

## What Industry Expects of a Technical Man

By L.G. Weeks

One step into the world of industrialization tells us the vast opportunities the future of this concrete jungle holds. Day in and day out, we are presented with beguiling technology, improving the quality and scope of human life by many folds. Have you ever wondered how a man, nothing less than a Neanderthal in his primitive years, has reached this stage? How have we absorbed the capacity and intellect to build multinational industrial empires? This is an excerpt from an article by L.G. Weeks that tells us the makings of a technical man and the basic necessities that helps one thrive as an individual in the industry. Further, a few qualities are enlisted that can be used as guidelines to get a gist of how a technical man should be.

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### **The industry expects a technical man to be ambitious**

Even though ambition was blamed for unhappy results in the case of Julius Caesar, it is by and large an excellent quality. We owe a tremendous debt to human ambition. It is the prime mover. The progress made by a country will be the fruit of the will to accomplish greatness, of the courage to take risks and confidence in one's abilities. The door of opportunity for a technical man is as wide open today as the geographical world for an explorer, in the era of covered wagons and sailing ships.

### **The Industry expects that its technical employees have been trained to think**

Perhaps the most important thing that an education should provide one with, is the ability to think critically, analytically and constructively. A maturing mind should develop a healthy skepticism and a spirit of intelligent inquiry. That is the kind of mind industry needs to give its business a dynamic and flexible nature, and on which it can depend for maintenance and improvement of its organization and methods. That is what a business needs if it is to progress. There is a lot of loose thinking in our national life today that masquerades as progress. True progress is a product of sound thinking and a balanced flexibility of mind.

***To read the rest of the article, refer to "The Bombay Technologist, 1954".***

Furthermore, it has nothing whatsoever to do with the youth, but in reality is maybe displayed by men and women of all ages. A trained mind, one that is trained to think and to judge, is the mark of the educated man. So, show your employer a college degree of intellectual competence rather than merely one of credit hours.

### **Another qualification of great value is the ability of expression**

There is a Chinese proverb which says that "He who knows and cannot say is just as if he did not know". There is also a great deal in knowing what to say. A plumber who discovered that hydrochloric acid was a good opener for stopped-up drains wrote to the Bureau of Standards about it. Some technical man at the Bureau wrote back to him, and ended his comment with a very high sounding statement warning that "the corrosive residue is incompatible with metallic permanence." The plumber was so pleased with what he took to be an endorsement of his discovery that he wrote back thanking the Bureau. The Bureau sent him another letter phrased in a fancy language, and once more the plumber sent back his thanks. This time the technical man at the Bureau made his third and last reply to the plumber, and

wrote: Don't use hydrochloric acid. It eats the hell out of the pipes."

A company executive one day was speaking to employees on making the most of their opportunities. He held up a large sheet of paper. At the center, he had placed a black dot. He asked each employee what he saw, and each promptly replied, "A black dot." The executive then said, "Yes, there is a little black dot, but none of you saw the big sheet of white paper. That is the real point of my story."

The real point of *my* story is that the industry needs technical men, more than it can get. The reason is that people want more and more of the good things in life, faster than the industry can devise them. The industry will have to receive a great deal of help from you in meeting that responsibility. The employees alone are the vitalizing force, the yeast that gives life and energy to such inert ingredients as capital and raw materials, and determines the amount and kind of benefits that can flow to all concerned."



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