

DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

Conducted by Paul C. Olsen.*

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ADVERTISING AND SELLING PROBLEMS OF DRUG STORES.

PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS OF SUCCESSFUL DRUG STORE SALESMEN.

BY PAUL C. OLSEN.

Imagination is the characteristic which enables a person to visualize that which is not before him and which indeed may never have been before him. It is a characteristic which is exceedingly important to successful drug store salesmen. The drug journals each month contain many instances which show how true this is. Just one group of examples are the facsimile reproductions of queer and odd orders which have been correctly interpreted and properly filled by drug store salesmen.

Imagination, as well as professional knowledge, is required of a drug store salesman when he is asked by a customer for insecticide which will kill roaches. Sodium fluoride is such an insecticide but it is also a poison to human beings. Where there are young children in the house, especially creeping babies, imagination as well as knowledge is required of the drug store salesman who is asked to supply an insecticide to be used under these conditions.

For disinfecting bathroom fixtures a dilution of an antiseptic containing phenol is probably the most effective and the least costly. For oral use, an entirely different type of antiseptic is indicated. Imagination plus knowledge equips able drug store salesmen with the ability to determine when to sell which.

Probably most common of all the experiences which drug store salesmen have in the sale of poisons occurs when a person, usually nervous, asks for a lethal dose of a poison "to kill a cat." Those are the occasions when the knowledge, imagination and human understanding of pharmacists everywhere have prevented murders and suicides—achievements which are to the everlasting credit of the pharmaceutical profession.

Imagination is a useful characteristic of a drug store salesman under many more pleasant conditions. It helps him to assist a love-sick young man in making a selection of the perfume or toilet water which will be most likely to please the young lady of his affections.

Imagination plus knowledge enables the drug store salesman with these characteristics to make a sale of C.P. instead of ordinary sodium chloride to the amateur chemist with a laboratory in his cellar and, at the same time, to win the good-will and enthusiastic interest of such a chemical experimenter by the knowledge and interest shown in his work.

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