

Wilson continued . . .

Job would be so similar. However, when I began teaching college classes in 1977, I did notice some differences. At first, I was a little too regimented, too straight-laced for college. Since then, I've discovered that harsh discipline doesn't appeal to college students, and I've mellowed out quite a bit.

Q: How would you describe your philosophy toward teaching?

A: I do whatever is necessary to create a positive learning environment—whether it is telling jokes or holding class outside. I think a positive learning environment is the key to successful teaching. If that environment is not created, students are going to lack motivation and become disinterested. Of course, it's up to the individual to absorb the material, but if I can make the environment conducive to learning, students will have a better attitude towards school.

Q: What demands are placed on students interested in finance?

A: The public schools have a pretty good handle on teaching students about computers and the fundamental requirements for business, but I'm concerned about the students' general weakness in mathematics. I would encourage students to concentrate more on the math and science areas. Also, students must be able to write. Writing is a skill that is necessary for every area of study, including finance. Students cannot expect to be effective managers unless they can communicate—both verbally and in writing—with their clients and staff.

Q: Do students have opportunities to interact with local businesses?

A: Many of our students participate in internship programs where they gain experience by working for a business

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during the course of a semester. I'm impressed by the number of ambitious students who are willing to volunteer their services without pay. In fact, we have so many students interested in internships that it's a challenge to find positions for all of them. We're currently in the process of establishing intern programs during the summer recess in an attempt to accommodate more students.

Q: What recent trends have you observed in the business world?

A: The most significant trend I've observed has been the influx of women into the field of business. Approximately 48 percent of the students in business schools nationwide are women, and by 1990 that figure will be more than 50 percent. We're seeing a migration of women from the traditionally female occupations, such as nursing and education, into business and engineering. I attribute this shift, in part, to monetary rewards. For example, a woman graduating with a degree in business administration can expect to earn almost twice as much as a woman with a degree in elementary education. Another factor that has created this trend is the increased acceptance of women in the business world. Fifteen or twenty years ago, the idea of women pursuing professional careers was just not socially acceptable. Today, I find that my women students are anxious to prove themselves. They are getting the better grades, and they are highly competitive with their male counterparts. I think it's great because it gives the men a challenge.

Q: What do you enjoy most about teaching finance?

A: My specialty is corporate finance. I find that field fascinating because it covers all aspects of business, including investments, brokerage firms, banking and savings and loan industries, and real estate. Finance encompasses a broad area. In every area of business, someone must acquire loans, decide what assets the firm is going to buy and how to pay for them, and project what the future impact will be. Finance is an exciting field because it is the "crystal ball" of business.

Q: What is the most challenging aspect of your job?

A: The most difficult element is keeping up with the changes in the field. Finance is very dynamic, constantly moving, constantly changing. One needs to continuously restudy and reevaluate the field. To do that properly, I would need to read three or four major newspapers a day, all of the popular business periodicals, and all of the professional journals. That would constitute about eight to ten hours of reading each day. So it is a constant challenge for me to keep on top of all of the latest developments.

Q: What do you do when you want to relax and forget about the world of finance?

A: I go to the coast and "blow it out" at the small jazz clubs in Santa Cruz and Watsonville. I'm a jazz fan and I feel very comfortable in that environment. It's a great way to escape!