

Women At Fieldcrest— What's The Outlook?

Women, who have always comprised a large portion of Fieldcrest's work force, are now not only becoming a larger, more visible part of the company's management, but are also entering the ranks of the higher paying production jobs requiring special skills.

Women in both these categories have, for the most part, been quite successful, according to J. B. O'Neal, Fieldcrest's equal employment manager.

Although there was initially some feeling among the company's management that women would not make good managers and supervisors or be able to do well in the higher paying production jobs, that attitude has generally been dispelled, O'Neal said.

While some problems have arisen, they have certainly not been insurmountable. For example, in some manufacturing departments, new rest rooms had to be added for female employees.

Some disappointments have been evident also, such as a bright female textile chemist at one of the company's plants who was doing outstanding work but left after less than a year because her husband was transferred to another city.

Although instances such as this have been few, when they do occur they reinforce the attitude that women should not be placed in responsible positions because they will eventually leave either to get married, have babies or because their husbands are transferred.

This attitude is becoming less and less a problem, however, as more and more women are becoming successful in managerial as well as the higher production jobs, O'Neal said.

In the higher-paying production jobs, in fact, the problem is in convincing women to take them, he said.

"In these previously male-dominated job categories, the women who have taken them are very successful, but we are finding that in many cases, the women are reluctant to try for them," O'Neal said.

In connection with this, a project is now under way to analyze a large number of these types of jobs which are still essentially all male to isolate those factors which may or may not make them undesirable for the majority of females. Plans call for modification of jobs where feasible in order to make them more attractive for females.

As for the outlook in the future, it's good according to O'Neal. "Management is no longer placing women in these jobs just to comply with the law," he said, "but because they are becoming increasingly aware of the real potential in the company's female work force and in the female labor market generally."



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