

## Started At Bottom, Nearing Top In Bottling

The clink, clink, clink of bottles rolling down an assembly line and then on to delivery trucks is a sound Charley Thomas has known since his childhood. Nowadays, the hubbub of activity around GCM\*Inc., the local bottler of Pepsi-Cola, Dr. Pepper and Seven Up, reminds the 30-ish Thomas of the responsibility he has been entrusted with.

Thomas is director of supermarket sales for the firm over a 15 county area covering the cities of Winston-Salem, Greensboro, High Point, Elkin, Statesville, Reidsville, Mt. Airy and Spencer.

He supervises a "couple hundred" salesmen and deals with 30 chain stores; however, he began in the soft drink business as a "swingman", "the very bottom of the list," he says.

"I worked real hard and I enjoy what I do," said Thomas of his rise to a management position.

Thomas got initiated to the beverage business as a warehouse for a beverage company up there for 14 years," said Thomas.



Charlie Thomas



"Most of what I know, I picked up from him and from people like my first sales manager," he added. Although one might think a traditional nationally-known product like Pepsi or Dr. Pepper would sell itself, Thomas dismisses that notion.

"The competition is very, very stiff because of pricing and inflation," said Thomas. "It has to be merchandised properly. If it doesn't catch the shopper's eye, then they won't buy it."

The merchandising includes catchy displays and discounts in prices at certain times of the year, when sales might drop off.

"We have to keep the market in line," said Thomas. He declined to cite sales figures, but said he has to reach a three per cent increase each quarter. Thomas said "attitude" is the key to success in the soft sales field. "my job involves handling rapport with the chain stores and keeping their buyers happy."

"You've got to keep a good attitude," he said. "Your attitude moves you a lot further in this business because you have to meet the public."

"It takes a lot of tact," he added. "If you don't have it, you're going to run into something you can't handle."

He recalled his days as a route salesman in the late 1960's. "There was this one lady who didn't want me (as a black) to come into her church, but my bosses backed me up. They told her 'That's your route man. Either get it from him or no drinks.'"

Thomas got the sales, and he's gotten a lot more since.

## The Administrator

By Naomi C. McLean  
Business Writer



The outstanding administrator has three types of skills. The first is technical skills, which have to do with the materials, methods, and processes used for the job to be accomplished, and the good administrator knows what is going on every day pertaining to accomplishments.

The second type of skills may be called human skills. Such skills go beyond techniques and processes and have to do with the ability of the administrator to work effectively with

people and to secure their full cooperation. It is this type of skill which largely determines the atmosphere of the surroundings.

The third type is conceptual skills. They have to do with the ability to recognize relationships and to search for the significant elements in any situation. Such skills are not acquired

in any school or college. They are the outcome of knowledge and experience which enables one to get quickly to the point of every problem or situation that confronts the administrator. He or she learns how to balance one consideration with another and to arrive at conclusions based on the truly significant aspects of the situation.

Administrators can help themselves and people with whom they come in contact by encouraging self-analysis from time to time in the light of these three basic aspects, of administrative skills.

If administrators were more flexible and varied in their procedures; if they were less the pedagogue and more the friend; if they used more insight and less recite; understanding, the way to be more interesting is to have a greater variety of interest, and the more human they are in at-

titude, the better administrators they become. Generally speaking, we are all aware of the importance of developing wholesome human relations in every aspect of our lives, and we need to develop insight into the individual characteristics of people working around and with us. The wise administrator realizes that every day he can learn something possibly which may be valuable, and a step toward accomplishments by being closely connected with other persons involved.

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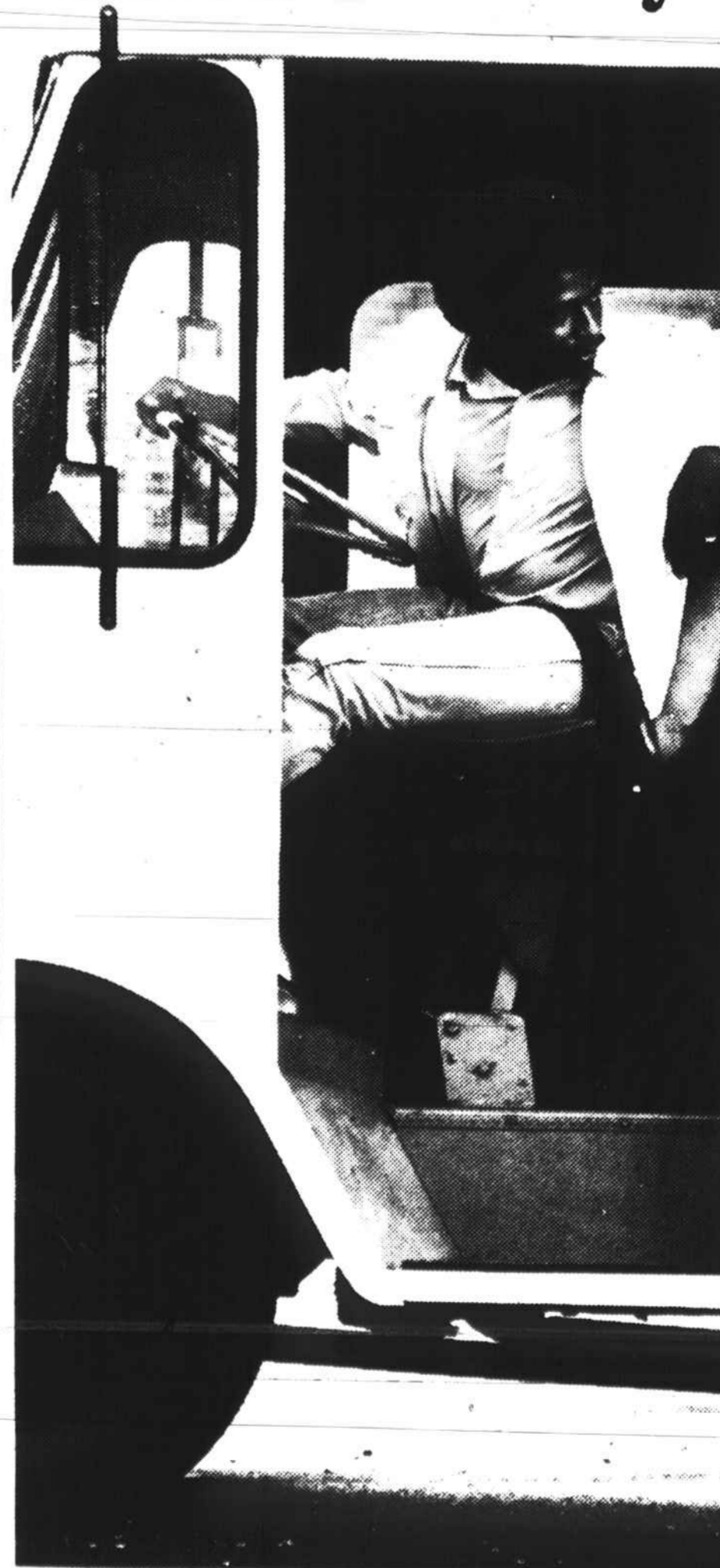
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