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Hueber Hall Dedication

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Philadelphia, June 2---A panel of leading life insurance men today discussed the characteristics of the outstanding life underwriter during ceremonies marking the dedication of Huebner Hall, in Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania.

The new building houses five insurance educational organizations as the American Center for Insurance Education. They are the American College of Life Underwriters; the American Institute for Property and Liability Underwriters; the Insurance Institute of America; the American Society of Chartered Life Underwriters and the Society of Chartered Property and Casualty Underwriters.

Howard D. Goldman, C.L.U., general agent for Northwestern Mutual in Richmond, Va., said that courage is "an indispensable ingredient for permanent high-level success in life insurance selling."

"Without real courage," he said, "a life underwriter would be a mere peddler -- an order taker -- and would never acquire the respect of others, or even real self-respect. The underwriter must be unafraid at all times to express his own opinions. He must have strong convictions, and be prepared to defend them. He must be able to refuse to write an application for life insurance unless he sincerely believes that the purchase is a sound one, and unless he can apply the test of the C.L.U. pledge."

In discussing "drive", another panel member, Arthur F. Priebe, C.L.U., Penn Mutual agent in Rockford, Ill., warned that an underwriter can become smug at any level of production.

"It isn't enough to have a sense of urgency," he said. "You've got to keep it, and keep it alive."

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Mr. Priebe described an experience with clients who had to remind him of services not rendered.

"I realized that I was not taking care of my clientele, not giving them the good service they deserved. So I hired another girl, making a total of three, went back to work myself, and I went from a million to two million within one year."

A third panel member, E. Price Ripley, C.L.U., agent for National Life of Vermont in Roanoke, Va., emphasized the need for building professional prestige through media such as estate planning.

If an underwriter is to be favorably regarded by the other specialists in estate planning -- the lawyer, the accountant and the trust officer -- he should respect the knowledge of those three in their respective fields, as well as their personal integrity.

"Stick to life insurance as the solution to the problem at hand," Mr. Ripley said. "Constantly work for a team approach to estate planning. Put the client's interest first, so much so that the others realize you are doing exactly that."

He advised not to be unhappy if a lawyer "crosses up or vetoes your ideas," since the same lawyer may help to sell a case in the future. Also, recommend accounting service when it is really needed.

"A lot of my clients have been establishing trusts at one of our local banks. This particular trust department has never sold a case for me, and that doesn't bother me a bit. If my clients get from me what they want and need, sooner or later they will lead me to some fine business."

The fourth panel member, Bernard H. Zais, C.L.U., Connecticut Mutual agent in Burlington, Vt., said that part of being a crack underwriter "requires that our every day be devoted in some measure to charitable and community activities -- activities that have absolutely nothing to do with life insurance -- which make us aware of the tremendous responsibility we have: to give back to one's own community just a little bit of that which one takes out.

"That is why I too am involved in community projects, and that's why I too have worked on many charitable and civic drives."

Moderator of the panel was Leroy G. Steinbeck, C.L.U., vice president of the Life Insurance Company of North America. The panel was organized to consider the characteristics of four mythical -- but realistic -- life underwriters. In their analysis, the panel members, themselves successful underwriters, brought out what they believed is required to be an outstanding underwriter.

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