

Manual for Messengers

By

Western Union Telegraph Company

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MANUAL
FOR
MESSENGERS



THE WESTERN UNION TELEGRAPH COMPANY

INTRODUCTION

TO THE JOB OF

MESSENGER

Your job as a messenger is a responsible one and you are expected to shoulder a certain amount of responsibility. Just as every cog in the wheels of a big machine is designed to stand a part of the strain, you as a "courier" in the Western Union organization are depended upon to do your bit in giving the public good telegraph service.

BE DEPENDABLE. As in other kinds of work in which you will later become engaged, Dependability stands at the head of the list of qualities that are essential to success. Honesty, capability, punctuality, courtesy and willingness are big factors, but **BE DEPENDABLE** and you have them all rolled into one.

The Western Union has become known everywhere as a **DEPENDABLE** telegraph company, and the public indicates its confidence and trust in Western Union service when it hands us its messages to be telegraphed. These messages are flashed to the four corners of the continent, and abroad, over wires and equipment that have cost millions of dollars to build and maintain, only to be entrusted, finally to you for delivery. If an incorrect delivery is made or an unnecessary delay occurs the speedy handling of such telegrams over great distances has accomplished nothing; the value of the service has been destroyed.

You have heard that a chain is only as strong as its weakest link. By the same rule, the service that we give will be only as good as you make it.

The public and the company are daily placing confidence in the work you do, and as a messenger you must be proud to uphold the fine traditions of the service.

YOUR EQUIPMENT

1. To be a good messenger, you must, first of all, be prompt. Change into your uniform and report to the delivery clerk at the office to which you are assigned promptly at the time you are told to go on duty, fully equipped as a Western Union messenger. This means that your uniform and cap must be in first class condition—brushed clean and free from spots; coat buttoned from top to bottom, your face and hands clean and your hair combed. Your shoes and leather puttees should be shined with paste every morning and brushed up again during the day if they have lost their polish. If this is done your good appearance will support your position as an important link in a public service of the greatest importance. Try to look as snappy as the model on the back cover.

2. The company furnishes you a complete uniform including a rain-cape for use when it rains, shirts for wear in the warm weather in place of coats, a mackinaw for winter wear in cold climates, puttees and a four-in-hand tie. This equipment is made of the best material that can be bought and you should take pride in keeping your things in apple-pie order. The company helps you do this by having your uniform cleaned, pressed and mended every two or three weeks. It is not hard to be an attractive messenger in a Western Union forestry uniform, but beware of grease and indelible pencil stains. Few things look worse than a dirty or spotted uniform. If you ride a bicycle, be careful not to put too much graphite on the chain. If your uniform becomes soiled for any reason ask the delivery clerk for a clean one.

3. One of the most important parts of any uniform is the cap. If the cap is out of shape, the effect of the whole uniform is bad. Do not throw your cap around, nor crush it by holding it tightly under

your arm when you remove it in a patron's office or residence. If it loses its shape, it will prevent you from making a good appearance. You will be required to pay for any malicious damage to your uniform equipment.

4. You will not be permitted to wear your uniform when off duty. When you change into your own clothes before you go home search the pockets of your uniform coat for any messages you may have failed to turn in. In the summer time, when shirts are furnished instead of uniform coats, you may wear your shirt home. Enough shirts to enable you to put on a clean one every other day will be furnished. Ask your mother to use care in washing the shirts to prevent fading.

5. In the interest of foot comfort and appearance only high-top shoes with sturdy soles should be worn with the uniform.

6. Shoes, bicycles and tires are for sale to messengers at prices much lower than the same quality equipment can be purchased in the stores. The company contracts for these articles in large quantities and sells them to you at cost so that you can get the benefit of the best equipment for the least money. When you need shoes or want to increase your earnings by riding a bicycle, be sure and speak to the manager before you buy elsewhere. The company makes no profit on any sales to messengers. Only messengers may buy.

YOUR DUTIES

7. The duties of a Western Union messenger are not difficult, but you must realize that the job calls for the best that's in you. The work you do—walking or riding a bicycle—is the healthiest kind you will ever be offered because it is not exhausting and because you are out in the fresh air practically all of the time.

8. If you do a good job you may be tired at night, but it will be a healthy kind of fatigue that will make you sleep well and eat heartily. Until you get accustomed to the work do not try to do too much. The first day of walking will be apt to discourage you unless you walk moderately. Your superiors have been instructed to break you in slowly so as to give the muscles of your legs a chance to become accustomed to the exercise. Take rests between runs if you feel tired. Don't overdo the job the first few days.

9. The following hints on the care of the feet will prevent discomfort:

If your arches are weak wear supports.

If the tendon in your heel causes trouble have it strapped at once.

Wash the feet daily, and put on fresh hose every morning, if possible.

See that your socks fit properly—not so loose as to cause wrinkles, nor so tight as to bind the foot. A hole in your sock or a darn will often make trouble.

See that your shoes fit properly. If your shoe is too large it rubs blisters; if it is too small it cramps the foot and causes pain.

For use when working, get shoes at least one-half size larger than those you ordinarily wear.

Break in a new pair of shoes before wearing them to work.

Keep your shoes well covered with paste so that they will be soft and pliable and keep out of the water.

If your shoes get wet inside, take them off and dry them.

If you are so unlucky as to acquire a blister, treat it as follows: Heat the point of a needle red

hot. When the needle is cool, insert it under the skin near the blister. Push through to the underside of bruised skin or blister and press out the water. Be careful not to tear off the skin covering the blister. To protect a blister, grease a small piece of chamois with vaseline and place it so that it covers the blister and extends over the solid skin surrounding it. Then place adhesive tape over the chamois. This allows the protective covering to be removed without breaking the skin over the blister and protects the new sensitive skin.

10. Work Conscientiously. Your work as a telegraph messenger involves a certain responsibility, and the company and the public alike depend upon you to accept it and face it squarely. Your career will depend largely upon how much responsibility you are willing to shoulder and on how well you do your work. Proper efforts on your part will be recognized and rewarded as surely as night follows day.

11. You should always bear in mind that a Western Union messenger is the representative of the company who is most in public view. Many large users of the telegraph seldom visit a telegraph office, and upon their personal observation of your conduct in their offices and on the street, they will base their favorable or unfavorable impression of Western Union service.

12. Messengers in all parts of the country by their courteous attention to business have attracted the notice of patrons to such an extent that they have been offered fine positions, in which they have made good. Business men admire clean, attractive, bright, energetic, intelligent and courteous boys. They know that the business of tomorrow will be carried on by the bright young men and boys of today.

13. While in our office sit on the bench with your cap removed and quietly await your turn to take out a route or answer a call. Loud talking, boisterous conduct or leaning over the delivery counter is not permitted.

MAKING DELIVERIES

14. Always remove your cap when you enter a customer's office and say "Thank You" when you obtain a message. It is the mark of a gentleman and there is no surer way to attract favorable notice.

15. Deliver messages on your route in the order in which the messages are arranged by the delivery clerk, and carry out any special directions that he may give you. If a receipt is to be taken you will be given a delivery sheet on which the addressee should sign. When presenting the delivery sheet to the addressee, courteously point to the line on which he is to sign and offer him a sharpened pencil.

16. You must be very careful to hand messages to the addressee if possible, or to someone in his office or home. Never leave a message lying on a table, desk or other equipment. Make deliveries always in someone's hand. This is called an HTA delivery, meaning "Handed to Addressee." If the office is closed or there is no one around inquire next door if necessary to verify that address is correct; then leave a paper notice form 66 and return the message to the office.

17. Messages for delivery to private residences can be left under the door or placed in the letter-box (except those with 2 stars) *if no one is at home*, but only after you have taken the following precautions:

(a) Ring the bell and if no one answers, go to the back or side door and make sure that no one is at home.

(b) Ask the neighbors on either side whether the addressee still lives there, or is stopping there, and whether they think he will return before the end of the day. If addressee has moved or left the city find out street address and city, if possible, and write it on the delivery sheet or envelope, returning the message to the office. If the addressee is unknown at the address given in the

message or to anyone in the neighborhood return the message to the office.

(c) If you are satisfied that you are at the right address, and that the addressee will shortly return, place the message in the mail-box at the front door, making sure that you have the right box. If there is no mail-box, push the message under the front door. This is called a "TD" delivery, meaning "Tag Delivery."

(d) Fill out a tag notice (form 66-R) and fasten it firmly to the front-door knob.

APARTMENT HOUSE DELIVERIES

18. When the address is an apartment house and the addressee does not answer the push-bell in the hallway, DO NOT PLACE THE MESSAGE IN THE HALLWAY LETTER-BOX, NOR UNDER THE MAIN ENTRANCE DOOR. The only proper place to make a tag delivery in an apartment house is under the door of the private entrance of the addressee's apartment. (Go to the floor on which he lives). Even then, do not place messages there until you have made sure that you are at the correct apartment door and have made the inquiries suggested in paragraph 17. When you have satisfied yourself that it is proper to leave the message, slide it under the door and hang a tag notice (66R) securely to the doorknob.

19. If the downstairs door of an apartment house is locked, and you have been unable to get an answer to the addressee's bell, ring the janitor's bell, if there is one, or find the janitor, and politely ask permission to go to the addressee's apartment door. Do not leave the message with the janitor but find out in which apartment the addressee lives and whether he is expected home the same day. If you cannot go to the addressee's apartment, DO NOT leave the message, but place a paper notice (form 66) properly filled out in the addressee's hallway letter-box and bring the message back to the office.

20. Do not deliver a message to a janitor, porter or elevator man. The only exception to this rule is in the case of large apartment houses where you are not permitted to go above the ground floor and where an attendant is on duty for the purpose of receiving telegrams, mail, etc.

21. If the neighbors say that the addressee is not expected to return that day, try and learn where he can be reached, and if successful, write down the address so that the message can be forwarded on your return to the office.

22. If there is any doubt in your mind about the correctness of any delivery that you have made, tell the delivery clerk about it as soon as you return to the office. You will never be criticised for making an honest mistake, but you may lose your job if you fail to help correct it. Bear in mind that many messages mean life or death to someone.

23. Occasionally you will be given "star" messages to deliver. These messages are marked with stars to indicate their special importance. Deliver them with the least possible delay and unless told otherwise put them first on your route. Use utmost care as they sometimes contain news of death or sickness. Never under any circumstances deliver a message containing two-stars without getting a receipt.

24. If it is necessary to deliver a message at an address different from that shown on the message make a note of the correct address and tell the clerk upon your return to the office. If the addressee of a message has moved to an address that is within reasonable distance, go there and make the delivery; otherwise bring the message back to the office.

25. Any charges to be collected upon delivery of a message will appear through the window of the envelope. Do not fail to turn in to the delivery clerk all money collected *as soon as you get back to the office.*

26. Messages addressed in care of a hotel may be left at the hotel desk since the addressee, if not already registered, usually is scheduled to arrive at an

early date. If the addressee has left the hotel you should try to secure the forwarding address from the hotel clerk.

27. If "Try" is written on the envelope before the address it is an indication that the delivery clerk is not sure of the address and that you must be doubly sure that the message belongs to the place to which it is addressed.

28. When you are given a message for delivery to a train passenger you should pass through the train if there is sufficient time calling aloud "Western Union Telegram for" followed by the name of the addressee several times in each car. If there is not sufficient time to pass through the train you should find the conductor and ask him to make delivery.

PICKUPS AND ANSWERS

29. When making delivery of a message that requires an answer as indicated by the words, "Sender requests answer" printed in a red block on the envelope, politely ask for the answer, using one of the following expressions:

1. "Shall I wait for the answer?"
2. "May I have the answer, please?"
3. "An answer is requested. May I wait for it?"
4. "Will you answer, sir? I'll take it right back to the office for you."
5. "The sender is asking for an answer. May I take it back to the office with me?"
6. "If you'll give me the answer, I'll take it right back to the office for you."

30. If the patron says he will give you the answer, politely ask him whether he would like to have a blank on which to write the telegram. If he says "yes," take a message blank from your kit and offer it to him with a pencil. If the customer does not give you the answer, ask him to "Please call Western Union when it is ready." The charge for the answer can be figured out from your rate sheet.

31. If, while making a delivery at a business office, you should see a message written on another telegraph company's blank, waiting to be picked up, **DO NOT TOUCH IT** without first asking politely for permission to take it; but you may pick up messages written on Western Union blanks even though told that a call has been sent for a messenger. When you pass a good customer's office or one known to favor another telegraph company when returning to the office for another route, it is a good plan to stop in and inquire if there are any messages ready to be carried back to the office. You will be paid extra for such messages picked up.

32. Messages picked up in business offices are usually charged to the account of the patron. You may accept such messages without asking for the money when the patron says he has a charge account. Some messages are sent "collect" and these also may be accepted without getting the money but in all such cases the patron should mark the message whether it is charge or collect. If the patron wishes to pay for the message in cash, figure out the tolls from your rate sheet and collect the proper amount, which should be turned over to the clerk with the message as soon as you return to the office.

ANSWERING CALLS

33. In addition to your duties in the delivery of messages, you will be called upon to go to the offices of certain customers to collect telegrams they wish to send. This is termed "answering calls." Next to making correct delivery of telegrams, this is the most important duty you will have to perform. Every minute counts. Take the shortest route to the place you are sent.

34. When you reach the patron's office you should go directly to the person who handles telegrams, if you know who that is. If you do not know, go to the nearest clerk and say: "Call for Western Union?" in a distinct but not too loud voice. Do not shout. After receiving the telegram say: "Thank you," and hasten back to your office with the message as fast

as you can. The telegraph service will be judged by your actions. Make it snappy!

35. Do not open envelopes containing telegrams which are handed to you by customers to bring back to the office. The delivery clerk will open the envelope and give you full credit for the messages enclosed.

ERRAND SERVICE

36. The company, in addition to handling telegrams, makes a business of delivering notes and packages. This is called "Errand Service."

37. In the conduct of this errand service you may be entrusted with valuable property that must be delivered to the correct person. Guard this property carefully while it is in your possession and do not surrender it to anyone unless you are certain that it is the right person.

38. Do not deliver notes or packages addressed to someone else, to a janitor, porter, or elevator man. Never make a delivery of any kind to a person on the street, door-steps, in vestibules, or in hallways of buildings or apartment houses (unless you are personally acquainted with the person). Dishonest persons may follow you and claim to be the addressee of the note or package you are carrying, with the idea of getting it away from you. Make it an invariable rule never to make delivery except at the address given.

39. If stopped on the street with the request to run an errand, direct the patron to the nearest office. It is not permitted to accept errand services from strangers on the street.

40. Return to office with any errands picked up on call unless otherwise instructed by the delivery clerk.

YOUR SAFETY

41. As your work continually carries you into the streets, you must keep your wits about you at all

times in order to avoid accidents. ALWAYS BE CAREFUL. DON'T TAKE CHANCES!

42. If you ride a bicycle, it will pay you well to keep both hands on the bars, your head up AND EYES TO THE FRONT. Don't try to beat another vehicle to a crossing.

43. Do not hitch on trolley-cars, automobiles or other vehicles.

44. Always observe the traffic regulations; keep to the right and don't day-dream on the street.

45. Enter and leave elevators carefully. Under no circumstances enter an elevator while the operator is out of the car. Never ride on freight elevators.

46. In icy weather cross the pavements carefully and watch your step on ice-coated stairways. If you find a loose heel or sole on your shoe have it fixed immediately.

47. If you should meet with an accident or run into someone, be sure to secure the names and addresses of any witnesses and report fully to delivery clerk, or manager, immediately upon your return to the office. If you cannot do this have someone telephone to the office for you.

GENERAL

48. Every messenger must carry with him a "Messengers' Working Kit," envelope (form 3599) and see that it always contains 6 undelivered notices (form 66), 6 sending blanks for answers, a rate sheet, and a copy of this booklet. In offices serving residential districts the kit should also contain 6 residential tags (form 66-R). When the kit becomes worn or soiled, ask the delivery clerk for a fresh one.

49. Always have a sharpened lead pencil with you.

50. Do not carry messages in your cap. Use the pocket in your coat that is provided for the purpose.

51. If you should lose a message, note, package or delivery sheet, report the loss to the delivery clerk promptly.

52. It is against the law for you to destroy a message, note or package, or to tell anyone the contents of a message or note. The offense is a grave one and is punishable by imprisonment or fine; or both.

53. If there is a bulletin board in your office, watch it daily.

54. Do not smoke while on duty.

55. It is strictly forbidden to ask for tips, or to solicit anyone for subscriptions, gifts, etc.

56. Don't forget that courtesy is sure to pay big dividends.

57. A "shooter" and rubber cement for the repair of punctures will be furnished upon request.

58. The bicycle sign you carry is not only a good identification but serves to protect your bicycle.

59. Get a lock and chain for your bicycle and fasten it to an immovable object when you are out of sight, to prevent theft.

60. Your hours are regulated by the manager of the office at which you work.

61. Never leave the office on personal affairs unless you secure permission to do so.

62. Sunday and holiday work is necessary occasionally and you must report when told to do so.

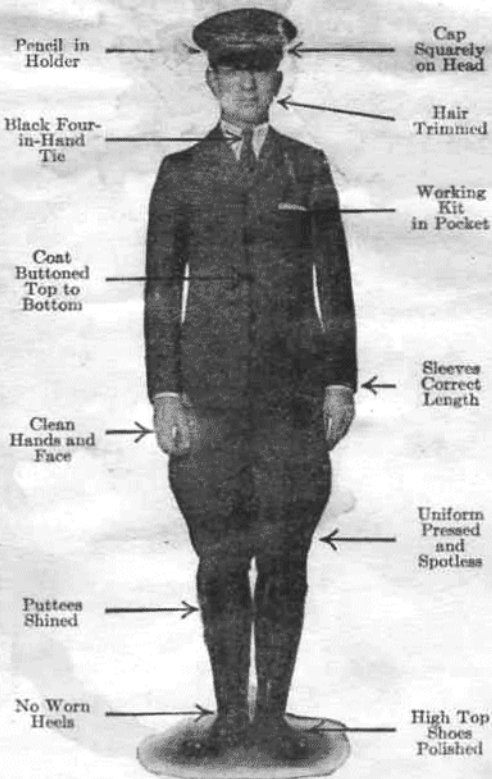
63. If you are unavoidably absent because of illness or any other cause notify the manager by telephone before your regular reporting hour.

64. After you have been in the service one year you will be entitled to one week's vacation with full pay. For two years' service two weeks' vacation with pay is allowed.

65. Dishonesty in any form, whether with us or with our customers means immediate dismissal. Sooner or later you will be found out and dismissal will result. "Honesty is the best policy."

66. If there is anything you do not understand, ask the delivery clerk or the manager. Either will be glad to help you.

TAKE PRIDE IN YOUR JOB *and* IN YOUR APPEARANCE



**CORRECTLY UNIFORMED
WESTERN UNION MESSENGER**