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United States of America Census Enumerator.
skills.

A response to an ad and then I became a census worker after much training. My area was Pittsfield, MA, where I was living then. I had also met a “girlfriend” the year before and sometimes hitch-hiked down to Amherst to spend some time on weekends, etc. with her.

Census work required that you were very accurate and very observant. You needed to supply the information, even if the people refused to give it. We learned how to count vent pipes to determine the number of bathrooms in a house, etc. However I knew the US Census was the main way in which monies were allotted for social work programs and having been involved before, and still was, in the Community Action councils, I wanted to help have an accurate count so we would know how many people were in need or in risk of having a need.

One of the side effects of this was that as soon as you wrote down what you were recording, you erased it from your memory. The privacy of the person giving the information is sacrosanct. To this day I need to write down notes to remember them, but much of it that relate to a name or address and such I erase from my memory immediately, or at the very least it is very hard to recover. You would think this would lead to Charles improving his penmanship. But it has not. His mind is racing so fast he has to scribble to get the stuff down before his mind rushes on to something else.

I also did the census in 1980, was not hired for 1990, but did the one in 2000. I was in school and did not even attempt the 2010 census. This training helped me to be able to do the Manning City Directory and that I did at least 3 times while in Pittsfield. My belief in the validity of data and planning information means I have joyfully accomplished this task, even when it was really hard to do.

Even today I go to the Connecticut Valley Historic Museum and search their records and often the street directory like the Manning one, is used to show where someone was living and what job they had at that time. Mr. Knight has loved history and is excited when he can be a part of its creation.

Interpersonal skills, communication skills, convincing someone to give up this information, finding it in whatever way we can factually do so, being accurate, trying 2 and 3 times to come back and seek the information, being ethical and reporting only what was said to us that was factual or we could determine a fact and presenting yourself as a professional only interested in the accumulation of facts to plan or the betterment of all he lives in that community, are hallmarks of this profession.

I can not do the walking I did then, but these skills have aided me when Mr. Knight has searched archives and Registry of Deeds old document to find information as you understood how the person originally recording the documentation may have operated.

Attention to detail, is an important part of this work, as it was in the art work, and became later in computer programming and architectural (building and landscape) design and execution.

As a U.S. Census worker I was working not for a party or section of government, but for the best interests of the people that comprise the United States of America. I like to fulfill needs.

It is the details of today (and the observation of certain problems) that create the plans for tomorrow.