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Objects: La Salle Stenotype Machine

Thinking in Sounds

Joe Strickland remembers learning machine stenography theory and building speed in court reporting school.

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They start out by teaching you the theory. And the theory is what key makes what letter on the machine. But it's not a key per letter. Obviously there's not you know, 26 letters, keys on the machine. So there are combinations of keys. So you strike two keys, and it becomes another letter. And then you strike four keys, and it becomes yet another letter, or a different sound. We actually think in sounds rather than letters because we're not thinking typing letters. We're thinking typing sounds. So they begin in court reporting school, even today, teaching you the theory of what those sounds are and how to make those sounds on your machine. That's the easy part. That's the easy part. And, and you spend the first I don't know how many months doing, learning that. Probably a couple or three. I don't know. And then the whole rest of the time is speed building. You start out at 20 words a minute, and 30 words a minute, and you build up. And they test you all along the way. And it's, I've described it to somebody as it's the only training where you, the minute you get good at something, they push you further, and then now you're failing every day. You go to school every day and you fail, and you fail, and you fail, and you fail. And then you pass. So then they push you into the next speed area. But the object of the game is the long-term goal of hitting the minimum required so that then you can begin working, get certified and begin working, so.