"What I like about IBM is the autonomy. I run my department pretty much as though it were my own business."

"Tell some people you work for a big company and right away they picture rows of gray steel desks with everybody wearing identical neckties.

"Well, that's the stereotype. When you look at the reality, things are a lot different. (This is Gene Rudge, B.S.E.E., an IBM Manager in Development Engineering.)

"IBM has over 300 locations. They believe in decentralization, and they delegate the authority to go with it. To me, it's more like a lot of little companies than one big one.

"Take my own situation, for example. I act as a kind of entrepreneur for my department. I decide if we should bid on certain government contracts for my group. I also decide the proposal strategy and come up with all the facts we need to set a bid price. Of course, upper management reviews my decisions, but to a great extent I run my own show.

"Another thing that makes this like a small company is the close relationship with your boss. You're almost always hired by the manager you're going to report to. And you work for him on your own or in a small team. It's part of his job to know your long term goals and help you reach them.

"This same interest in the individual also shows up in IBM's educational programs. I'm getting my Master's now, and IBM's paying the entire cost, and some of the class time is on company time. It makes it a lot easier to get your advanced degree."

Gene's comments cover only a small part of the IBM story. For more facts, visit your campus placement office. Or send an outline of your career interests and educational background to P. J. Koslow, IBM Corporation, Dept. C, 428 Park Ave., New York, N.Y. 10022. We're an equal opportunity employer.