

INTERNSHIP AND JOB SEARCH GUIDELINES

DEPARTMENT OF JOURNALISM

Students seeking internships and graduating seniors are understandably nervous when looking for opportunities or getting ready to enter the job market. Following is information specific to journalism majors which may be helpful to both groups.

A SEARCH STRATEGY: Generally, an applicant knows either the specific type of work being sought, or a geographical area in which the person would like to work.

For sequence related jobs, there are periodicals and directories listing jobs or persons to write about jobs.

For geographical locations, you must either be in the area you would like to work, use directories which cover those areas, or arrange to have publications from those areas sent to you.

It is not helpful for an intern or a graduate to say "I will take any kind of work in journalism anywhere in the U.S." This does not give the search a focus, and it will suffer because there is no starting point.

Understand that there are things you can be doing while you are a student that will make your search easier and more profitable when you begin looking for work.

Networking, or getting to know others in the field, is important in all occupations. Developing contacts among members of your profession might bring you mentoring, tips on job openings (perhaps even a helpful introduction), and a free advice on many subjects.

The easiest way to network while you are still in school is to join the local chapter of the professional organization in your area of interest. While organizations differ in their requirements for membership, it is almost always helpful when joining the professional chapters if you belonged to the student affiliate while you were an undergraduate.

Explore the possibilities of joining the **Society of Professional Journalist, the Public Relations Society Organization, the Radio Television News Directors' Association, Women in Communication**, and other groups for the avowed purpose of getting involved and getting known. Watch the bulletin boards or ask your faculty adviser for the person in charge of the group in your interest area.

WHEN TO START THE JOB SEARCH: Newspapers seldom know they will have openings until a reporter turns in a resignation. Timing is important here, as newspapers will allow two to three weeks to fill an opening. Some papers, but not many, maintain files of resumes. Most start fresh when an opening occurs.

Public relations, broadcast and magazine openings take longer to fill, and are usually advertised more widely in local and regional newspapers and some trade publications.

Resumes are almost as individual as you are. Some people suggest they be limited to one page, others say longer if you have significant accomplishments. Do not mention high school accomplishments in more than one line, unless they were of national significance.

Above all, be sure **EVERYTHING** on your resume is up-to-date and **EVERYTHING** is spelled correctly. It is not wise to mail resumes by the dozens or hundreds to a wide area. Picking a restricted geographical area may be more helpful at first.

In your resume, be sure to include name, current address and phone, significant media-related experience, internships, honors or awards and other information showing how well you can produce on the job. An introductory paragraph in the resume specifying what you are offering (three years of work on the BG News, internships with the BG schools, etc.) or what your goals are (to find a newspaper reporting job, or to work in a media related position) may be helpful. Do not send a resume with a newspaper orientation to a public relations firm. Some suggest that you print only a small number of resumes, and change the offering or goals paragraph to fit the job you are applying for.

Opinions differ on references. Some say include them on your resume. Others prefer that you include them in the cover letter you send with each resume. Others say you should use References Upon Request. This is one of many decisions you are going to have to make.

Above all, spell **EVERYTHING** correctly on the resume. Employers look for reasons not to hire people, too, and a misspelling is often reason enough.

WHERE TO LOOK:All jobs reported to the Department of Journalism are posted in the glass case outside the **Journalism** and **Telecommunications** Offices, Room 319 and 322 West Hall. The Journalism Department also has a **JOB HOT LINE** that is up-dated whenever a posting is received. The number is **419-372-0424** and is available 24 hour a day.

Students should check with their **faculty sequence advisers**, and provide them and the department secretary with an address where they can be contacted after they leave school. If the department knows what you are interested in, or where you can be reached, we will forward information to you.

The classified section of **local and regional newspapers** in the geographical area you are focusing on can provide job leads. The Sunday papers are especially important in terms of number of classified ads published.

Periodicals serving your chosen areas of interest are available either by subscription or for use in Room 302. **Editor and Publisher** serves the newspaper industry and has some public relations advertisements. **Broadcasting** Magazine serves that field. Both are weeklies, and both are available in Jerome Library as well.

For a subscription to **Editor and Publisher** write to Circulation Department, Editor and Publisher, 11 West 19th Street, New York, NY 10011, **Broadcasting** is obtained from Cahners Publishing, 1705 DeSales Street, NW, Washington D.C., 20036.

Directories listing newspaper, broadcast, magazine and public relations companies are available in Room 302 West Hall. Please ask the Communication Studies secretary for the directory in the field of your interest, and it must not be taken out of Room 302. The Yellow Pages-type directories in your preferred geographical area may also provide leads on firms, since they are listed by state in the **Editor and Publisher Yearbook**. An annual Register issue is published by the **Public Relations**

Society of American, listing practitioners alphabetically and geographically, and public relations firms by state. **Broadcasting Yearbook** includes radio, television, and cable firms. **Gale's Directory** lists magazines published throughout the United States.

You may photocopy any of the publications in Room 302 by paying the appropriate copying costs.

Broadcasting stations hire somewhat differently. Networking and good internships are the best sources of contact. Even part-time jobs get you in the door, and give you a chance to meet station personnel. Join the Radio-Television News Directors Association campus chapter. It is active in getting speakers, going to conventions, offering job listings and making field trips. While job listings are often somewhat outdated, they do give you a sense of what stations want and how to present yourself.

In addition to **Broadcasting Yearbook** and **Broadcasting Magazine**, RTNDA's **MediaLine** offers a service which gives you job openings by telephone. Be reminded that broadcast openings are usually in smaller markets, with Toledo, Detroit and New York opening up after you have done well in the smaller markets.

The **University Placement Office**, 360 Student Services Building, phone 372-2356, suggests you register with them early in your final year of study. In an ever-tightening job market, students with writing, thinking and layout skills taught in Journalism could fit into many fields. It is suggested you explore this option.

DEVELOPING A JOB SEARCH PHILOSOPHY:

There are several points to think about when looking for jobs after graduation:

--Learn to **anticipate rejection**, but to continue full speed ahead despite them.

Many students have been accepted by the college of their choice, the study program of their choice, and have completed all graduation requirements. Not to be able to find the job of your choice before graduation can be hard to handle. Remember, you only need one offer.

Please understand that you will likely send out many applications, and perhaps go to several interviews before you get the job of your choice. This **does not mean there is anything wrong** with you. It means the job market is tough.

Do not limit yourself to the sequence you specialized in at BGSU. Just because you are a broadcast sequence person does not mean you are not qualified for a newspaper job. And newspaper sequence graduates often find work in public relations. The point is that during your four years here, in any sequence, you have come to understand the media and to know how to think and write. These skills can be applied in any sequence.

Learn as much as possible about any newspaper, broadcast outlet or public relations firm as you can **BEFORE** you interview. Ask for materials to be sent to you. Stop in to the company well in advance of the interview, if possible, and ask to see the kinds of publications they do, the brochures they give customers, or anything else they can share with you. Read this material with an analytical eye, and be prepared to ask intelligent questions about the company during the interview.

Know your strengths and weaknesses. No one can do everything. Know what you do well, and what you need work on. Stress the things you can do which would be helpful to the employer you have researched carefully before your interview.

Expect that **some interviews will go better than others.** There is a certain chemistry which develops between applicant and employer, and it will vary depending on the two persons involved. You can present a positive attitude and be as well prepared as you can, and the chemistry might not be right. Do your part well - this is all you can do.

When you have a job, you work 40 hours per week at it. When you are looking for a job, you ought to **spend 40 hours a week** doing this as well. If the newspaper or other firm cannot use you at the moment, ask if you could do free-lance work if you intend to remain in that area.

Maintain contacts with those places you did internships. 'While they may not have a job, they may know of someone who has an opening, and they may be able to provide you with leads. The **University Alumni Office** has programs in which you can spend a day with alumni working in your field.

Make a **portfolio** of materials you have done for publications, for classes, or for outside projects. You do not have to include every story you have written, every brochure you have done. But do include enough of your good efforts so that the employer can see what kind of work you would do for them.

The faculty and the Department of Journalism stand ready to provide any additional information you need. **Please ask.** When you get that first job, tell us. When you get your second job, tell us. We may have someone who would like to apply for your old job. That's what searching, networking and helping others are all about.