



Scott McCrary

Class of 2000

Major(s): Broadcast Communications and International Relations, minor in Political Science
Washington, DC producer for CBS Newspath

How did you land your first job out of college?

I found it at the RTNDA convention. I posted several resumes on the bulletin board for individuals looking for producing jobs. My cell number was scrawled on the top of each one. I interviewed with several news directors that week -- and ended up accepting a job offer from one of them a few short weeks later.

What top two job skills will most benefit job seekers in your field?

Writing and networking. On writing: Every hiring manager I interact with in the TV news field laments the lack of good writers coming out of college. On networking: It's not about connecting with total strangers through Facebook or LinkedIn. It's about really talking and listening to friends of friends, or even acquaintances of acquaintances -- and staying in touch with them. For example: I've helped one recent grad land her first job in the last month. We met when I spoke to her class at Elon -- and she stayed in touch with me.

What advice would you give a job seeker in your field?

Times are tough in the TV News industry -- but don't despair. There are jobs to be had. Be ready to work hard, and do more than one job (Report and shoot, produce and write for the web, etc.) And, use your alumni network! Elon grads are constantly in touch with one another -- and, for the most part, we're always happy to help you find a contact, or answer your questions.



Leigh Ashurst

Class of 2001

Major(s): Broadcast Communications and Corporate Communications

Manager of Program Development & Acquisitions for Planet Green, Discovery Communications

How did you land your first job out of college?

I signed up with a temp agency when I first arrived in Washington DC. Within three weeks I had a full time job working in a television group for the government. 10 months later, through a contact I'd made at an internship, I found out about and landed a job with Discovery Communications working for Travel Channel

What top two job skills will most benefit job seekers in your field?

Networking is one of the keys to success in this field. The more people who know you, the more opportunities you'll be made aware of. Depending on your focus, understanding technical skills are also vital - but social ability is imperative to success. Thriving in a corporate setting is made easier if you can interact well with others.

What advice would you give a job seeker in your field?

The best advice I can give is to find out what facets of this field interest you. If you like editing, shooting, writing, being outside in the field or sitting in back at the office, all are important in narrowing down what you want to do. Once you make that decision, be open to the possibility of any job in that arena.

You may not be starting out doing exactly what you want, but if you're in a similar area, the opportunities will come. And then, just talk to people. If people know what you're interested in, they'll look out for you, and if they like you, they'll hire you when a job becomes available. Show people you're confident, capable, and dependable. Those are the three biggest skills that surprisingly are difficult to find. If you have them, you'll go far.



Leanne Jernigan
Class of 2007
Major(s): Corporate Communications
Account Coordinator, Levick Strategic Communications

How did you land your first job out of college?

I researched every PR firm and agency in D.C. I also searched Craigs List, Monster, and other job sites every day. I found Levick by research on the Internet. There was no ad for a position or any kind of opening. I just emailed one of the Senior Vice Presidents who was listed on Levick's web site (he is now my boss) and introduced myself, explained that I was looking for a job, and attached my cover letter and resume. It was a lot of luck, but it was also a lot of persistence. I just kept emailing and following up with my contact at Levick and eventually something opened up and I got a job.

What top two job skills will most benefit job seekers in your field?

Writing and networking

What advice would you give a job seeker in your field?

Be patient- something good will come your way. Do not settle. Just because you get a job offer doesn't mean you have to take it unless it's absolutely right for you and it's what you want. Be nice to every single person you meet- you never know when you will run into them again or if they could be a great contact for you in the future.



Steve Earley

Class of 2004

Major(s): Journalism

Copy Editor for The Gazette, a group of community weeklies in the Washington, DC suburbs

How did you land your first job out of college?

I wanted to report for a daily newspaper somewhere in the East, so I researched papers of the appropriate size for a beginning reporter in places I could see myself living and sent cover letters, resumes and clip packages to 50-plus papers up and down the coast. The Editor & Publisher International Yearbook was an invaluable resource. I got bites from three papers and about three weeks before graduation accepted a general assignment spot at the Daily Freeman, a 22,000-circulation a.m. daily in upstate New York's Hudson Valley region.

What top two job skills will most benefit job seekers in your field?

An essential skill is having a strong news sense: Knowing what's newsworthy, what isn't and why. Some of this is innate. It's obvious some people just get it. At the same time, the principles of news judgment can be studied and learned. And, even those who come by it naturally should make sure they are able to explain why one story is more important to a paper's audience than another. Time management is also crucial. Reporters and editors are expected to meet short-term and long-term deadlines no matter what the news cycle throws at them. So, a well-organized Outlook calendar helps, but, when news breaks hours before press time, you'll need to be able to plan and prioritize on the fly.

What advice would you give a job seeker in your field?

Take time to learn about all the different positions there are in a newsroom.

Reporters, photographers and section editors tend to get most of the credit, but there are also copy editors, wire editors, graphic artists, researchers, Web coordinators... the list goes on. If you love journalism, don't let your distaste for one position or another steer you away from the field. Chances are, there's a spot for you somewhere.