

Tips for Journalism Job Fair Participants

Welcome to the 2008 job fair, and welcome to the world of journalism. It is an honorable and fulfilling profession that makes a difference in people's lives, in communities and the world.

As you look for the right spot to serve an internship or begin your career, every advantage helps. Below is a list of six important tips for the interview and selection process:

1. Network and stay in touch without being a pest. Ultimately, your work ethic and abilities will define your career. However, it also is up to you to position yourself and get to know people for when that big break is in front of you.
2. Don't be afraid of the small newspaper. It's OK to be selective in choosing a newspaper at which you'd like to work. You should be. But instead of large product vs. small, look more for the professional characteristics. The small paper can provide an incredible learning opportunity in your initial years because you will be asked to work in so many different areas. This will stretch you and force you into becoming a well-rounded journalist. Look for places that adhere to strong professional standards and will provide opportunities in which you will receive coaching and mentoring.
3. When interviewing, look the interviewer in the eyes and let your personality shine. You will deal with people every day of your life in this profession. You will deal with people in good situations and bad. You must have interpersonal skills, and the person doing the hiring will look for that in the interview. Be confident, not cocky.
4. Be an interviewer yourself during the interview. Do your research on the product, and show the interviewer that you have done your homework. Come with questions, and as the interview unfolds, more questions should arise. The interviewer's job is to learn as much about you as possible. Your job is to learn as much about the workplace as possible.
5. Dress the part for an interview. That means sports coat, slacks and tie for men, and dress or pants suit for women. Dressing down on the interview is a good way not to get a job. First impressions are vital. Remove visible body piercings and cover tattoos. Those do not belong in the professional setting.
6. Be ready to go to work when you land that internship or job. If you're not competitive, willing to work hard and sometimes long, uneven hours, do yourself a favor and choose a different profession. As you will see today in the job fair, there are hundreds of aspiring journalists competing for jobs. What are you going to do to set yourself apart? This is true even as you enter the business and look to further your career.

While you are at the job fair, stop by the APME's "help desk" if you want an objective, non-judgmental opinion on your resumes or clips, or if you're seeking advice on a career path. No appointments are needed at this desk, which will be staffed by Indiana editors. More information on careers at newspapers will also be available at the desk.