

# JobCenter

National Career Resource of the  
Public Relations Student Society of America

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## Resources

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## Networking 101

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### What is it?

Making connections with people who can help you.

### What can people do for you?

- Offer you a job/internship, now or in the future.
- Introduce you to someone else who is hiring.
- Give you information about other companies/agencies that have openings.

### Myths and Realities

**Myth:** You should only network with people who can help you get a job.

**Reality:** Don't set limits-think broadly-people may know someone else who can help you get a job or internship.

**Myth:** You need to know the "right" people to network effectively.

**Reality:** It's up to YOU to create the connections that will eventually help you.

**Myth:** Strangers resent you asking for help with your job/internship search.

**Reality:** If you approach people properly and make reasonable requests, they will most likely help.

### Create a Network List of Contacts

Think of your list in the shape of a pyramid, broken down into levels.

#### Level One

These are people you are comfortable approaching for names and other requests. These are your friends, neighbors and relatives with whom you have regular contact. This level consists of about 10-15 people.

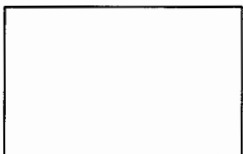
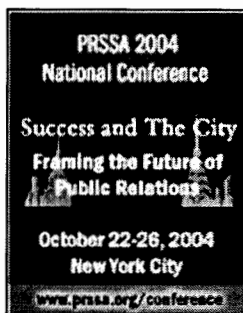
#### Level Two

These are your colleagues and acquaintances that you see occasionally. These people know you and are willing to help you-you may deal with them on a professional level (i.e. your doctor).

#### Level Three

This is the toughest level. These are strangers-people you have yet to meet. You have heard about them from someone in level one or two, or you found his/her name in a directory (i.e. The Blue Book) or a newspaper.

Now that you have organized your networking contacts into levels, it's time to put them into a database.





## Network Database

This should include:

- Name
- Title
- Company
- Business address
- Home address
- Phone number
- Fax number
- E-mail address

It would also be helpful for you to explain:

- Nature of this connection (i.e. met at PRSSA National Conference Career Expo)
- Names of other people or companies they gave you
- Priority-how valuable is this person to you?
- Comments-record meetings you may have had, any letters you may have sent, etc.

### Example

Here is an example of what you can say to a potential network contact:

"Hi, my name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I got your name from \_\_\_\_\_. For the past \_\_\_\_\_ years I have been studying at \_\_\_\_\_. During that time I've had the opportunity to develop my PR skills in the areas of \_\_\_\_\_. I will be graduating in \_\_\_\_\_ and am looking for \_\_\_\_\_.

Be articulate, speak naturally and have confidence.

*Source: Stanton Hudson, past National PRSSA Professional Advisor, presentation given at PRSSA National Assembly, San Francisco, 1999.*

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# TRADE SECRETS

## FIRST-TIME JOB SEARCHES: GET HIRED IN TV NEWS

If you're a college student who wants to break into television news, we have some tips for you from Susana Schuler, corporate news director at Nexstar Broadcasting. June 2001  
*Communicator*

### 1. Get Good Experience in College

- Intern, intern, intern.
- Get hands-on training; learn how to write, report, shoot, edit and produce.
- Take lots of writing and English classes.
- Study and debate journalism ethics.
- Get well-rounded by studying history, government and economics as well as journalism.
- Develop good news habits. Read the paper and newsmagazines, watch and listen to local and network news.

### 2. Do Your Homework

- Contact your local state broadcasting association for a list of TV stations.
- Research jobs online (all sites are free unless otherwise noted):
  - [www.rtnda.org](http://www.rtnda.org)
  - [www.tvspy.com](http://www.tvspy.com) (ShopTalk)
  - [www.tvjobs.com](http://www.tvjobs.com) (free and fee)
  - [www.tvnewz.com/jobs.htm](http://www.tvnewz.com/jobs.htm)
  - <http://journalismjobs.com>
  - [www.tvnewsweb.com/briefing/jobshop.shtml](http://www.tvnewsweb.com/briefing/jobshop.shtml)
  - <http://members.nbc.com/mikestvjobs>
  - [www.ire.org/jobs](http://www.ire.org/jobs)
  - [www.medialine.com](http://www.medialine.com) (fee)
  - [www.lostremote.com/jobs](http://www.lostremote.com/jobs)
  - <http://emonline.com> (*Electronic Media*)
  - <http://ojr.usc.edu> (*Online Journalism Review*)
 To compare cost of living: [www.homefair.com/calc/salcalc.html](http://www.homefair.com/calc/salcalc.html)
- Spend spring break going door-to-door soliciting jobs.
- Network and get the word out.

### 3. Develop a Strong Résumé

Always call a station before sending anything to get a list of openings and confirm correct spellings of names. If there's no opening, you can send a tape, but don't expect a response.

- Paper résumés should include:
  - Contact information, including name, address, phone number and e-mail.
  - Work experience that relates to television, like internships, hands-on classes you took in school, plus any radio or newspaper jobs.
  - Education background, including where you went to school, when you graduated and what your degree is in.
  - Extracurricular activities/clubs you participate in as well as awards you've received and if you are bilingual.

References, including names, titles, phone numbers and an explanation of how you know the person.

- Cover letters should include:
  - Correct spelling of news director's name.
  - Correct mailing address.
  - Something of relevance to current news in the market, the station's brand and image.
  - Log on to the station's web site or to local newspapers.
  - Reasons why you should get the job. Sell yourself with attitude, teamwork and willingness to work hard.
- Tape résumés should be no more than eight minutes and should include:
  - Quick montage of stand-ups and live shots showing your on-camera abilities
  - Three solid packages. (Make certain that some of the standups included in your montage are part of at least two of the stories on your tape.)
  - Anchor segment, if it's strong. As a beginner, you won't be a candidate for many top anchor jobs, so don't put anchor segments first.

#### **4. Prepare Carefully for Interviews**

- Realize that news directors want good attitude, experience, teamwork and initiative as much as they want good journalists.
- Expect to spend time with several people within the newsroom, not just the news director.
- Expect questions about your experience and news philosophy.
- Bring a copy of your résumé (paper and tape).
- Be prepared to write sample scripts, go out with a crew in the field and do a mock anchor segment on the desk.
- Always dress as if you were on the air that day.

#### **5. Be Realistic About Your First Job**

- Don't expect to start in the top 100 markets.
- Expect to move at least three to five times before finding your dream job.
- Realize that the hours are long and include nights and weekends.
- Expect to earn from \$14,500 to the mid-20s a year to start, depending on position and station.

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## Cover Letters

A well-written cover letter can spark the interest of an employer more effectively than a resume. Cover letters should be targeted to the specific employer and his or her needs. Every resume should be accompanied by a cover letter. Since most job seekers do not pay enough attention to the cover letter, this is an excellent opportunity for you to stay one step ahead of the competition.

It is best to state your objective in your cover letter rather than in your resume because then it is easier to tailor it specifically to the employer's needs. You should remain consistent with your objective, however you do not want to turn away a prospective employer in the first stage of the game. Remember, there may be several other resumes on his or her desk, you do not want to immediately disqualify yours.

### A good cover letter:

- Makes an immediate connection to the position or company
- Is written directly to the person responsible for hiring decisions
- Does not sound desperate
- Rarely begins sentences with "I"
- Is brief and to the point
- Does not sound like a form letter
- Successfully markets the job seeker
- Directly asks for a specific form of response
- Requests a meeting rather than an interview

### Cover Letter Outline

Paragraph 1:

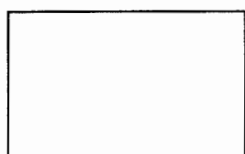
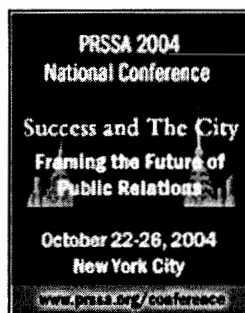
- How did you hear about this position/company
- How did you get this person's name
- What is your objective

Paragraph 2:

- Why are you interested in the position
- How are you qualified for the position

Paragraph 3:

- Request an opportunity to call and speak directly to the employer (within five days after receiving the cover letter and resume)



## Resume Tips

### Writing a Good Resume

By Don Fitzpatrick

Your resume is one of the most important documents of your life. It announces where you've been, what you're doing and where you want to go. Your resume reflects who you are as a broadcast professional. Here's how to write a resume that will stand out:

- Keep your resume to one page!
- Always include your name, home address, daytime and evening telephone numbers, and personal e-mail address. Put this information at the very top of the resume in a clear, bold font. Do not include the e-mail address you have been issued by your station.
- Clearly list your job experience, including job titles, employer names, job responsibilities, and number of months or years you held each position. If you've been in the business a long time (more than a decade), list only your most recent work, condensing early years to one paragraph.
- Note your educational background (including professional development courses).
- List awards, including award sponsor and the story that won the award (Best Spot News--Hurricane Andrew). If you've been in the business a long time or if you're gifted, or both, your awards might fill up a page or two. If that's the case, list your most prestigious or most recent awards.
- Note any volunteer work and association memberships. List other skills and interests briefly.
- Keep it simple. Just because your computer has 100 fonts doesn't mean you need to go crazy mixing them.
- Don't use the throwaway line "References available upon request." Instead, list four or five references on a second page. Be sure all titles, phone numbers and addresses are current.

If you follow these guidelines, you'll create an attractive and informative resume. Your resume is your first impression, your absentee interview and, most often, the phone call you're not allowed to make. Impress potential employers with your resume and you'll soon be impressing peers with your new job!

*Don Fitzpatrick is president of Don Fitzpatrick Associates*

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816.555.2000 work  
lookingforwork@aol.com

**News Director**

May 1996 to present

**Station Name, City**

Responsibilities include managing staff of 54 persons, directing the editorial content of 22 hours of news a week, and developing and monitoring budget

**Executive Producer**

May 1991 to May 1996

**Station Name, City**

Supervised news operations, including editorial content, live coverage, reporters and crew assignments. Also produced three hour-long specials and a series of investigative reports.

**News Writer**

May 1990 to May 1991

**Station Name, City**

Wrote news, medical, sports and feature stories. Also served as on-air translator as needed.

**Education**

1990 University of Missouri School of Journalism

Bachelor of Journalism, Broadcasting

1998 RTNDF Money in Politics workshop

1997 RTNDA Spring Training Conference

1993 The Poynter Institute for Media Studies

**Awards**

Alfred I duPont—Columbia University Award, 1998

Edward R. Murrow Award, 1995, Feature Reporting: An Apple for the Teacher

Emmy Award, 1994, Investigative Series: Campaign Dollars: Where They Come From, Where They Go

**Memberships**

RTNDA member since 1989. Member of the executive committee, 1997-1998.

International Women's Media Foundation member since 1995.

Society of Professional Journalists member since 1996.

**Volunteer Work/Other**

Habitat for Humanity: participated in blitz build, 1998

Local School Board: elected member in 1997

Girl Scouts of America: troop leader 1993 to 1998

Fluent in French and Spanish