

CT Intern Academy 2012
Speaker questions – Patty McQueen
Communication Strategies

1. What do you look for in a resume?

I look for a range of experience - different jobs, different schools, etc. I am less impressed by the name of a school or a degree, and more moved by a person's willingness to try different things. That said, I don't mean ten jobs in a year, but reasonable growth and expansion over time.

2. What classes do you recommend for students interested in your field? What skills are important to develop? (writing, fiscal analysis, public speaking, etc.)

I tell students to take the classes that interest them. I was a Communications and Journalism major, but I took political science classes because I loved politics. My first job out of college was at public television as a production assistant on news programs, and those classes served me well -- in fact, they have helped throughout my careers in tTV, print journalism, politics and now public relations.

3. What keeps you motivated in your job day-to-day?

New challenges that come from new clients and new issues.

4. What was your career and educational path to your current position?

I have a bachelor's degree in communications and political science, but more importantly, was given the opportunity while still in school to work as an intern at the Connecticut Public Television stations. After graduation, I was hired under a grant from PBS where I was able to work on public affairs programs and learned to produce, direct and serve as on-air talent. I left the station after four years to work at a newspaper because I wanted to learn to write news, and spent five years there working up from town reporter to the paper's sole state capital reporter. After another two year stint at a larger paper, I left journalism and worked for the state's Speaker of the House briefly before joining the Clinton Gore campaign in 1992. I worked on both Clinton campaigns and on the Presidential Inaugurals before coming back to Connecticut to launch my own public relations business.

5. What risks did you take?

Leaving perfectly safe jobs in television and journalism to try new things, and then rejecting offers to work in Washington to come back home to start a business.

6. What terms and acronyms do people need to know?

7. What sources of info do you check regularly?

Huffington Post, Slate, Politico, Courant, NYTimes, TMZ (I confess), Facebook, CTMirror, CTNewsJunkie, and other assorted local news blogs and sites.

8. What's your best advice to students? What to do and what not to worry about

Don't worry so much about what courses you take. Take the ones you need, but also the ones you enjoy.