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BEST

SHOT

NFL, NBA, MLB, NHL & NCAA

Employers Share How to Impress Them With Your Application

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Introduction

Most play-by-play broadcasters aspire to call games in the NFL, NBA, MLB, and NHL or for a major university.

Wouldn't it be great to know what to put on your demo, resume and cover letter to impress those employers?

You're about to find out.

I have asked directors of broadcasting of NFL, NBA, MLB and NHL teams and major universities what they want, and don't want, in your applications. Some had contradicting opinions. Ultimately, do what seems right for you.

Here is what employers most commonly say they want to hear – IN THEIR WORDS.

- Jon Chelesnik
Owner, STAA



Demos

1. Time and Score

The MOST important things are time and score and, in football, down and distance. These are the most important skills to master above all.

2. Featuring your analyst

I want to hear a good back and forth with the analyst. Call the play and then lay out for your analyst to do their thing.

3. Insider perspective

Insight from practice or film that fans don't have access to. In this technology age, fans have access to just about everything online. They don't get to come to practice or sit in the film room. Make those two count in your favor by referencing them in the broadcast and providing good insight from what you saw.

4. Setting the stage

At the beginning of the broadcast give the fans a verbal "visual" of the scene. Describe things like how warm/cold it is, the smell in the air, the mood on campus etc.



5. A less scripted postgame

Use bullet points to help lead your way but don't sound robotic and scripted.

6. Less Audio

I don't need an entire game. I also want to hear the analyst, not just the mechanics of the play-by-play guy. I want to hear more than just screaming on a touchdown. Don't just show me great highlights. I also want to hear how you work the analyst into the broadcast.

7. No Music

Don't put music under your highlights. I can't hear your highlights. This isn't a music video.

8. Variety

The smart thing is to give me as much as you can and give me variety – highlights, an interview and [for baseball] at least one inning of play-by-play. If you want to send a whole game, that is fine. If you make it far enough into the process, I'll eventually listen to it. Not having enough on your demo can hurt you. Having too much cannot. I don't have to listen to all of it.



9. No FTP sites

Don't post large audio files on FTP sites. I received some of those and the links had expired by the time I went to access them." (FYI -- most FTP sites keep links active for just three to seven days. SoundCloud doesn't put expiration on links)

10. Be Online

If your demo and resume are not online, you're not keeping up with changes in the market.



Resumes

1. Keep it Lean

Your resume speaks for you. Anything more than a one-page resume is ridiculous. It usually works against you. That much detail means you are fibbing somewhere, or else why have you had so many jobs?

2. Keep it Relevant

I want to see what you've done, in chronological order. I want to see your education. Non-sports stuff is unimportant. Tweak the resume to fit the job. I don't need notable achievements, awards or press clippings. Those things are just someone's opinion. I can get online and read blogs if I want the opinions of others.



Cover Letters

1. Don't Assume

This is the biggest thing, and it happens almost in every case: everybody, almost to a person, in their intro letters and emails and phone calls, tells me they are the absolute right person for the job. People just assume we are looking for a guy to do x-number of games. We wanted somebody to be an ambassador for team, the face of the team in the market.

2. Be You

The cover letter is more valuable than the resume. It is the first impression. I like the English language. It says something about you. Resumes are very basic. Cover letters are like someone walking in for an interview and seeing how they are dressed. It isn't even so much content as, "are you personable?"



Misc

1. Ask Questions

If you call me, spend three seconds asking a question or two. For example, “What are you and what are you not looking for?” Tell me what you are looking for. Why are you looking for that? What doesn’t work for you?” Try to learn a little bit about what’s going on.

2. Choose References Wisely

Recommendations need to be well placed and need to be key recommendations.

Be smart with email and phone call recommendations. Make it a couple of well placed ones. Don’t offer five or six recommendations from people I have never heard of.

3. Use Reference Calls Wisely

Don’t have five different people call me [on your behalf]. It gets to be a bit much, especially when one is a guy with whom someone did high school football.



Your talent is going to get you to the next round. It isn't about who made a call for you -- not in the first round (of cuts). Recommendations can help in later rounds.

