



# THE POWER OF PREPARATION

## How to launch a career in the new media landscape

Written by **Keerthi Vijayapalan** | Photography by **Hajer Mustafa & Dominic Balasta**

**APPLYING FOR JOBS** in the media industry can be daunting, especially as we enter a new decade promising constant changes. For anyone seeking a career in media, here is a comprehensive guide for future success.

### Attitude is everything

If you're passionate about the industry, it shows. Kim Shiffman, editor-in-chief of *Today's Parent* magazine, says she looks for candidates who have a love and passion for magazines.

She looks for people who are “in tune with what other magazine brands are doing in print and online, and who are bursting with ideas—everything from story ideas to process improvement ideas and everything in between.”

### Do your research

Researching the industry and being knowledgeable about the world you're entering gives you an advantage when applying for jobs. Shiffman recommends that anyone applying to *Today's Parent* should “learn about the magazine industry in Canada and make contacts by networking and volunteering. If you're in a journalism program, try to get a byline outside of your school's publications.”

Go into a job interview knowing all about the company. Preliminary research prepares you for interview questions and shows that you are enthusiastic. “Anyone interviewing at *Today's Parent* ought to have spent considerable time researching *Today's Parent*,” says Shiffman. Displaying an

avid interest in the company shows potential employers that you take the job seriously.

### Practice makes perfect

Preparing will get you far. Tim Shore, founder of blogTO, says preparation is key to good interviews. He recommends that candidates practice answering questions. “Why should we hire you?” may seem like an obvious question, but Shore says he is impressed when interviewees are “able to articulate why we should hire them over other candidates.” Having a thought-out response could very well be what gets you the job.

### Build a portfolio

Employers are always looking to see your work. Showing that you have the skills they're looking for can give you a boost and increase your chances of getting the job over other candidates. Students should “build as much a portfolio as they can—writing, video, social media—as we can use this to evaluate them to a certain degree when they don't have work experience,” Shore says. He emphasized that creating as much professional quality content as possible can help demonstrate your capabilities.

## Take initiative

Sasha Nagy, head of Canada video operations at Verizon Media Studios, says the best way to get a job is to show you're interested. "Something that's really overlooked is reaching out and letting us know that you're looking for opportunities, making me aware of what you're doing." Nagy says that he takes meetings with anyone who wants to learn about his job and how they can get involved. LinkedIn can be a great tool for this, because recruiters can watch your progress as you work and get more experience. In fact, Nagy says that a lot of the hiring process for him begins on LinkedIn.

## Be the jack-of-all trades

A few years ago, being only a writer was great, but this no longer works in the current media landscape where one person must do multiple jobs. "It's evolving because the quality of the productions are getting greater, so the emphasis on the ability to make the visuals, writing good scripts, producing in a more broadcast sense is more important," Nagy says.

Multimedia and digital media have taken over the industry and now the viral video owns the Internet. The idea of viral videos has really become more user-generated, as seen on Twitter and TikTok. Verizon Media Studio has moved into more detailed storytelling. "We are looking for people who can really produce, opposed to just shooting and editing," Nagy says. Most people on his team "wear multiple hats on any given day" so the ability to be flexible and a good teammate is essential for him.

## Never lose sight

If he could give one piece of advice to recent graduates, Nagy says it would be to never forget why you chose your profession. "You didn't choose it to be brought down by analytics, ad plays or social media likes and retweets. You got into it to tell an honest story, to make a difference in someone's life in some small way," he says. "If you have an opportunity to do that every day, it's the greatest job in the world." ▲



## SO YOU'VE GRADUATED NOW WHAT?

Written by **Madison Furness** | Graphics by **Karisa Simon**

From hitting the books for four years to suddenly jumping into the 'real world,' TDS Personnel recruiter Jillian Tishman breaks down three helpful tips for post-university life.

### 1 Test out the waters

You don't need to start job hunting immediately after graduation. Exploring what your field of interest offers might help you determine your next move. Tishman recommends getting involved in what you love to do by volunteering, securing an internship or even joining LinkedIn to grow your connections.

### 2 Know how to sell yourself

Rehearsing job search exercises will help prepare you for any opportunities that come your way, explains Tishman. Mastering the 30-second elevator pitch and having a professional social media platform are great ways to land an interview.

### 3 Remember, there's no need to rush

Even if you don't have a 9-to-5 job lined up months after graduating, there's no need to worry. Simply putting your energy into small tasks, like face-to-face networking, can be a great achievement, says Tishman. This will help you break into the industry and navigate the workforce.

