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Mr. Speice

Research Assessment #5

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Education

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ISM

Belzer, Jason. "Sports Broadcasting 101: Breaking Into The Business Of Sports Media." *Forbes*,

Forbes Magazine, 25 Feb. 2016,

www.forbes.com/sites/jasonbelzer/2016/02/24/sports-broadcasting-101-breaking-into-the-business-of-sports-media/#44a5ea7e14b1.

Assessment:

This week I decided to focus my research on finding schools that have the the top broadcast, journalism training/education programs in the country. I came across the article, *Sports Broadcasting 101: Breaking Into the Business of Sports Media*, written by Global Sports Business Leader, Jason Belzer. His article talked about various ways individuals can enter the broadcasting industry. Within the article, Belzer mentions key components that direct aspiring sports broadcasters in the right direction. Belzer beings the article talking about how the sports broadcasting industry is expanding due to technological advancements, as a result, there is an increase in job opportunities within the industry and it will continue to grow. Belzer then moves into the education realm of sports broadcast. He argues that undergraduate and post graduate training is a necessity for achieving a successful career in the sports broadcasting industry. He

proceeds to mention notable alumni from a few universities, in order to validate his reasoning acknowledging those universities. Moving on, Belzer states the importance of finding an agent in order to assist an individual on landing a spot with a large sports network.

After reading the article, there were some key points made by Belzer that grabbed my attention and really stuck out. The first thing that stuck out to me was the emphasis Belzer put on finding the right schools for broadcast. In the article, Belzer mentioned universities that are known for their broadcast/journalism programs. The universities mentioned were, Syracuse, Northwestern, Missouri, Southern California, and Arizona State. Of these options, the University of Southern California is the best fit for me. He then indicated that attending one of these universities will further an individual's opportunity in the broadcasting industry, because they contain the best training necessary for the job. Along with that, these schools obtain various alumni that are successful in today's sports broadcasting industry. This information is relevant and helpful to me, because I can begin to prepare myself to get into one of these universities, so I can have an advantage over my future competitors. As of right now, the University of Southern California is my dream school, because they have an outstanding athletics program, as well as, one of the best broadcast/journalism programs in the country. Academically, something that I can do to start preparing myself to get into USC is to maintain my GPA, because my GPA is high enough to get accepted into the university. However, my SAT score is below the average score of students admitted into the university, therefore, I need to revise my game plan and keep working towards improving my SAT score. Athletically, I need to continue to train with my club coach and make sure that I'm fueling my body with the right nutrients, so I can run the times necessary for an athletic scholarship to USC.

Along with that, the second thing that caught my attention was the idea that finding an agent after graduating is an effective way to get on with a large sports network. This is something that I have never considered or thought about, so this information was very informative for me. With this knowledge, I am going to keep that information in the back of my mind when thinking about my game plan for after college. Hopefully, I will attend USC and participate in an internship program with NFL Network, because their headquarters are 24 minutes away from the campus. Hopefully, I can build a relationship with whoever I'm interning for and they could help me find an agent. This information is relevant to my ISM research, because now I will be adding sports broadcasting agents to my contact list, because they still have the knowledge, experience, and connections that will show me the ropes of sports broadcasting.

Sports Broadcasting 101: Breaking Into The Business Of Sports

Media

So you want to be a sports broadcaster? While the majority of us may not have the raw athletic prowess necessary to become a professional athlete, it doesn't mean we can't become the talent on the sidelines and inside the broadcast booth reporting on the athletes we love. As the business of sports has evolved, so has the industry that covers them. No longer are jobs in sports media limited to being a beat writer for the hometown paper or doing play-by-play for a local high school team. There simply has never been a better time to break into the business of sports journalism.

Indeed, the North American sports industry is expected to generate some \$73.5 billion by 2019. The biggest catalyst behind the growth is the projected increases in revenue derived from media rights deals - estimated to be worth approximately \$20.9 billion by 2019 - which are predicted to surpass gate revenues as the sports industry's largest revenue generator. As money pours into media rights, naturally the amount of television and digital coverage increases as more content is needed to sell commercial inventory against. The end result? **Thousands of new jobs across the sports media spectrum, from broadcasting, analysis, content production, and everything in between.**

That being said, while there have never been more opportunities to break into sports media, **the competition has also never been higher.** So how then do you prepare yourself for a career in sports broadcasting? Here's a step-by-step look at how to differentiate yourself and break into the industry.

Sports Broadcasting and Journalism Education Programs

While many universities have offered degrees in communication studies for more than a century, programs that offer specific concentrations in broadcast journalism have only begun to emerge over the last few decades. **Sports media related concentrations are even rarer, but over the last several years numerous universities have begun to offer both undergraduate and graduate degrees in this specific area of focus.**

For those interested in embarking on a career in sports broadcasting or journalism, the proper undergraduate and graduate education is key. Not only is the opportunity to get on-air training from an early age integral to positioning one for opportunities upon graduation, but the network of individuals you while in school can help take your career to the next level decades

into the future. While many universities tout their communication and journalism programs as being the best, only a handful consistently develop and graduate the industry's top broadcast professionals. Among them are: Syracuse, Northwestern, Missouri, **Southern California** and Arizona State.

The jewel of Chicago, [*Northwestern University's Medill School of Journalism*](#) has been producing some of the nation's most revered journalists for almost 100 years. Medill's undergraduate journalism specialization is considered the most rigorous in the country, and its graduate degree programs in Magazine, News and Video reporting are taught by the industry's top professionals. Having produced an astonishing 38 Pulitzer Prize laureates, Medill boasts a proverbial who's who of sports media alumni, including: [Adam Schefter](#), [Michael Wilbon](#), [Darren Rovell](#), Brent Musburger, [Mike Greenberg](#) and [J.A. Adande](#) (ESPN), Ira Berkow (New York Times), [Rich Eisen](#) (NFL Network), and [Rachel Nichols](#) (CNN).

Considered by many as the top university for aspiring sports broadcasters, [*Syracuse University's Newhouse School of Public Communications*](#) has graduated some of the most celebrated journalists in the industry over the last 50 years. Offering degrees in both Broadcast & Digital as well as Newspaper & Online Journalism, Syracuse has positioned itself as a leader in educating the next great generation of great media talent. Among its alumni are: Bob Costas (NBC), Marv Albert (CBS), [Mike Tirico](#) (ESPN), and [Pete Thamel](#) (Sports Illustrated).

Widely considered the oldest journalism school in the world, the [*Missouri School of Journalism at the University of Missouri*](#) offers one of the most prestigious communication industry educations around. With a focus on hands-on journalism, students undertake what is referred to as the "Missouri Method" by working at the school's nine community-based real-media outlets,

where they learn to deliver news using traditional, digital, online and mobile formats. Many of sports media's most lauded journalists are proud graduates of Mizzou, including: John Anderson (ESPN), [Michael Kim](#) (120 Sports), [Pat Forde](#) (Yahoo Sports), and [Matt Winer](#) (Turner Sports).

Consistently ranked among the nation's elite communication schools, [Arizona State University's Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication](#) might be the best return-on-investments education wise for aspiring sports media professionals. While USC, Northwestern and Syracuse have great programs, they will cost upwards of \$65,000 a year in tuition and expenses. Arizona State alongside Missouri on-the-other hand offer substantially more affordable journalism education's as public universities. That being said, Cronkite's positioning in the Phoenix/Scottsdale market provides students with far more internship and employment opportunities than Mizzou. Arizona State's sports broadcasting alumni include: [John Seibel](#) and [Matt Barrie](#) (ESPN), Al Michaels (NBC Sports), and [Madelyn Burke](#) (FanDuel).

Located in the heart of Los Angeles, the entertainment capital of the world, the [University of Southern California Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism](#) offers students unprecedented opportunities to get hands on experience during their time in school. With dozens of research and public interest projects and programs, including the [Annenberg Innovation Lab](#), USC has become a center for discussion among scholars and professionals in journalism, communication, public policy, media, and education. Sports broadcasting alumni include: [Arash Markazi](#) (ESPN), [Michele Tafoya](#) (NBC Sports), [Joe Sheehan](#) (Sports Illustrated), [Sean Salisbury](#) (Yahoo Sports), [Bob Lorenz](#) (Yes Network), [Petros Papadakis](#) (FSN), [Lindsay Rhodes](#) (NFL Network).

So you want to be a sports broadcaster? You're going to need an agent.

As with any industry, simply having a degree in your field of focus is never enough to guarantee that you will land a job in the industry, much less rise to the top. Indeed, while many aspiring broadcasters find employment upon graduation, most will spend years toiling away behind the scenes before they ever get a shot at being in front of the camera. Even then, the lucky few that make onto television screens often do so in tiny markets where the viewership is almost as low as their paychecks.

How then do the personalities we see every day reporting for the biggest sports networks actually make it into those seats? **One key shared commonality is that they are represented by agents, many of which spend years working side-by-side with their clients as they climb every rung of the industry ladder.** Truth is, if you ever expect to reach the broadcast booth of a major sports network, you need an advocate that sees your potential and is willing to do whatever it takes to have others share in that vision.

There is no better example of the benefit agents offer their broadcasting clients than that provided by [IF Management](#), who for the past twenty years has helped develop and place many of today's most celebrated news and sports broadcasters. Started in 1996 by attorney [Steve Herz](#), IF has taken a unique approach to talent representation. Unlike larger firms like Creative Artists Agency (CAA) that often recruit clients only after they have made it to the top of the industry, instead IF has focused on finding and cultivating young talent and turning them into the best possible broadcasters and journalists in the business. In fact, many of IF's clients have been with the company for over a decade, starting in small markets and working their way through the business, all the while receiving training, feedback and mostly importantly shrewd career management advice from the IF Management team.

According to [Gideon Cohen](#), IF's Senior VP of Sports Broadcasting, "When we are deciding to sign a client, our evaluation is based almost entirely on the potential we see in them, either personally or professionally, or possibly a combination of both. Do we think they have the potential to grow as a broadcaster? Do they have what it takes to stick it out for the long haul? Can they put their ego asides and take our feedback, even when it's something they may not want to hear?"

Admittedly the latter question might be the most important. After spending decades representing talent, IF has learned that a client's ego can be their best friend or -more often than not - their worst enemy.

"Broadcasting is a unique profession in that talent can see what other talent is doing," explains Cohen. "Imagine if you were a doctor and could see other doctors operate by turning on the television. On the one hand watching your competitors out performing you can be a great motivator, but on the other, it can also end up driving your insecurities. That means that the greatest value we can offer our clients is to be talent managers and developers, not just job placers."

Talent develop is precisely IF Management's forte. Look no further than the fact that many of IF's most successful clients started off in careers totally outside television. From former attorneys to business executives to college basketball coaches, IF has done a truly remarkable job of identifying and nurturing its clients, especially those who had no intention of ever becoming broadcasters early on.

"I couldn't have done it without IF because in life I have always felt that the key to success is about people, relationships and trust," reveals Seth Greenberg, basketball analyst and

co-host of ESPN's College Gameday. "Gideon Cohen and the IF team are not my agents but my partners. We are in this together. They care about me as a person and they treat my career as their career. They have guided me and taught me how to transition into a new profession after 36 coaching while always being concerned more about my family and my well being than just negotiating my contract," he adds.

While [IF Management](#) is not the only broadcast representation firm in the business, it is arguably the only one focused solely on its talent. Larger agencies like CAA, William Morris Endeavor (WME) and United Talent Agency (UTA) **position their own brands over that of their clients**. By producing and packaging shows for networks, the talent becomes secondary to the broader business of creating content. While this is attractive to some, it only takes two hands to count the number of clients who chose to leave IF over the last twenty years in pursuit of the bigger opportunities these agencies claim to offer.

"Larger agencies sell clients on 'you're going to move up with us because we have so much leverage'," opines Cohen. **"What broadcasters fail to realize is that they are just a tiny cog in a giant machine, and that there's always someone better the agency is willing to replace them with tomorrow. To us, being a good agent means going on the long path to help our clients get better in their careers and make a real difference in their lives."**

3 things that stick out

- 1 importance of going to the right university *relate this to academic achievement now
- 2 finding an agent in college *relate this to keeping in contact with mentor
- 3 out performing my competition