Adam Bochart

Personal Philosophy

The Criticality of Internships

It is my belief that the broadcasting major is heavily based on past experience rather than *solely* current skills. With an increase and ease of access to high-end editing software and recording equipment, the job market would appear to be increasingly saturated with talent. In today’s market, almost anybody looking for a job in mass media knows how to write. Almost anybody knows how to use non-linear editing. Almost anybody knows how to run a camera. Jobs may seem plentiful and wide in their variety, but the amount of young adults entering the workforce with basic video knowledge is far beyond what it was years ago. Access plays a big part of that. Anybody can start a YouTube channel. The rise of YouTube as a distribution platform has only encouraged more and more people to enter into the video field. In an increasingly saturated talent pool, past experience starts to play a more crucial role. Look at it from the viewpoint of an employer. If two job applicants have close to the same skills, but one worked an internship with a production company while the other took the summer off, it makes sense that the former would seem more qualified. Real-world experience is not something one can teach in the classroom. I have learned more about my career goals from my two internships than I ever could in classroom or textbook. By the time I start graduate school, I will have had three internships, one of which hired me back for the next year. That is roughly 20 months of real-world experience. That already puts me more than a year and a half ahead of a 2017 college graduate with no internship/job experience. I feel like that is an invaluable statistic. Many times, these internships can lead to jobs right out of college. The amount of networking made possible just by spending three months with a company is a leg up on the competition. In this major, any advantage is a good advantage. If that means an additional 20 months of content for work on my demo reel, 20 months of professional interaction, 20 months of asking questions and networking, the gap in qualifications starts to become more distinct.

All this is not to say that skills are unimportant when searching for a job. The skills help in getting the first internship, and the skills and one internship lead to another internship, and this all compounds exponentially. The jobs train your skills and pad your resume, the skills and the resume get you better jobs that will train your skills etc. It’s a loop. And the sooner you can figure out that loop, the more successful I believe you will be.

In an increasingly saturated job market, I firmly believe that past experience is what will set applicants apart when looking for new hires. Past experience benefits applicants through networking and by showing a precedent that you not only have the skills good enough to work in this industry, but have the drive to succeed in a professional environment before leaving college. The skills and knowledge learned during internships are directly applicable to future jobs, and are not necessarily teachable in the classroom. In this field, an edge over competition is not only helpful, but imperative.