# #chatsportsbiz Recap: FAQs from Sports Industry Hopefuls- June 30th, 2016



When you’re a newbie in the sports industry, everything can seem overwhelming. What’s the right thing to say in an interview? How do you ask for a mentor? When’s the right time to introduce new ideas? How do you improve your networking abilities? Well fear no more, Bob Hamer (@SportsBizBob) asked Twitter users what  (keys) they would give to young professionals looking to make a successful career in the sports industry. Check out the great advice from people across the industry:

**Q1: How do you make yourself standout and more desirable for a job in sports?**

“Have idea of where you want career to go. Shows commitment & foresight. Best leaders love to help you grow”- **Macgregor Perkins, Sales Executive for Atlanta Falcons** (@The1Macgreogr)

It’s a great idea to have a 1, 5, and 10-year plan both professionally and personally. Talking about your goals also holds you accountable to them, do something today that will put you one step closer to your goal tomorrow.

“Conducting information interviews prior to job search is a great way to establish connections early on”- **Windy Dees, Associate Professor at University of Miami** (@getDeestweets)

As a potential employee you should want to know the office culture and the type of leader you would be reporting to and learning from. Try to learn as much as you can about the organization and department before you get to the interview.

Other Notes: anyone who wants to work in sports usually has a passion for what’s going on the field/court/rink, but you should show managers your passion/knowledge of the business, not the game. Show them you’re genuinely interested in working in sports (internships and educational focus) for the right reasons. Embrace the small tasks and perform them without complaints and to the best of your ability. Ask relevant questions in your interview!

**Q2: Networking early on is key, how do you build strong connections with industry pros, when they’re so busy?**

“Respect their time. When asking to connect: be coachable, be curious and be concise. W.A.I.T.= Why Am I Talking- **David Sedei, Account Executive, Sacramento Kings** (@DavidSedei)

When making connections, it’s important to be open to new ideas and advice, show people you’re willing to take on a new perspective (especially if they’ve been in the industry many more years than you).

“Once I establish a connection I periodically check in either about the industry or just social. Simply put: keep in touch” –**Lenore Shimon, Social Media Assistant at Rivals.com** (@lenoreshimon)

Don’t let someone forget about you just because you’re not in a positon to see them in person. We live in the digital age; it takes two minutes to send an email just to check in with someone.

Other Notes: Focus on the relationship and not what you can get out of it, people don’t want to feel like they’re being used for their position. Don’t be afraid to make an effort, most of the people you’re trying to connect with have been in your shoes and are willing to help out if you make the effort.

**Q3:** **When interviewing for a job in sports, what are keys to getting an offer?**

“Be yourself. Be confident and show you want the opportunity. Give specific example as to why you are a good fit”- **Andrew Sidney, Manager of Group Tickets and Inside Sales at Houston Rockets** (@Andrew\_Sidney1)

Managers love concrete examples of how you would be the best fit for the role, this is normally some sort of experience in the area or any technical skills that would be applicable for the position.

“Are you able to sell yourself? Gotta listen to what team’s needs are and show how you provide that solution”- **Ian (@winklmann)**

Be the solution to their needs! Show them how valuable you could be to their organization and give them no choice but to hire you.

Other Notes: show you want the job, and ask for it! Know what their ideal candidate looks like and make sure you show those characteristics and skills. Study the job description’s qualities wanted and skills section, during the interview make sure you highlight those that align with your capabilities. This is the time to show your professional personality, managers want energy and excitement on their team.

**Q4: What’s the biggest mistake young job seekers make?**

“Don’t take time to understand job applying for…either focus on team name or league. Not job”- **Brett Zalaski, Founder & Trainer of Get After It Sales** (@bzalaski)

The job you’re applying for is about the position and people you’ll work with, not the team name or league. Demonstrate that you understand that during interviews.

“Lack of follow up. Don’t send thank you note of f/u to see if they got job. Shows lack of desired and lack of persistency”- **Mike Fuhrman, Premium Sales Manager of Minnesota Timberwolves & Lynx** (@MBF511)

You should send a thank you note (email) first thing in the morning after an interview, make sure to provide a personal touch and mention something specifically about your time with them. Following up is actually how I got my current internship so I strongly encourage everyone to do it!

Other Notes: No one likes a coworker who has a negative attitude, try to put negative thoughts aside and show a positive attitude because everyone appreciates a positive person. Even if you’re out of school you’re still continually learning, keep up with industry trends and how your role differs across the industry.

**Q5: Is graduate school necessary right after bachelor’s? Or should you take work experience?**

“A grad degree isn’t a golden ticket- it’s entirely up to your motivation to make it valuable”- **Jonathan Hawks, Service Executive at Ontario Reign** (@jehawks)

If you decide to go to graduate school, don’t expect you automatically have an edge over everyone else who decided not to go to graduate school. Make everyday of your program count: volunteer, improve your critical thinking/problem solving skills, earn the best grades, etc.

“I think education and experience are the right mix, the level of education and the experience should not overshadow”- **Danny Kambel, Sports Information Director at LeTourneau University** (@DannyKambel)

It’s important to know the business components of the sports industry, but it’s still equally as important to have experience in working with the industry.

Other Notes: No matter the advice you hear; this is a very personal decision to make. You need to take some time and really evaluate about the pros and cons for each choice. At the end of the day you need to do what’s best for you and your plan/goals. If you do obtain a graduate degree before your first job don’t let that go to your head, you’re still working at an entry-level position, make sure you remember that. If you have a job offer after completing your undergraduate degree, take it! There’s always the ability to go back to school, or work something out with the organization to work and get your graduate degree.

That’s our recap for this edition of #chatsportsbiz. Don’t forget to join us on Twitter next time on Thursday, July 14th at 6pm PST. Make sure you’re following Bob Hamer (@SportsBizBob) to catch our next topic!

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