

Listen to a public relations executive talking about her studies and job.

Optional exercise (The answers are at the bottom of the page).

Put the following events into the order that they actually happened according to the speaker.

- a. I built up a list of contacts in the media and PR industries.
 - b. I got promoted to Account Executive.
 - c. I met lots of experienced professionals
 - d. I did a business course.
 - e. I got a job as Account Coordinator.
 - f. I joined two associations.
 - g. I started an internship.
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When I was at university I did a business course that covered advertising, marketing, sales and public relations. I'm really glad I did this particular course as, although it was vast, it gave me an overview of business in general and the different careers in communications.

While I was studying I realised that I was most interested in Public Relations and so I joined a couple of associations so I could start networking before leaving university. Through one of the organisations I joined I was able to meet lots of experienced professionals who gave me advice on getting into the industry. I was also offered an internship in my final year. This meant I could build up my portfolio even before I'd finished studying.

I think that it's extremely important, especially today when there are so many people wanting to work in PR, to do an internship to a. get a foot in the door and b. have more on your c.v. than simply your studies. You have to show willing and prove that you're an enthusiastic, ambitious person who wants to succeed. It was hard studying and working at the same time but at least it prepared me for the deadlines and long hours you're expected to put in with a PR job.

My internship also meant that I built up a list of contacts in the media and PR industry itself. Both areas were very important in helping me get my first job as an Account Coordinator with a corporate public relations agency. I had to write and proofread flyers, keep track of media databases and other admin type stuff. It wasn't the most exciting of jobs but at least it gave me a better insight into PR and helped me decide what I wanted to do after. I didn't have much journalism experience either before working for this company so I learnt that as I went along.

After about nine months, when I felt ready to tackle something a bit meatier, I applied for a job, still within the same company, with more responsibility. I became an Account Executive and very quickly felt at home in my new job. That was about two years ago. I've much more contact with our clients and I play a large role in developing public relations strategies. I still do a lot of writing with press releases but I'm also more involved in organising special events like press conferences.

I love what I do because I get to meet loads of different, interesting people every day. You have to be quite outgoing and able to communicate easily which I guess is more of a talent than a skill. If I had to start again I'd choose to do a journalism option at university as employers like you to have a journalism background. Otherwise, getting an internship was the best thing I've ever done and I'd do it again, no problem.

Answers: 1 d, 2 f, 3 c, 4 g, 5 a, 6 e, 7 b