Week 2 Written Assignment:

Informational Interview

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 After conducting the interview, I feel more motivated and relieved after finding out first hand what the job experience is like from someone who has been in the field. Most importantly, I hope to end the interview with having the ease of mind that I have successfully gotten my name out there in the industry, and have networked and created a professional relationship with the other person enough to where I can contact them in the future for a job, or see if they know of any other openings that have not yet been posted on job searches online.

 Before going to meet up for the informational interview, I first formulated questions that pertained to the organization and the specific field of communications industry to better relate to the individual I interviewed. It is always helpful to have a well-prepared interview upon the actual interview being conducted. In order to better prepare myself for the informational interview, I first strategically selected someone in the communications industry that appealed to me, rather than just select any industry sector. Once I determined a few individuals whom would be good candidates for the interview, I simply called them. The individual who worked for a communications department that focuses on online advertising in the Orange County area was my selection, as they work in the area I wish to work in also, therefor having more tailored answers that are relatable to what I can expect. After I selected who I would interview, I then researched more about the organization she worked at, and started with the company website. While researching about the organization, I made sure to find out about their mission and vision for the organization. Furthermore, I began to lay out a list of questions to ask that I could not find information on the web site, and made sure the obvious answers that I could find via their website were not included. I prepared first general questions. Keeping in mind my objective to network for my future endeavor, I prepared the questions regarding suggestions to my resume, and recommendations toward the end.

 I was lucky to enough to find an individual that lived in Huntington Beach for the interview. I met with a gal named Ceara Ingram for the informative interview. Her personal contact information is (480) 205-1252.I conducted the interview at her office headquarters located in Huntington Beach at Marisol Marketing (http://marisol.vpweb.com). The company’s telephone and email to contact them directly are 847-438-1351 or email at rpwalker@comcast.net.

 The general consensuses of my questions were taken from our textbook on page 62. These questions asked about what she likes most/ least about her job, how she chose the field she works in, and other questions in regards to the skills set and education required to obtain the career and be successful while in the position. I wanted the beginning of the interview to be about the job, and start lightly. The end of the interview consisted of questions asking for suggestions and feedback, as well as recommendations to other friends or colleagues in the field that can provide advice. I wanted to demonstrate that I was curious and hardworking, asking questions that reflect my seriousness about entering the field.

 I learned how to clearly define the exact industry I which to obtain a career in, and better compare my skills and knowledge to the requirements needed for the job. This better prepped me to look for a career and head in the right direction relevant to my wants and needs, as well as appropriately linking up my skill sets to an industry that requires similar attributes. I also learned how to not be afraid to take action, and make cold calls to those whom I wanted to interview. The research led me to develop a strategy and begin to implement tactics, which gave me the confidence needed to follow through and take action. By researching and developing a strategic approach to obtain my desired career, I became more excited rather than nervous to reach out for the informative interview. Lastly, through the SOSTAC approach, I learned to ask for feedback and suggestions from professionals about my resume, to help me formulate a well-rounded and applicable resume. Overall, I feel more confident and enthusiastic to begin my career pursuits in the communications industry.

The Interview

1. Individual being interviewed name: Ceara Ingram

2. What is the name of the organization you work for? Where are the headquarters located?

My company is Marisol marketing, a digital marketing consultancy I developed after years on the client and agency sides, based in Huntington Beach, CA.

3. What do you like most about your job?

The best part of my job is providing a results-driven service to my clients, achieving and exceeding their expectations and sharing my expertise in the field with them. I also love being able to work from home and have flexible hours!

4. What are some of the more difficult parts of your job?

Dealing with challenges outside of my control, from overcoming issues with tracking metrics to breaking down internal barriers on the client's side to interacting with 3rd party companies that may not have my client's best interest in mind.

5. How did you choose this field?

After graduating from college, I spent 3 years working on the client side, building an online marketing program from the ground up at a luxury resort, and 2 years as an Account Manager at an agency, where I represented multiple clients across various verticals, directing internal teams and maintaining excellent client relationships. I loved my time in both of these positions, which continually challenged me and required me to not only use creativity in problem solving and build strong communication skills, but gave me the opportunity to set and achieve goals that were both important to my team and to my clients.

6. Do you work alone or in teams?

I own my company and perform all of the work myself, however I do work with teams: each of my client's internal marketing teams as well as teams for the industry products that I use.

7. How is the field developing and changing?

The field of marketing has changed dramatically with the emergence of digital, and even more so with the exponential growth of social marketing within the last few years. Gone are the days of traditional push marketing, and here to stay is the interactive marketing that digital and social require. Even further, marketing teams must now deal with not only promoting their business through on and offline channels, but they must go further to acknowledge where their customers are in the social space, interact with them, resolve any issues and create their own voice without blatantly pushing their marketing objectives on these consumers.

8. What are the most important skills to have for success in this field?

A strong ability to lead and develop strategies for either internal teams or clients, good communication skills in order to convey and uphold your ideas, organizational skills to ensure tasks stay on track and you are meeting your goals, and nowadays, a strong knowledge of the digital and social space.

9. Is a master's degree required for advancement in the field?

I don't believe that a master’s degree is as important now as it used to be. There are several ongoing certification programs that I think almost hold as much weight as a degree. In digital marketing, things are changing so fast that a degree would be a good foundation, but the ongoing seminars, groups and certifications would keep you at the top of your game.

10. What advice do you have for me as I think about finding a career in the communications industry?

Explore a variety of industries that interest you, but find what truly makes you happy. There are marketing/communications opportunities everywhere, so bringing your passion to your job by working in an area that makes you happy and keeps you interested will be the most important in the long haul.

11. Can you recommend friends or colleagues with whom you think it would be good for me to talk with?

Yes, I would recommend my colleague Serah who works at my previous agency ethology, and my friend Elissa who is the marketing manager at a collection of high-end clubs in Arizona.

12. What is the typical career path for someone in this field?

I don't think there is a "typical" career path in this field because a marketer can be born of someone fresh out of college or someone who is self-taught or mentored. In addition, someone could start at a business in a completely different position and move into marketing because of their innovative ideas and communication skills.

13. Can you make any suggestions to my portfolio, resume, and cover page?

She wrote specific suggestions directly on the papers I provided her with, mainly tailoring my resume to describe skills and knowledge that fits the requirements for her specific organization.