

---

# Getting Started in Broadcasting

Reprinted from  
the Annual Report 1979/80, 1978/79  
of The John and Mary R. Markle Foundation  
by Lloyd N. Morrisett, President

50 Rockefeller Plaza New York, New York 10020 (212) 489-6655

---

## Getting Started in Broadcasting

Out of the one million young men and women who will receive degrees from America's colleges and universities this spring — and the millions of others who will graduate from high schools and technical schools — a sizable number are likely to look to broadcasting for their first jobs. The lure of a career in radio or television for this generation is not difficult to understand. As a group, they have spent at least as much time in front of their TV sets as they have in school; television has inescapably left its imprint on their dreams and imaginations. As the most avid consumers of popular music in the country, they have also had radio as a constant companion. And very likely, in some parts of the country, they are already acquainted with the new media brat on the block — cable television — which may one day open up vast opportunities for their talents.

Taken together, radio and television seem to offer everything — glamour, creative work, exciting new technologies, huge salaries, and the chance to grow with an industry that is growing in all directions. It is no wonder that many young people see their future in broadcasting's glowing electronic rainbow.

There may be a pot of gold at the end of that rainbow, but getting started in the industry can be very difficult and frustrating. Over the last ten years, I have talked with many young men and women who want to start their careers in radio or television. No matter what their background, they express similar concerns: How do I find my first job? Given my skills and interests, what sort of job should I look for? Where will this first job take me in my career? What are the working conditions in the industry really like?

From our work in mass communications at the Markle Foundation, we are in a

position to offer some partial answers. In addition, I will draw in this report on my own conversations with leaders in the industry, on a small research literature that deals with the subject, and on a series of interviews last summer with people in radio and television.<sup>1</sup> By giving young job seekers a better notion of what to expect, perhaps we can reduce some of the anxiety that accompanies the start of any career, and give them a little perspective that may help them sort out their future priorities.<sup>2</sup>

### Where the Jobs Are

Anyone looking for a job in broadcasting (or narrowcasting as cable is sometimes called because it can reach smaller, more specialized audiences) quickly discovers that jobs for beginners are scarce. To find out why that is so, let's look at the numbers. The most recent figures from the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) show that about 190,500 people are employed in radio, television, and cable in the United States; since these figures are always somewhat out of date, the current total is probably closer to 200,000.

It is much harder to pin down figures on the number of people who are looking for jobs. A recent annual survey of colleges and universities that offer course work in radio and television shows more than 17,000 juniors and seniors majoring in broadcasting, plus almost 2,000 students studying for a master's degree in the field, and approximately 3,600 junior college students in broadcasting. Many more job seekers will come from other majors, and from high schools and technical schools. Recognizing that the above figures are probably a small part of the total, it might be conservatively estimated that a minimum of 20,000 new people seek jobs in the field each year.

Some observers have suggested that there is a yearly turnover of about 10 percent in

broadcasting jobs, which means that about 20,000 openings occur when people in the industry leave their positions. Of course, many of these people are moving to another job in broadcasting, leaving fewer total vacancies for beginners. It is doubtful that more than 10,000 new people are hired by the industry each year. This means that at best there are two people looking for every available starting position, and for some of the more desirable jobs that promise entree to the industry — for example, the pages at NBC — there may be one hundred or more applicants for each of the few openings.

Where are those jobs? Unfortunately, there is no information available on the numbers and types of jobs that have been offered to beginners in the past. We can, however, get an idea of the distribution of jobs among the various broadcasting media from the FCC's most recent figures:

	Number of jobs	% industry
Cable television	21,294	11
Commercial television	54,666	29
Non-commercial television	9,852	5
Commercial radio	72,193	38
FM radio	11,086	6
Non-commercial radio	3,785	2
Broadcasting headquarters	17,666	9
	190,542	100%

Somewhat surprisingly, though television seems to be the pervasive medium, there are actually more jobs in radio. Not only does radio employ more people than television, it is ordinarily an easier place for a beginner to get a first job. As for cable, though new systems are opening across the country and the fledgling medium is attracting a lot of attention, it accounts, as of now, for only a small percentage (11 percent) of total employment in the industry.

The overall employment picture in the industry is not encouraging. For that reason, many young job seekers might think about trying to work first in an allied field and then entering broadcasting later. People who work in advertising, talent agencies, independent

---

production companies (which make programs for TV), and industrial communications (which offers experience in various media skills, for example making training films), and other businesses that provide services to broadcasting sometimes learn the skills and make the contacts that enable them to find jobs in the industry through a side door.

For a lucky few, however, it is sometimes possible to start directly in the field — although luck isn't the main ingredient. The jobs will go to those who have an edge in talent or skill, who are highly motivated and persistent, and who go about hunting for jobs in ways that are likely to be successful. To see how it's done, consider a few success stories.

## Radio

Frank is twenty-five years old and earning \$12,000 a year as news director for a suburban FM radio station. How did he get where he is? After graduating from high school, he had embarked on an acting career, but, deciding it was not what he wanted, he went back to school to study radio. While in college he had several part-time jobs and two internships at local radio stations. When he began looking for a full-time job, he sent out resumes and tapes to radio stations located in his area of the country, obtaining names and addresses from *The Broadcasting Yearbook*.<sup>3</sup> Every week or so he would call to check for openings, and he kept sending additional tapes. Finally, he was offered a job as a weekend music person at his present FM station, and although his main interest was news, he took the job. Later he had a chance to fill in for the station's newsman, who was on vacation. Shortly thereafter, when the regular newsman left, Frank was offered the job. He is now a one-man newsroom, doing all the newscasts and sometimes going out to cover stories. He works long hours but hopes to be able to hire a second person in a few

months. After two or three years of learning this job, he expects to move on to a larger station.

Judy, who is in her mid-twenties, was recently hired in the sales department of a medium-sized radio station at a training salary of \$800 a month. A history major in college, she came in contact with radio through a friend who was working at a local station. She decided to go into radio sales, selling commercial time, but she could not land a job at first, partly because of her lack of experience, but also, she is convinced, because the people who interviewed her did not believe women were particularly effective in radio and TV sales. As a result, she went into selling cosmetics in New York, later became a regional saleswoman in the garment industry, and then, with a good sales record to show, was hired by a small city newspaper to sell ad space. She still wanted to work in radio, however, so she began calling a few station managers and sales managers. This time she not only had experience, she demonstrated with repeated calls that she did not give up easily. She was hired at a small station, but after six months moved to her present job at a bigger station which is part of a broadcast group that offers her a variety of future opportunities.

Bill, who is now in his thirties, has become general manager of a radio station in a small city after having worked for about ten years at several other radio jobs dating back to his college days. While studying for a degree in engineering, he had a part-time job at the local radio station, which enabled him to get a foot in the door for his first job after college as a disc jockey for a small radio station. At one station or another, Bill had a chance to be a sportscaster and also helped out in sales. Moving finally to a station in a larger market, he had a succession of responsibilities, and



when the general manager left, he was given the job. After two years, Bill took over as general manager of a station in a larger market.

Frank and Judy are just starting their careers in radio while Bill has already achieved some success as a manager and is thus well on his way. All three demonstrate that what employers are looking for is experience. Judy found a way in by getting sales experience outside radio and then gradually moving into the field. Frank and Bill got experience in college work or part-time jobs before landing their first jobs.

Even the smallest stations prefer to hire experienced people, but since there is a steady migration of personnel from smaller to larger stations, the small ones must often settle for people who have only part-time or volunteer experience; or those just out of school who have worked in a college station or at least concentrated in their studies on some area of broadcasting. Part-time employment, volunteer work, or the summer internships that some stations offer (some with and some without pay) can be a big asset when one is competing for first jobs. For beginning jobs, it is also true that local residents are favored in hiring. In sales and on-the-air work, knowledge of the community is a definite asset.

Another lesson that can be drawn from these stories is that small radio stations need people who can do many things. A disc jockey may have to fill in for the sportscaster. An announcer may be needed to help out in sales. A secretary may be asked to cover a news story. In a small radio station there are enough jobs to be done for almost everyone to have an opportunity, at one time or another, to try something else. Getting a job, almost any job, is far more important than getting right into news, or music, or sales, — whatever your first choice is. Small stations need

---

versatile people who are willing to try anything.

The staff of a typical small to medium-sized radio station will include about nine-teen to twenty-five people. If there is an engineer on the staff, he is likely to be part-time; to deal with complex technical problems, the station usually calls on outside specialists. Here is what an average full-time staff looks like:

General manager	1
Sales	6-8
Announcers	4-6
Sports (if any)	1
News (if any)	1
Clerical	2-3
Part-time	4-5
	<hr/>
	19-25

Aside from clerical employees, most staff members are engaged in sales or on-the-air work (announcers, news people, and sports-caster). These are the jobs with the greatest turnover. Good sales people quickly develop reputations and contacts within the broadcasting field. On-the-air talent can be heard by everyone, including other station managers, and is often lured away by local competitors or larger stations.

Since large stations demand previous experience, and very few offer training programs of any kind, first jobs in radio will almost invariably be at small stations. For salespeople, the road ahead can lead to a larger station, or perhaps into television sales; if successful with a large station, they will be very well paid. On-the-air talent can also look forward to moving to larger stations and the glamour jobs in the industry. For people who are so inclined and have the ability, another path leads to station management.

For the potential station manager, experience with a variety of jobs, and often with several stations, is a virtual necessity. The station manager must not only attend to the business at the station, overseeing budgetary matters, sales and expenditures, he is also in

charge of personnel and has final responsibility to the station's owners and to the public for programming. The precise division of these responsibilities will depend on the strengths and interests of the station manager, owner, and key personnel. Several people may act as a team to get the total job done. To some extent, all of the station manager's functions must be learned on the job, but many knowledgeable people in the industry believe that business and/or legal training can be helpful. For someone in radio who intends to make a career in management, one or two courses in communications law and a few business courses would be advisable. A master's degree in business administration would be a significant advantage, if combined with several years of work experience. (Indeed, several top business schools recommend or require that applicants for the MBA degree have at least two years of business experience first.)

Finally, women and minority-group members interested in radio have an unusually good chance of getting first jobs with smaller stations. Under its affirmative-action program, when licenses are being renewed, the FCC examines the personnel profiles of all licensed radio stations with more than five employees to see if suitable proportions of these groups are being hired. Qualified women and minority members are thus much in demand and tend to move quickly to larger stations. Almost all of the smaller stations have trouble finding and keeping them. This means that the entry-level competition is easier for such people if they can demonstrate they are able to do the job.<sup>4</sup>

## Television

Jack is only in his late twenties, but earns more than \$50,000 a year as sales account executive with a television station that is a network affiliate. Jack, who has a college

degree in radio and film, started out as a page at NBC in New York, one of the few entry-level positions at the networks, at \$44 per week. Pages are hired with the understanding that they will have a chance to learn, to meet people, and eighteen months to find another job at NBC or elsewhere. Before long, Jack had gone to work for the NBC radio network, where he assisted in the preparation of air-time schedules. While there, however, he became interested in sales. After working in sales administration and research for a short time, he went to a local television station as a salesman. It took him another three years, during which he had two more sales jobs, one in radio and one in TV, before he landed his present position.

As is true in radio, television sales is a fast-moving area. Jack's case illustrates that it offers many opportunities to move rapidly into ever more demanding and higher-paying jobs. In sales, people like Jack get to know the competition, and they know him. When salespeople in television want to move, they usually know where the openings are and whom to talk to about them.

Linda's first job after secretarial school was with the sales department of an independent television station. She did not have a career plan; she simply used her secretarial skills to go to work in television. Once there, she found that it was the station's policy to advertise all job openings within the station first, and to give preference in filling them to employees. She kept alert to the job postings and after nine months was shifted to another secretarial job, this time in personnel. After six more months, she applied for an opening as a production assistant, and is now earning \$15,000. (A production assistant may do everything from taking notes on the set to going for coffee. Nevertheless, he or she is part of the team that puts together programs and thus gets a closeup view of the most

---

creative aspects of television.)

Jim always wanted to be a reporter but had not planned to go into television. In college, he majored in English and worked on the student newspaper. After receiving a master's degree in journalism, he went to work as a reporter for one of the two newspapers in his home city. After moving to another city and another job as a reporter, he found that the local television station was looking for a newsman. Even though Jim had never been on the air, the station manager felt he had the poise and speaking voice to do the job. He was hired, and has been in television for two years, now earning \$25,000. Jim's education and training had thus helped him to move into television when his interests changed. His reputation as a reporter for the local newspaper had helped enormously in landing the TV job.

The three cases illustrate that the paths to a good job in television are diverse — even somewhat devious.<sup>5,6</sup> There are not only fewer jobs in television than in radio, but salaries are generally higher, thus attracting more experienced people. Television jobs are also likely to be more specialized, demanding specific training or experience. The staff of a television station may range in size from the sixteen employed in KGIN in Grand Rapids, Nebraska, one of the smallest, to the three hundred and eighty-eight employed by WNBC-TV in New York, one of the largest (1978 figures from the FCC are the most recent available). WTOL, an average-sized station in Toledo, Ohio, employed ninety-five people in 1980 divided as follows:

Managers and station officials	20
Professionals (producers, newspeople, anchor- persons, salespeople)	25
Technicians (engineers, cameramen, etc.)	30
Clerical	20
	95

Except perhaps for some clerical jobs, few of

the positions above are open to beginners. One of the only ways to gain experience, therefore, is through an internship program. A number of television stations, both commercial and public, offer such programs, and while there is no assurance that interns will eventually be hired, the training does enable them to become familiar with how a television station works. It also gives them a chance to become acquainted with people who may later be sources of jobs, and thus serves much the same function as a part-time job in radio. It may be a way in.

The details of the internships vary. Some are in cooperation with local colleges and universities, and provide short-term (for example, thirteen-week) experience in a single area of television work, such as community affairs, writing promotions, newswriting, or production. Other programs offer interns a year of training in paid positions. For example, at the public-television station in Chicago, WTTW, an intern receives around \$9,000 and is exposed to all facets of station operation. However, competition for the three internships each year is fierce. The station receives several hundred applications, many of them from people with graduate training.

As previously noted, there are other, more indirect routes into television. Jack proved his mettle in radio sales first, but that is only one obvious example of how skills learned in closely related businesses are transferable to television. Other examples are the buyer of TV time for an advertising agency who goes to work for the programming department of a TV station, or a film editor at an independent production company who moves to a TV network.

Like radio, television is also looking for people with business training. The networks recruit several MBA's a year for management-training programs or such beginning-level managerial jobs as sales account executive,



business manager in a local station, financial analyst, or market researcher. Some of the larger television stations also recruit a few people directly from business schools. Because of the appeal of these jobs, the networks and stations can choose among the best talent: they go only to the top schools and give preference to graduates who, in addition to their business training, have experience in broadcasting or an allied industry.

The world of television is like that of radio in that employees move steadily from stations in small markets to stations in larger markets: in television, they also move from independent stations to network-owned stations or to the networks themselves. Again, as in radio, this means that it will usually be easier to find a beginning job with a small station than to start in a major city. The trouble for the neophyte is that even the smaller stations are able to recruit people with experience or advanced training. Another problem may be the greater specialization of jobs in television as compared to radio. Most nonmanagerial positions — for example, cameramen, actors, electricians — are union jobs with tight rules that make it difficult to obtain varied experience. There is also some union organization at the larger radio stations as, for example, with before-the-microphone personnel. At a small radio station, there is an air of informality and “everyone does everything.” At a television station, the staff is likely to be more specialized and organized, with more rules and hierarchy, so that it is harder to get a chance to try your hand — or demonstrate your capabilities — at some new skill.

### Cable Television

When Joan was finishing college, she was unsure of her career interests. She had majored in marketing and vaguely assumed she would go into retail merchandising.

During her last semester she read that a new cable television company was about to begin operating in a neighboring city. After finding out a bit about the cable industry, she decided to drive over and talk to people at the company. Although she had no experience, Joan was offered a job as a salesperson to begin immediately after her graduation, largely on the basis of her college training. Excited by a new industry and unexpected challenge, she accepted, at a starting salary of \$10,000. After two years, the company began operating in another city, and Joan, who had built an impressive sales record by then, was named assistant manager of sales and marketing for the new system. In the meantime, a large multiple-owner of cable systems had acquired the company, and thus Joan now sees many more opportunities for upward movement in her career.

Jack graduated from college last summer with a degree in electrical engineering and went right to work in the construction and installation of a new cable system in his hometown. Jack put up lines, strung up amplifiers on them, connected them to homes and to the "head end" (center of transmission). After only six months on the job, he is already being given more responsibility. While he took the job initially as a stopgap, until he could find something better, he now realizes that in an expanding industry like cable, his experience will be in demand. He has revised his original plans and is going to spend at least another year in his job to find out how well he can do as far as salary and promotion are concerned. At the same time, he intends to visit two or three other companies in neighboring cities to see what they might be able to offer him. Jack is now earning \$12,000.

Because cable is growing faster than other broadcast media, its staff requirements are somewhat different from those of radio

and the older television industry. New cable systems are being built or planned in many cities, and pay cable options such as Home Box Office are being added to older systems. As might be expected under these conditions, there is a heavy demand for technicians, as well as for sales and marketing personnel. Most companies prefer experience, but even the larger ones that can attract people away from smaller companies have found it necessary to hire entry-level people and to train them. Several of the larger companies already have, or plan, training programs for technical and managerial personnel. Some large cable-system operators, such as Teleprompter, hire managerial personnel from headquarters. In most companies, beginning positions are handled by local systems.

Cable systems can be as small as Big Timber Cable in Big Timber, Montana, which employed just one person in 1978, or as large as the Mission Cable Network in San Diego, which had a staff of four hundred and seventy-five in that year. A fairly typical large system is Oceanic Cablevision of Honolulu, which in 1980 employed one hundred and four persons as follows:

Managers and station officials	7
Professionals (newspersons or producers)	2
Technicians	14
Salespeople	8
Clerical	27
Craftspeople (installers, etc.)	40
Semiskilled (office maintenance)	6
	<hr/>
	104

As this profile shows, cable systems employ relatively few professionals. At present, they are looking mostly for people trained in technical work and sales and marketing. But the industry is likely to be seeking specialized workers of all kinds to handle complex new hardware and a likely demand for more local programming in the years ahead.

New cable systems are being built with forty-eight or more channels as compared to the earlier systems' twelve channels. New pay

channels such as Home Box Office are being added. Cable systems are already offering a number of new services, among them channels that monitor your home for fires and burglaries, and are planning others. All this means that cable will need more people in programming, in the specialized areas of home services, in community relations, in legal, financial, and business areas, in publicity and advertising. If experience is any guide, many people in cable television will start out in one direction, only to be diverted into others when unexpected opportunities come along.

It is likely that the National Cable Television Association (NCTA) will be developing programs to assist the industry in recruiting and training. NCTA recently hired a Director of Human Resources, who will presumably play such a role. In addition, NCTA is a good source of information on new systems that are opening and other industry trends.<sup>7</sup> A professional organization, the Society of Cable Television Engineers, can assist people looking for positions on the technical side of the industry; the society will attempt to match job-seekers with openings that come to its attention.<sup>8</sup>

### Choosing the First Job

Looking for a first job can be both an exhilarating and a wrenching experience. The search marks a young person's entry into the adult world, promising increased self-reliance and opportunities for novel experience, but also calling for the acceptance of new responsibilities, and raising issues of success or failure. Under the circumstances, the job hunter sometimes loses sight of those things that make a job, especially a first job, truly rewarding or at least satisfactory. For it is usually not the glamour or excitement surrounding an industry that determines job satisfaction; rather, it is the specific day-to-



day working conditions. The young person considering radio, television, or any other field would be well-advised to keep in mind a number of practical questions: Is the salary sufficient to meet my needs? Can I find satisfactory living arrangements near the office, and can I manage meals, transportation, and other living expenses? Who are the people I will work with, and can I like and respect them? Who will be my boss or supervisor, and what will that person expect of me? Do others like to work with the boss? Who are the people with whom I will be working most closely? What about the space I will be working in — do the lighting, furnishings, amenities suggest that the company cares about the people who work there?

Some of these questions about a company and a job will be easy to answer. Others must be investigated, and still others will require time and considered judgment. It may be possible to talk to a few people in the company in addition to those who do the interviewing. It will be especially useful to talk with others of similar age and experience who are relatively new to the company.

To generalize about working conditions in broadcasting is difficult. Radio is different from television, and both differ from cable in many ways. Large broadcasting companies tend to be more structured and formal than smaller companies. Further, many jobs in television are unionized, with their duties carefully defined by the contract. Radio is less unionized and staff members may have many and diverse responsibilities when there is no contract. Finally, every company or station tends to have its own character.

One aspect of working conditions that distinguishes broadcasting from other industries is a more urgent sense of time. Radio and TV stations run on daily schedules and much of the work is tied to those schedules. A news program that is scheduled for 6 pm must go on at that time and not 6:30 or even 6:01.

---

Technical and on-the-air staff must show up in time to prepare themselves. News copy must be ready, and commercials must be aired at precisely the time allotted to them. Broadcasting is an industry based on the scheduled use of time, and, in a very real sense, that time is money. For people who work in it, that means deadlines — and very little leeway for those who cannot adhere to a strict regimen.

### Long-Range Priorities

After one finds a job, it may take time to feel really comfortable in it. No matter what one's training, there are always new things to learn. Working relationships with people take time to establish. And new employees must become familiar with their company's calendar of activities, usually organized on a yearly basis, before they can fully understand what is happening and what is expected of them. Regularly scheduled planning, auditing, board meetings, special sales efforts, and seasonal audience ratings can have an effect throughout an organization. Most of these events have their own deadlines and call for action by a range of employees. As a result, it may take as long as a year before most new employees can fully evaluate a new job, decide how well it suits them, and begin to think about future career opportunities.

It is also useful to realize that while first jobs may be important, they are seldom lifetime commitments. The average person will probably have several other jobs before settling into one for five years or longer. All the people we have looked at in radio, television, and cable have changed jobs at least once — often several times — even when the direction of their careers may have remained constant. Between the ages of twenty and thirty, most people indulge in a certain amount of occupational experimentation. At the same time, they are learning new

skills, developing new interests, and gaining experience and judgment. The long-term career decisions can wait for ten years or so. This is not to say that good early job choices can't give one a head start on a career. But it does suggest that one need not fear getting stuck in a first job and closing off all future opportunities.

As we have seen, in radio, television, or cable, one frequently runs into the unexpected. The person who starts out in radio sales may find that she is drawn to advertising — which she may never have thought about seriously. Another person planning to be an announcer may discover he has managerial skills and interests.

Just as young men and women learn more about their own talents and interests in their first jobs, they also become shrewder in appraising potential new employers. For those who have been around broadcasting, a glance and a few conversations are usually enough to identify a well-run radio station or one that is poorly run. It is easy enough to determine if a sales unit is managed effectively. As evaluating working conditions becomes easier, the satisfaction of fundamental personal values becomes more important. At first, simply finding a job and earning enough to live on may be sufficient. By the time a person is thirty or certainly by forty, questions about personal values and long-term goals become increasingly important. For one person, financial reward may become vital; for another, creative opportunities may be more important. One person will want to live in New York, another in California. Not only do these personal values vary from person to person, they may vary for the same person at different times of his or her life. For a twenty-five year old, the chance to travel may be a strong value; the fifty year old may prefer to travel very little or not at all. Salary may be unimportant to a single person of twenty, but of vital interest when that same person is forty

and has two children in college.

Long-range job satisfaction is probably best achieved by those who are able to develop fairly clear ideas of who they are and what they want. The following list suggests some of the values that might be considered when evaluating a given job or career. You may want to add to the list or change it to fit your own values.

- **Personal growth:** what are the opportunities to develop skills, knowledge, and interests?
- **Creative opportunity:** will I have the chance to develop new ideas or projects?
- **Quality of life:** what are conditions like during working hours and outside of them? What kind of people do I work with, what is the general atmosphere, how much pressure is there?
- **Springboard:** does this job provide a good base for going on to a better one?
- **Security:** is the job relatively free from the threat of quick change? Does it provide a long-term future?
- **Immediate financial reward:** how good is the present salary?
- **Long-term financial reward:** looking ahead five years or more, are the financial rewards likely to prove equal to, or greater than, those that might be found elsewhere?
- **Achievement:** will I be encouraged in the job to develop my skills and talents as much as possible, and will my contribution be fully recognized?
- **Public service:** does the job entail work that benefits the public?
- **Professional associations:** how good is the job in bringing about congenial and satisfying professional contacts?
- **Professional interests:** how good is the job in satisfying the range of my professional interests? If I am in news, for example, will I have a chance to get out and cover stories, or get a tryout as an anchor? If I am a lawyer most interested in litigation or corporate acquisitions, will I be called upon to handle these matters?

---

## Persistence Pays

To sum up, there is no easy road to a first job in broadcasting. Job seekers are in a buyers' market. Broadcasting places a heavy premium on experience, and beginners are confronted with the chicken-and-egg problem of how to get experience when they can't find jobs. Further, the industry as a whole is highly fragmented, with many independent employers, and there are few central sources of information about jobs,<sup>9</sup> let alone agencies that offer placement or counseling services. Since broadcasting companies do not find it necessary to recruit employees as a rule, there are few useful and efficient personnel departments.

Yet, for the person who is talented, skilled, and dedicated, the jobs are there. Broadcasting is probably not a place to look if you simply want an interesting job but are not really committed to the field. On the other hand, if you are determined to break in, persistent in your efforts, and willing to start in something that may not be precisely to your liking, in order to move toward your real goal, there is likely to be a place for you.

## Footnotes

<sup>1</sup>I want to thank Stephen Majercik for his help in preparing this essay.

<sup>2</sup>The Television Information Office, 745 Fifth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10151 (212-759-6800) can provide a bibliography on careers in television that includes some radio and film references.

<sup>3</sup>*The Broadcasting Yearbook*, Broadcasting Publications Inc., Washington, D.C.

<sup>4</sup>The National Association of Broadcasters, 1771 N Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036 (202-293-3500), started an employment clearinghouse in 1973 to help women and minorities gain entry into radio and television broadcasting. Services include career counseling, job information, job referral, and follow-up counseling.

<sup>5</sup>The National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences (NATAS), 110 West 57th Street, New York, N.Y. 10019 (212-765-2450), maintains job listings, mostly entry level positions, for its members. There are three categories of members: students, associates, and active.

<sup>6</sup>The National Association of Educational Broadcasting, 1346 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036 (202-785-1100), operates PACT (People and Careers in Communications). PACT offers job-hunting advice on the basis of resumes. It also offers situation-wanted ads (\$20.00) in the bimonthly newsletter, *Current*, and special job activities at national and regional conferences.

<sup>7</sup>National Cable Television Association, 918 16th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006 (202-457-6700).

<sup>8</sup>The Society of Cable Television Engineers, 1900 L Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036 (202-223-0353).

<sup>9</sup>In addition to the sources already cited, a number of newsletters and magazines carry job listings. Some of these are: *American Film*, *Back Stage*, *Broadcasting*, *Cablevision*, *The Hollywood Reporter*, *Marketing and Media Decisions*, *Radio and Records*, and *Television/Radio Age*.



**Photographs:**

**Page 4, courtesy of National Broadcasting Company**

**Page 11 top left, courtesy of National Broadcasting Company**

**Page 11 top right, courtesy of Warner Communications**

**Page 11 bottom, courtesy of National Broadcasting Company**