[00:00:18.460] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

This is *Catch A Break* - The Insider's Guide to breaking into and navigating Hollywood - conceived by Catchlight Films. Whether you are looking to work in film or television or new media, it's all production and it's all entertainment. Maybe you are already in the business but looking to make a change, shift your focus, explore a new area. This is for you too.

In each episode, *Catch A Break* brings you a panel of top experts currently working in the business for conversations you won't hear anywhere else. And we'll provide you with bonus materials you can get your hands on and sink your teeth into. We'll give you samples of paperwork and forms you need to be familiar with, video tutorials and exclusive resources that will all help with your success.

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You can find us at catchabreakpodcast.com and all the podcast providers. I am your host Julie Harris Walker. You may know me from the podcast *The Other 50 Percent: a Herstory of Hollywood* or even *The Kiss My Age Show*. But today the focus is on you and how we can help you to Catch A Break.

[00:02:03.320] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

Welcome to *Catch a Break*, the insider’s guide to breaking into and navigating Hollywood. I’m Julie Harris Walker, your host, and this episode is called “Career Paths, Internships, and First Jobs.” This is the episode where we take a deep dive into getting that very first job. Where do you even start? What's the deal with internships? How do I get my foot in the door? We are going to try and answer all of these questions to get you started on your path. We have an incredible panel today who bring a variety of different perspectives on this topic. First, we have Laurie Luh. Laurie was one of the first employees of Participant Media and created the entire human resources and operations infrastructure for a company that was first of its kind. With Participant’s mission to create content that inspired and compelled social change, Laurie took on the role of building the culture. She also built an intern and fellowship program that employed upwards of 100 students a year. She forged relationships with schools across the country and became known for creating an internship program that included one on one mentoring and workshops focused on resumé writing, online profile optimization, job search education, and interviewing skills. Laurie is now a successful human resources consultant and key business advisor to CEOs and executive teams for many high profile clients. Welcome Laurie.

[00:03:17.180] - SPEAKER: **Laurie Luh**

Thank you.

[00:03:18.164] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

I'm going to ask you a question.

[00:03:19.265] - SPEAKER: **Laurie Luh**

Go ahead.

[00:03:20.033] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

What was your very first job and how did you get it?

[00:03:22.135] - SPEAKER: **Laurie Luh**

In the entertainment business, this is a funny story, but I'll make it short. I was at an entertainment law firm in New York. And I was living in Delaware so I actually left an executive position at a bank and a Fortune 500 company and started taking the train from Delaware to New York to become an office manager / development girl at a very small entertainment law firm in New York

[00:03:44.958] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

Every day?

[00:03:45.692] - SPEAKER: **Laurie Luh**

Every day. And then I would stay in the city maybe once or twice a week with some college friends. The kicker is that is how I got my job at Participant Media, ultimately. That head of the legal department ended up getting a job at Participant when the company first started. And I was one of his first calls.

[00:04:03.743] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

Being in the right place at the right time.

[00:04:04.410] - SPEAKER: **Laurie Luh**

Means everything.

[00:04:06.145] SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

Thank you. Thank you for joining us.

[00:04:08.147] - SPEAKER: **Laurie Luh**

Pleasure to be here.

[00:04:08.930] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

We also have Andrea McCall. Andrea McCall has been the head of story at DreamWorks since before 1990 where she currently runs the internship program and story PAs. She is a wealth of knowledge on topics like what she looks for in a resumé, how to conduct yourself and get the most out of an internship and the skills that she and her staff teach everyone coming through her department before they can go out and cover desks or move to another position at the studio. Before DreamWorks, Andrea got her start in the industry at William Morris working in lit. She never went to film school. Instead she found her way through working in TV commercial productions. She started out at Amblin as a second assistant and was made the story editor right around the time that DreamWorks came into existence. And she's been working there since in a variety of roles. Welcome Andrea.

[00:04:51.180] - SPEAKER: **Andrea McCall**

Thank you so much.

[00:04:52.759] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

What was your very first job and how did you get it?

[00:04:55.028] SPEAKER: **Andrea McCall**

Well the first job in the industry was working at William Morris and I got it by…I signed up with a temp agency and I told them I don't want to work at any company that is outside of entertainment so only send me to industry related jobs. And I got some weird jobs at first. They were testing me out to see you know what kind of worker I was in person and little by little the jobs they sent me to were closer and closer to where I wanted to be. So, I was working at Edgar Schreck’s production company who at the time was doing lots of film and TV and this guy kept walking past my desk and I didn't know what he was doing. He was kind of literally checking me out and after my first week there he said, hey I have a friend who's looking for an assistant at William Morris. I think you'd be a good fit there and I said OK. And I went and I met the agent and she hired me on the spot and that was my entry into the business.

00:05:52.580] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

Well fantastic. And do you think temp agencies are still a real viable way to get in.

[00:05:56.870] - SPEAKER: **Andrea McCall**

I do. I don't know why more people don't do that because to me it just takes a little time. But once you prove yourself I think it's a good shoe-in and everybody in the industry uses temp agencies

00:06:08.801] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

Because it does put you in the office.

[00:05:56.870] - SPEAKER: **Andrea McCall**

Yes right there where you want to be. Sometimes you know maybe in an area that's not your first go to spot, but it's a way in. And then you get referred.

[00:06:19.430] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

All right, smart. Thank you for joining us.

And we have Eve Honthaner. She's the deputy director of the California Film Commission. And Eve has an extensive background in production management having worked on films such as TITANIC, JUST MARRIED and TROPIC THUNDER and for companies like DreamWorks and Legendary Pictures. She's the author of two entertainment related books, one might say bibles, called *The Complete Film Production Handbook* and *Hollywood Drive: What it Takes to Break In, Hang In, and Make It in the Entertainment Industry.* For the past 19 years, she's been teaching a summer course she created for USC School of Cinematic Arts and is a member of the Producers Guild of America. Welcome, Eve

[00:06:57.530] - SPEAKER: **Eve Honthaner**

Thank you.

[00:06:59.285] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

What was your very first job in the business and how did you get it?

[00:07:02.100] - SPEAKER: **Eve Honthaner**

It was a teacher who recommended - well, she asked me if I would be willing to quit school first semester because she had a friend who worked at KCET and was looking for an assistant for a special project. And I thought “Wow, who wouldn't want to work in a TV station?” So, she said I'll set up the interview for you. So, she did. And I got the job and I never went back to school. That was it. I loved it.

[00:07:30.016] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

You were in.

[00:07:30.850] - SPEAKER: **Eve Honthaner**

I was in. I drank the Kool-Aid and stayed.

[00:07:35.888] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

Thank you for joining us. And we also have Michael Figari. Michael graduated with honors from the USC School of Cinematic Arts where he was awarded the Jack O'Keefe scholarship for cinematic achievement. Michael has worked as both a writer's assistant and executive assistant for several major TV series, including *Burn Notice* and *White Collar*. His web series, *Bro's,* was sold into distribution with Cold Cast TV. Michael currently is the manager of the producers program at the UCLA School of Theater, Film & Television where he supervises day-to-day operations of the graduate MFA program. Additionally, Michael applies his practical industry knowledge to oversee internships for the school and guide students through the process of finding internships that lead to future careers in the business. Welcome Michael. So the big question is how is it for you working at UCLA after going to USC?

[00:08:22.835] - SPEAKER: **Michael Figari**

I think that the name Judas brings it back. (laughter) No it's great.

[00:08:29.375] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

So what was your first job in the industry and how did you get it?

[00:08:31.890] - SPEAKER: **Michael Figari**

My first position in the industry was as a personal assistant to a showrunner by the name of Matt Nix who created *Burn Notice*. And I got that job because my college roommate was working as the script supervisor on the show and they knew this guy Matt Nix needed a personal assistant for three weeks and I got hired and then stayed there working with him for overall two years throughout the show.

[00:08:59.069] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

Thank you for joining us. This is always the story when it's a job for two weeks: take it because that could turn into ten years. You really just never know.

And finally, we have Jessica Malanaphy. Jessica was formerly a Vice President at Blumhouse Productions where she helped pioneer a new model of studio filmmaking, producing high quality micro budget films for wide release. At Blumhouse, she oversaw films such as THE PURGE, OUIJA, and the INSIDIOUS franchise. Following her time at Blumhouse, Jessica joined Illumination Entertainment as Vice President of Creative, working on such franchises as DESPICABLE ME, MINIONS and THE SECRET LIFE OF PETS. Currently Jessica is an independent producer and co-founder of Catchlight Films. Welcome Jessica.

[00:09:36.970] - SPEAKER: **Jessica Malanaphy**

Thanks!

[00:09:37.543] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

What was your first job and how did you get it?

[00:09:39.345] - SPEAKER: **Jessica Malanaphy**

My first job was as an office P.A. on the TV show Numbers and I got it because my husband's freshman year classmate Adam Karp was working in TV and he called me when I first moved back to L.A. after college and got both my husband and I hired in the office to fill in for another P.A. who was going to be starting in three weeks. So that was about that three week long job that I took. And that's about as long as I lasted in production before I started looking for a nice desk job.

[00:10:11.460] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

Luckily there are a million jobs in Hollywood. Thank you for joining us.

Now to get us started. Earlier in the week, I interviewed a recent college graduate Parker Lamal Brown to find out what the current experience of a recent graduate might be and what kind of questions they might have. Let's listen to some excerpts of this and then we will come back to see if we can't offer some advice.

[00:10:33.090] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

I'm sitting here with Parker Lamal Brown who is a recent college graduate and moved to Los Angeles to pursue a career in entertainment. Thank you for joining us.

[00:10:42.694] - SPEAKER: **Parker Lamal Brown**

Thank you so much, Julie.

[00:10:43.697] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

Where did you go?

[00:10:44.580] - SPEAKER: **Parker Lamal Brown**

I went to Bowdoin College in Maine. It is a small liberal arts school right on the coast of the Atlantic. It was sociology with a minor in Francophone studies which was a fancy word for French

[00:10:54.981] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

But what do you want to do?

[00:10:56.222] - SPEAKER: **Parker Lamal Brown**

I want to write for TV and I ultimately would love to be a show runner.

[00:11:00.030] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

So when you graduated, you wanted to move to L.A and start working in the business. What did you do?

[00:11:05.130] - SPEAKER: **Parker Lamal Brown**

I started networking like two years earlier. Just when I first wanted to go into entertainment where I basically went on Facebook and I knew two people who worked in Hollywood who had come to an improv show in my town. I had an improv club and we did this workshop together and somewhere along the way we became Facebook friends. And so years later when I was a junior in college, I realized that you could go and see people's friends on Facebook and you could send them friend requests. And so I kind of knew who these guys were working with or they knew somebody on one show. I was like well that show has writers on this show and this one and this one and like you could kind of draw a map of who was working there. So I started sending out hundreds of friend requests to all these writers and producers and actors in Hollywood. So I did that. And if people would you know for every like 60 you get like maybe three friend requests and then I'd send out a message to them and be like hey, I'm a student I'm interested in TV. Do you have any advice or can we have a phone call? And out of those you know like I probably got like three hundred like hundreds of friend requests and then I got to get on a couple of dozen calls with people and just ask their advice.

[00:12:11.120] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

OK. Let's break this down. You went on Facebook, you figured out who is writing on shows, you targeted those people, you friended those people, and you asked them to talk to you. And they did.

[00:12:21.067] - SPEAKER: **Parker Lamal Brown**

Yeah, that sounds a little creepy.

[00:12:22.880] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

That's amazing. This is a whole new world.

[00:12:27.113] - SPEAKER: **Parker Lamal Brown**

It really is. Yeah. And I would say it's like professional stalking but it works.

[00:12:32.750] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

It did work. So, this is not the tried to get an internship through the studio program that has 25 interns and a whole long list of competitive whatever.

[00:12:41.000] - SPEAKER: **Parker Lamal Brown**

I mean I just never heard about those opportunities and like going to a liberal arts school there were certain paths that were very well paved for students. But most of it tended to be finance, medicine, consulting, and non-profits were kind of the major career paths. And there were some fellowships that were offered for entertainment but usually like they were for students of color or something else that I wouldn't qualify for. And even when I did ask for certain internships, my career advisor just didn't know where to find them.

[00:13:08.990] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

So, you really created your own path. That was really smart.

[00:13:11.924] - SPEAKER: **Parker Lamal Brown**

Thank you.

[00:13:12.591] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

So, you moved here…

[00:13:13.580] - SPEAKER: **Parker Lamal Brown**

I did. Yeah, I planned on doing it no matter what I. I was like I'm not going to be living in Ohio any more than I need to. I booked my flight several months in advance of the end of June. I'm leaving.

[00:13:25.137] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

You were determined.

[00:13:26.338] - SPEAKER: **Parker Lamal Brown**

Yeah. And I was hoping, you know, worst case scenario I was like, OK I will have like a month between when my college roommate was moving out and I was like just trying to find a job then. If that's not going to happen. But I got really lucky by having this job offer literally the day before.

[00:13:25.137] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

So where is this internship?

[00:13:45.024] - SPEAKER: **Parker Lamal Brown**

So this is at E1 in Santa Monica.

[00:13:47.295] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

And it's paid.

[00:13:45.024] - SPEAKER: **Parker Lamal Brown**

It is. Yes. Which everyone's like what? I can't believe it.

[00:13:52.774] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

So, what are you doing in that internship?

[00:13:54.230] - SPEAKER: **Parker Lamal Brown**

So I work in TV development. It's currently me and one other intern. And we'll do coverage of scripts that come in and we do basic research for people. Say, you know there are people looking for writers or directors and just kind of want like a general idea of the field. We'll make spreadsheets. Things like that. I've made cue cards for marketing tapes. I did that with the head of marketing. Sometimes it's just covering people's desks. I'm learning how to roll calls and just kind of fill in for different assistants which has been really cool and seen you know being in business and legal affairs versus being in like the more creative side.

[00:14:27.560] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

Are there a lot more moving parts than you thought?

[00:14:30.703] - SPEAKER: **Parker Lamal Brown**

Oh definitely yeah.

[00:14:32.238] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

So, you have this internship now and you're starting to think about where this internship ends; what you're going to do. What is your plan?

[00:14:40.900] - SPEAKER: **Parker Lamal Brown**

Huh. That's a very good question. Um, I don’t know. I've been thinking about that a lot. One of my biggest questions is, when do I ask about jobs? Who do I ask and what should I be looking for? And I ultimately want to work in a writer's room, but I've heard from multiple people that I should really be getting agency experience. So that's the first big question - do I go and join a mailroom or should I try to get you know a writer's P.A. job or should I work in production? Should I continue working in development? You know if somebody offered me … they needed a new assistant somewhere, that's happened for other interns at my company, should I take that opportunity? And then so that's what I'm really wondering is like what should I be seeing…

[00:15:23.923] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

The list of all the options that you laid out, that's kind of that the obstacle and the magic of it because you could take any of those paths and get where you want to go. I think it depends on which opportunity presents itself and you grab onto it.

OK. So if you had three questions for our panel of experts what would they be?

[00:15:42.170] - SPEAKER: **Parker Lamal Brown**

Who do I ask for a job and when do I ask at all? I think it's how do you find opportunities really. How am I…how can I try my best to be in the right place at the right time?

How do I find a mentor? That's my biggest question, I think, right now.

And I have material but a lot of times of my own writing - I can't really find a way to go further than I already have without having outside feedback. And kind of beyond just friends and family from back home, but now wanting to see like, what does this look like in the industry?

[00:16:12.338] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

Sure.

[00:16:12.611] - SPEAKER: **Parker Lamal Brown**

So that would be like the most valuable thing I think right now.

And then this is a more specific thing but should I be going to an agency? And that's been something that has always been suggested to me from the very beginning and it's something that I've always been kind of wary of. It's like a culture in itself.

[00:16:27.860] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

You mean to work at one or to submit your work to?

[00:16:30.322] - SPEAKER: **Parker Lamal Brown**

To work at one. Yeah

[00:16:31.924] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

Yeah. Some people would say go work inside the agency. You see how it all works and then you have all those connections.

[00:16:36.261] - SPEAKER: **Parker Lamal Brown**

Yeah yeah. And I think if there was a bigger question too that I was really wrestling with, a few weeks ago I was asked to write a bio about myself, which is in the third person. I identify as non-binary and I use they/them pronouns and suddenly with this, should I use that in this bio or should I be using female pronouns because that's more acceptable? And it became a bigger question of how genuine should I be presenting myself, even if it's at professional risk and especially for me coming from this tiny liberal arts college, I was in this bubble and I'm aware of that but being new to the industry I really don't know how progressive people are or what things people are aware of. So, am I bringing in this new vocabulary? And am I alienating myself in this…this became, you know, if I only have my work to go off of, I don't want to put any obstacle in front of people reading my work. So, this became this ongoing debate about gender and pronouns and general presentation

[00:17:38.657] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

I'm going to say to you what, I've interviewed now one hundred twenty five people in this business: your authenticity is your super power. You have to be as authentic as possible and you could not be at a better time in a better place right now to be exactly who you are. And that is going to be the thing that shoots you ahead in your career.

[00:17:56.120] - SPEAKER: **Parker Lamal Brown**

That is really good to hear. I am so excited to be here right now and just watching from kind of the sidelines while I was still in college was like, everything about the #MeToo movement has just been blowing my mind. And having you say that means so much to me. If these little pieces of encouragement that I've gotten from people like, I've talked to I think about 60 industry professionals right now. But I remember that one sentence I was kind of like we need you out here. We're like do it. Just be yourself and do this thing and it's fairly simple. But those are the ones that stick with me constantly even if it's like, yeah my friends are like, you sure you're not going to grad school?

[00:18:33.112] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

You know, be here now. You are the one we've been waiting for. Get in there.

[00:18:37.037] - SPEAKER: **Parker Lamal Brown**

There you go.

[00:18:38.117] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

That’s all I have to say. We're done.

[00:18:39.294] - SPEAKER: **Parker Lamal Brown**

Yeah. (laughter)

[00:18:41.551] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

Thank you.

[00:18:42.521] - SPEAKER: **Parker Lamal Brown**

Thank you so much.

[00:18:44.180] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

Now that was just a couple of minutes of my interview with Parker and if you want to hear the whole thing go ahead and download it from our website. It's a really good listen with lots of great information in it and as a special bonus, Parker put together their social media stalking guide, which you can also download on our web site. Again, that website is catchabreakpodcast.com. Now just a quick note before we get into the discussion of Parker's interview: there are several times when we mispronoun-ed Parker as we were talking about this interview and we just want to apologize for that, as we all try to do better in this area.

[00:19:16.810] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

OK, first of all. What did you guys think? Andrea, what did you think of Parker and Parker's approach?

[00:19:21.960] - SPEAKER: **Andrea McCall**

I found Parker really articulate and I was just really impressed with how they articulated their thoughts and what they wanted in their enthusiasm. And even though this person doesn't have that much experience under their belt as far as what I can see and coming up the ranks I felt she had a lot going for her. I was really impressed. So..

[00:19:44.180] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

I thought Parker was so impressive and the whole approach of Facebook stalking to find the people and putting all the pieces together and reaching out. Have you guys heard of people doing that before?

[00:19:55.141] - SPEAKER: **Andrea McCall**

I wouldn't do that even though I found it innovative but…

[00:19:59.996] - SPEAKER: **Michael Figari**

I worked with a guy who had gotten his job by DM-ing the showrunner on Twitter. He had responded and built some kind of communication with the showrunner and then got offered an assistant job and that was his way and to an assistant position on a show.

[00:20:16.610] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

Cause you don't think that would work but I hear more and more stories of that working.

[00:20:21.230] - SPEAKER: **Andrea McCall**

I think Twitter and LinkedIn. But for me, Facebook is just more personal and I don't ever respond to requests on Facebook unless I know them. So, for me it's Twitter or LinkedIn.

[00:20:31.177] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

Laurie, what do you think?

[00:20:32.360] - SPEAKER: **Laurie Luh**

What was interesting going off of what Andrea just said that Parker had two friends on Facebook that were kind of in the business and then used those friends’ friends. So, she was able to see those two friends, their friends and then was able to kind of say “All right, let me see if I can get in.” So, I think it was like for every couple hundred people she tried to friend maybe a few of them accepted and then after that Parker was able to get coffees and phone calls with some of them.

[00:21:03.050] - SPEAKER: **Andrea McCall**

It's like a six degrees of separation kind of tactic and it worked. So that's great. It's successful. I mean, any way in that you can figure out is the way in.

[00:21:13.430] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

So, Parker had a few questions that I wanted to pose to the panel. See what you say. The first one is how do I find opportunities and what should my next steps be?

[00:21:22.760] - SPEAKER: **Andrea McCall**

UTA job list.

[00:21:24.663] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

What is that.

[00:21:25.230] - SPEAKER: **Andrea McCall**

It is a job list put out by United Talent Agency. And if you can get your hands on it, it's a list that provides all kinds of jobs from P.A. to assistant to executive. Sometimes it's hard to get immediately after it's released but after a few weeks somehow it makes its way throughout the industry and through various contacts and you can get that.

[00:21:48.650] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

Is it just something that people pass around? I know I see it on one of my google groups that people just posted.

[00:21:55.000] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

This is Eve.

[00:21:55.571] - SPEAKER: **Eve Honthaner**

Yes. People who get it share it. It's all over the place but the jobs go very quickly.

[00:22:00.820] - SPEAKER: **Andrea McCall**

It's key to get it right away.

[00:22:04.550] - SPEAKER: **Michael Figari**

If you're seeing it more than a week after it's published, it's almost meaningless.

[00:22:08.900] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

That should be one of your first questions when you meet new people is “do you have access to the UTA Job list?”

[00:22:13.856] - SPEAKER: **Michael Figari**

I also suggest starting off with all the contacts you already have and contacting everybody they know, seeing if they know of any positions that are around or someone's hiring, especially on an assistant level. No one ever wants to hire someone that they have no connection with. They want to know people that can vouch for that person's work ethic. Especially if you're gonna be on set or in an office for long hours at a time. You want to know what kind of situation you're getting into with someone independent of their resume. The resume is only part of it.

[00:22:44.989] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

So you have to network…

[00:22:47.290] - SPEAKER: **ALL**

Have to, have to (etc.)

[00:22:49.299] - SPEAKER: **Michael Figari**

Hopefully, it's from friends and people that you worked with in the past that enjoyed working with you, that would recommend you to other places. That's always the best recommendation when employers are looking.

[00:22:57.740] - SPEAKER: **Andrea McCall**

You can also go on studio websites…

[00:23:01.573] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

This is Andrea

[00:23:02.892] - SPEAKER: **Andrea McCall**

…and look at their hiring of interns and PAs. Many of them have programs and that's a way in too. I mean you can just always cold call H.R. and just ask if they're hiring. Call all the agencies. I mean it's a lot of work but it can pay off.

[00:23:19.254] - SPEAKER: **Laurie Luh**

Every company has a careers page, every company.

[00:23:20.343] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

This is Laurie

[00:23.21.037] - SPEAKER: **Laurie Luh**

From the big studios all the way to a much smaller production companies and everybody has an info@ or a careers@ or something. So it's easy to e-mail or pick up the phone. But I agree that Parker is doing a really good job of working out their network. And so I would keep doing that. And I believe that Parker is at an internship right now. And so if you're ever in that situation, temping, interning, something, get generals with pretty much everybody in the company you can think of. Let them know that you're looking and work those angles.

[00:23:48.740] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

And I think that answers one of Parker's main questions is… they’re in this internship, now how do they ask for the job and who do they ask? So take general meetings with everybody.

[00:23:59.290] - SPEAKER: **Laurie Luh**

Absolutely once you're in the door you can pretty much get a, you know, an informational with a lot of the people there.

[00:24:05.000] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

Jessica where you going to jump in on that?

[00:24:06.356] - SPEAKER: **Jessica Malanaphy**

Yeah. One thing that Parker mentioned that worked really well for me was going through your college's alumni network, especially at some of the smaller liberal arts colleges. I went to Vassar and had a really strong network where I was able to reach out to a lot of the people who had graduated, including Jason Blum who ended up becoming one of my bosses, and get a job through that or at least get those generals and informationals. And now that I'm working in the industry whenever anybody reaches out from my college's network I always say yes, I always grab coffee with that person.

[00:24:34.127] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

Were you going to say something else, Eve?

[00:24:36.080] - SPEAKER: **Eve Honthaner**

I think the general information meetings are the best way to build a network and start meeting people. And I tell my students don't ask for a job, just ask for advice. Don't ask for a lot of time because if you're not putting someone on the spot and asking for a job and you're not asking for a lot of time they're more likely to say yes. And if they like you they're going to want to help you even if they don't have anything at the moment.

[00:25:05.168] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

Because they know you're looking for a job.

[00:25:06.960] - SPEAKER: **Eve Honthaner**

They do. But you go in with some, you research that person and you come in with some very intelligent questions and you don't overstay your welcome. And you make an impact and you ask if you can stay in touch and you start building your network that way.

[00:25:24.725] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

So what would you ask in a general meeting?

[00:25:26.636] - SPEAKER: **Eve Honthaner**

Well, I would ask, how did you get to where you are? What was your path? Did you have a plan when you started out? Was there anybody specific who helped you? And tell me what you love or don't like about your job. I'm trying to make decisions about my career and I want to talk to as many people as I can and ask questions to find out what sounds like a good fit for me.

[00:25:52.315] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

It's great and people love telling their stories of how they got where they are

[00:25:55.669] - SPEAKER: **Eve Honthaner**

They do, and networking. There are so many groups and organizations all over and you go and you meet people and you never know who knows someone who's going to be able to help you. And networking isn't a dirty word and it's not about what other people can do for you. It's about what you can do for them, it's about building relationships, making friends because basically people hire people they like and they know and they're comfortable with. So, it just stands to reason the more friends you make, the more connections you make, more opportunities you have.

[00:26:33.860] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

Yes. And I can see this industry looks gigantic when you're on the outside looking in. But once you're in, you realize it's so small.

[00:26:40.580] - SPEAKER: **Andrea McCall**

Yeah. On the general meetings, I totally agree with everything Eve said. I'm always amazed that when you have a good rapport and you have a good connection with somebody and I give him my card. Stay in touch, let me know how you're doing and I mean it. And I never hear from them again. They don't follow up. It's staggering to me that I feel like I'm a good connect, but maybe they get stymied. I don't know what it is.

[00:27:03.448] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

I wonder if they don't want to bother you.

[00:27:04.814] - SPEAKER: **Andrea McCall**

It's not bothering because as you said networking isn't a dirty word. You have to. You do have to find things to say. Oh, I just saw the movie that your company put out. I really loved it. Talk about that or talk about what you're doing or hey you know if you ever hear of any jobs there let me know. It's just it's just keeping in touch in a very friendly positive upbeat way. Yeah. I don't want a big two-page e-mail but you know just a nice connect.

[00:27:31.380] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

And you've given them permission.

[00:27:35.677] - SPEAKER: **Andrea McCall**

If someone says keep in touch. Most people wouldn't say it unless they meant it.

[00:27:39.860] - SPEAKER: **Jessica Malanaphy**

I think a lot of young people are intimidated to when they meet with people who are more established in the industry. And I think what you learn when you've been working in this industry for a long time is that those people that you helped out when they were interns, end up being your colleagues down the road. So when we do say stay in touch, it's not as a favor to you it's because we actually think there is going to be a relationship there for many years.

[00:28:00.990] - SPEAKER: **Eve Honthaner**

That's why I think some of these people are getting through to directors and producers through Facebook and Instagram and Twitter because it's not happening as much as you think it is. So the ones that are actually taking the wild swings and going for it sometimes you know are getting the meetings and the jobs from it.

[00:28:17.960] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

OK let's move on to the next question, which is how do I find a mentor. Everyone says “Get a mentor, Get a mentor.” How do you actually do that?

[00:28:25.490] - SPEAKER: **Laurie Luh**

You just ask. I think there are several people or a lot of people who enjoy being mentors, but they don't wake up one morning and say I'm going to find someone to mentor today. But if they're asked, if somebody sends him a letter or say, you meet someone on a general information meeting and you feel there's a connection and you can really connect with this person, I think it's fine to send them a letter and say I really enjoyed meeting you…blah blah blah…would you consider? And also I promise I won't become a stalker and I know that there will be certain guidelines and I won't overstep my bounds and I won't take up too much of your time. And you kind of have an agreement going in like agree to so many phone calls or face-to-face meetings within a certain period of time. And set limits on it so that the person doesn't feel overwhelmed. But I think just asking sometimes will do the trick.

[00:29:30.500] - SPEAKER: **Andrea McCall**

Yeah. I'm not sure you know if the fear of rejection or fear of that. It's like you're going to get no. As we've said earlier you know you're going to get a lot of no's but it doesn't hurt to ask. And if you have that connect and if you felt like the meeting went well just follow up or just say, could I meet with you again in three months or you know. Happy to do that.

[00:29:50.237] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

And then what does mentorship look like?

[00:29:52.080] - SPEAKER: **Laurie Luh**

You have to agree what it's going to look like when you go into it. You have to both know what you're getting into.

[00:29:58.460] - SPEAKER: **Andrea McCall**

To me it’s just giving advice. You know the person may have questions, I've had students, young people come to me after we've met and they'll say I'm in this tight spot. I'm in this position I'm being offered a better one that's higher paid. But I think I have better contacts in the one that I'm in and then we talk about it. And so they just bring me issues, challenges, problems that they don't quite know which way to step. I'm not going to tell them what to do but I'll give them my opinion and advice of what they might want to think about before taking that next step.

[00:30:30.120] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

And you can help them walk through what they're thinking about. It’s really valuable.

[00:30:33.890] - SPEAKER: **Laurie Luh**

And I would say always be appreciative. I mean lead with gratitude. So these people are giving their free time so even at the end of the call, be profuse and genuine about it. “Thank you so much for your time I really appreciate this.”

[00:30:46.814] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

Thanks Laurie.

[00:30:47.510] - SPEAKER: **Michael Figari**

One thing I would say just kind of back stepping a little bit. I think it's really important for people who want to work in this business to get comfortable with rejection early and not internalize rejection. I see that tendency a lot with people that I graduated with or other students, especially when you're younger. I think that's a common flaw for a lot of young people to have. And realizing that rejection is OK and letting it roll off your back and not letting it really derail you from what you want. And just realizing that it’s a part of life and it’s a part of this business in particular.

[00:31:20.390] - SPEAKER: **Andrea McCall**

I think that's really right. A lot of people get derailed by, say they get 10 rejections in a row, it's like so the 11th person is going to be the one that you vibe with and, to Laurie's point, you do need to vibe with someone and when you do you're going to know it. And if the other, you know, if the meeting is a little strained, a little awkward you can't quite flow with it, that's a sign. It's not going that well. So go to the next one…

[00:31:43.250] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

You'll find your people

[00:31:20.390] - SPEAKER: **Andrea McCall**

You're gonna find your tribe. It's gonna work out.

[00:31:46.091] - SPEAKER: **Michael Figari**

You gotta keep trying till something clicks.

[00:31:47.897] - SPEAKER: **Andrea McCall**

Exactly. Don't give up.

[00:31:46.091] - SPEAKER: **Michael Figari**

Having a good support system around, your friends and family that can encourage you, that you can rely on. And when you're feeling weak after you've been rejected, if that's something that you struggle with and you're not comfortable with rejection yet, having those people that can build you up so that you can learn how to deal with rejection.

[00:32:06.000] - SPEAKER: **Andrea McCall**

It's a lot of self-talk.

[00:32:07.516] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

Eve?

[00:32:07.600] - SPEAKER: **Eve Honthaner**

I think it's important too for people who are just starting especially to have a support system as Michael was saying. And there are a lot of clubs and groups and I have started different groups and we talk, we help each other. We talk about goals, everybody brainstorms. When someone's feeling really down and rejected everybody builds them up because we've all been through that roller coaster ride - the ups and the downs - and having a group of people who are going through the same things and are there to support you is very helpful.

[00:32:44.190] - SPEAKER: **Laurie Luh**

Participant Media was one of the producers on The Help and I remember hearing that that particular author had sent that book around to I think over thirty-five people and got rejected, right? And not only was it a bestselling book but then it became an amazing movie. So if she had said, if she had stopped after the first five?

[00:33:02.496] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

So persistence is key. OK.

And then the last bit that I definitely want to talk about was Parker's dilemma with how authentic can I be at the risk of maybe not getting a job or not being accepted because Parker identifies as non binary and uses they and had to write a third person biography about that and was struggling with, “do I say that out of the gate or do I wait to get in and then slowly reveal myself?” What would you guys say about it?

[00:33:32.913] - SPEAKER: **Andrea McCall**

I would say please don't hide who you are. Just be your authentic self from the get go. We want diversity across the board. And I think that's a welcome thing. I think it's refreshing. Just show up and be who you are.

[00:33:44.190] - SPEAKER: **Michael Figari**

And also if they interview with someone who's not comfortable with that, then that's not someone they want to work with anyway.

[00:33:50.640] - SPEAKER: **Jessica Malanaphy**

And authenticity in whatever form it takes for each person…

[00:33:54.308] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

And this is Jessica

[00:33:55.329] - SPEAKER: **Jessica Malanaphy**

…can really be an advantage too because when you talk about applying for the UTA job list, you're in there with hundreds of other people. And if you don't have something that makes you unique and makes you stand out, and that's not represented in your custom cover letter that you turn in along with your résumé, it's just gonna go in the stack and nobody's ever going to take a look at it. So using those things that make you unique in the right ways, I think, can actually be a benefit.

[00:34:17.570] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

Okay. So since you all brought up resumes, let's talk about resumes for a minute. Is a cover letter still necessary? What should your resume look like? Let's give some of those tips.

[00:34:26.489] - SPEAKER: **Andrea McCall**

If you're going to have a cover letter just keep it short because I'm going to be looking at the resume. I can get tone, aittle bit of who you are, but if it's a long cover letter I'm I check out.

[00:34:38.370] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

Let's start with is it even still required?

00:34:40.620] - SPEAKER: **Laurie Luh**

No it's not really required just being in human resources. We're not really asking for a cover letter. I think to your point about resumes kind of all looking the same, it's about the experience; it's hard to get a real tone in there. We kind of shy away from having someone put a lot of character into their resume. So a brief four sentence little paragraph on who you are as it relates to the company so that we kind of know that you're not just sending out the general, “here's my résumé,” to everyone but you know “I love Participant Media. Your last three films” and then name them “were three of my favorite. I see this particular job opened. This is exactly what I've been looking for.” Name one or two skills that's that fit perfectly. Would love to hear from you.

[00:35:25.680] - SPEAKER: **Andrea McCall**

I think that's right. And even if it feels like, “oh I'm just brown nosing in this cover letter,” it's like, we don't know that. I mean maybe you are, but you want to be enthusiastic for the company that you're applying to so show that in your in your cover letter and keep it brief. And I would say don't try and be cute in your resume. Don't try and be super funny. Just keep an even tone. Keep it business like and show off your best skills in your resume.

[00:35:52.410] - SPEAKER: **Jessica Malanaphy**

I actually use the cover letter as kind of a writing sample because so much of what when I'm hiring an assistant I'm looking for them to be able to do is draft e-mails and correspondence on my behalf, to be able to write coverage things like that. So somebody who has typos in their cover letter? No, done, you're out.

[00:36:07.000] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

And read it out loud because then your mind doesn't fill in those missing words or say the wrong words. If you read it out loud you could really hear what it says.

[00:36:14.404] - SPEAKER: **Michael Figari**

I just think a cover letter needs to briefly explain why you want to work at that company and why you would be a good fit for that job. But again, brevity is the best.

[00:36:26.250] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

What if your resume has nothing on it because you just graduated, should you make stuff up? How do you represent yourself?

[00:36:31.500] - SPEAKER: **Andrea McCall**

Please don't do that.

[00:36:34.080] - SPEAKER: **Michael Figari**

It's only going to become painfully obvious if you lie on your resumé when the time comes to actually do what you say that you know how to do. And it's only going to go wrong for you in the long term. You might get the job but you know do you want a job you got under false pretense.

[00:36:48.510] - SPEAKER: **Laurie Luh**

Agreed, but for the people listening, do you have something besides your education on your resume? Start early. Waitressing, Eagle Scout, internships.

[00:36:59.918] - SPEAKER: **Andrea McCall**

Anything. Working in your dad’s office, there's something on there. Yeah. They're gonna have some work experience.

[00:37:07.270] - SPEAKER: **Michael Figari**

It's important to be always hustling. You need to be learning things. If you're not learning things outside of school, and I say this as someone who works in a school. School is a very important part but if you don't have any arena in your life that you've been able to apply what you've learned then you're only doing part of your education.

[00:37:25.870] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

What about if you've worked on other people student films or made your own student film. Do those go on your resume?

[00:37:30.190] - SPEAKER: **Laurie Luh**

Absolutely.

[00:37:31.690] - SPEAKER: **Eve Honthaner**

When you do a resume though don't just list the titles of the shows you worked on. Put in parentheses or list what type of show it is. Is it a student film? Is it a short? Is it a music video? Also, if it's a long project and you just worked on it a couple of days put in parentheses “day player.” When you're looking at resumes, you want to know, were they there for the whole show? Did they just come in for a few days or for the week?

[00:38:00.640] - SPEAKER: **Laurie Luh**

Your resumé is a story, you know, so the person is the reader and you have an opportunity to tell them who you are. So, if you're an extra on a movie set. If you've worked in your dad's office…. I used to when I had interns at Participant I would sit with them and their resumes and we would go over it and I was amazed at what they'd leave off. People that were almost professional athletes didn't have it on their resume. Think about the story that tells, the drive. You know, if they were the treasurer of their fraternity or sorority, all this volunteer work they did, so much was left off and yet that tells me a story when I'm looking for a receptionist or you know a more junior position in the company. That type of experience goes a long way.

[00:38:43.750] - SPEAKER: **Jessica Malanaphy**

And it could be a point of connection for the specific person that you're meeting with who was also almost a professional athlete.

[00:38:49.390] - SPEAKER: **Michael Figari**

I also think it's important to know that you can't just have a blanket resumé when you're going out for different jobs. I always kept one resumé that had every single thing I've ever done on it with descriptions and everything ready to go and then I would pick the jobs that pertain to the job I was applying to and kind of just tailor it. So you can't fit everything you've ever done in your life and you want to just give the most important things that pertain to that company or that position that you're going for.

[00:37:31.690] - SPEAKER: **Eve Honthaner**

And make it easy to read! Two columns, bullet points, don't crowd the font where everything is squeezed in. If it's not easy to read, chances are it might not be read.

[00:39:29.340] - SPEAKER: **Michael Figari**

And please always send in a PDF format so that the format that you intended it to be is actually translated to whatever it is. Some people send word documents like actual Microsoft Word documents or something and I think that's thankfully mostly gone but some people still do those kind of things and you can't ensure what your audience is going to see and the format can get corrupted and then it's not clear and that costs you a potential interview.

[00:39:53.800] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

Now Laurie you mentioned online there's so much online submitting now and there seems to be the algorithm and it seems to be a mystery how to beat the algorithm to get the phone call. Does anyone have any insight on that?

[00:40:07.720] - SPEAKER: **Laurie Luh**

So you think about SEO these days and search engine optimization. If someone says in the job ad, “I'm looking for someone with assistant skills, highly organized, agency experience,” whatever their words are. If you have it, make sure it's in your resume. As long as it's true, make sure you're putting that back in because if they've got an applicant tracking system, it’s picking up on those types of words specifically. If you're looking for someone in marketing and you've got marketing experience by all means make sure marketing's in there. Same thing on your LinkedIn profile. So everything should kind of match the job you're looking for, keywords.

[00:40:45.730] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

And then let's talk about references a little bit because people don't always call the references that you have listed because as we said before the business is so small and everybody knows each other. Talk a little bit about how that actually works.

[00:40:59.050] - SPEAKER: **Laurie Luh**

I can talk about it.

[00:41:00.002] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

This is Laurie

[00:41:00.787] - SPEAKER: **Laurie Luh**

I mean just always be kind to everyone you know, be great and leave everything better than when you started because your reputation does follow you. So, if I am talking to someone seriously, I'm normally going to try to call some people that aren't on the reference list to get the real scoop because I wouldn't give you a reference of mine unless I knew they were going to say great things about me. So just make sure that you're doing a good job with that. I also think when you're applying for a job that you really want, if you see that someone you know knows someone in that company I do think it's worth your while especially if you're trying to get the job still for that person, I would call Andrea and be like I really want to work at this company, I see you know someone. Any chance you could put in a good word for me?

[00:41:46.960] - SPEAKER: **Andrea McCall**

Yes, I agree with that. After you've managed the interview but not before. I really find it difficult to have people call me before and say “oh there's a resume somewhere in your stack and I think that person's really good” and it's like, it just makes it awkward. I may have passed on it for some reason and it doesn't help it really, to me doesn't help until afterwards. Then afterwards, please call me.

[00:42:09.500] - SPEAKER: **Jessica Malanaphy**

You're also burning your favors by asking people to call on your behalf for a job… before you've even….

[00:42:16.490] - SPEAKER: **Andrew McCall**

…before you've even got the call for the interview.

[00:42:16.406] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

Okay. Now if you get into that job and you get the first assistant job or the internship, generally do you think it's better to work and rise at that company or is it better to move around if you can? You guys have opinions on that?

[00:42:28.860] - SPEAKER: **Laurie Luh**

I think it depends on the company and what's available. In some cases, it's absolutely if you're feeling it and there's room to grow in there then by all means stay. You know in today's day and age though, especially on a more junior resumé, it's OK if I see every year you know kind of a skip from one job to another. Again it's telling a story. So when you're first starting out people do tend to move around a lot. But if you're into a good spot and they're growing and there's room for growth and you really like the team that you're working on and the projects, stay.

[00:43:02.720] - SPEAKER: **Jessica Malanaphy**

I think as long as you're still learning too. If you're moving yourself forward career-wise, I think that's really important. That’s the advice that I give most of my interns is just know when you've gotten everything you're gonna get out of that position and then it's time to move on. And make sure you do so gracefully. I do think it's a red flag. If you see somebody who's moving on more than every year, you see somebody who's jump jobs you know twice in a year or three times in a year, that's a big red flag.

[00:43:27.377] - SPEAKER: **Michael Figari**

It shows a lack of maturity and a lack of commitment.

[00:43:29.910] - SPEAKER: **Jessica Malanaphy**

I do think you often hit a point where you cap out internally at a company where if you did come in as an intern, you worked as an assistant and you get promoted to junior exec - which is amazing and I think is often the best way to get promoted - eventually you do kind of hit that wall where there are some people who still think of you as an assistant or you had a you know a salary cap you know where your peers are coming in at higher salaries than you having worked your way up and that point it might be time to jump to another job. But you have to weigh the pros and cons there because it's also, you know, then you're starting over from scratch and rebuilding those relationships and any relationship with a new company can be you know some time you have to invest.

[00:44:05.790] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

OK, so speaking of that Jessica, if you're an assistant at a job and you want to move to the next level, become a junior exec, what do you need to do in order to make that leap and what should people expect as they’re on that path?

[00:44:17.500] - SPEAKER: **Jessica Malanaphy**

You have to just start doing the job that you want. When I was working for Marc Haimes as an assistant in development at DreamWorks, I just started doing notes on every single project that was submitted to him. He never asked me for them. I never actually got any feedback from him on my notes until one day I didn't do notes and he said “Well, where are your notes?” And then suddenly I was like, “oh I guess you're reading them,” you know? And so, there was never a moment of this is what you need to do. And then when Marc left DreamWorks to start out as a writer and producer, he took me with him as his junior executive because I'd already put in all that work for him as an assistant.

[00:44:51.810] - SPEAKER: **Andrea McCall**

I think that's right. I think whatever the next step is that you want to get to, you just start doing that job, not ask. Nobody is going to come to you on a silver platter and say oh what would you like to do this is your next… No. You have to work towards it and then you'll get noticed just like Jessica said is the classic example of how it would work.

[00:45:12.302] - SPEAKER: **Michael Figari**

And don't ask for permission to do the work or ask them if they want you do the work. Better to ask forgiveness than ask permission.

[00:45:18.773] - SPEAKER: **Eve Honthaner**

If you know nobody is doing a certain type of follow up report, whatever it is, just step in and do it.

[00:45:25.220] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

And do we need to say that there are some parts to your boss's job you don't grab and start doing.

[00:45:30.750] - SPEAKER: **Andrea McCall**

Well that's a really good question because that's really the crux of the matter in terms of being able to read the room, read the executive, read the job, and it's a very fine line you need to walk to be able to determine for yourself whether you're going to be threatening, stepping on his or her toes or not. That's something that you have to feel your way through.

[00:45:57.630] - SPEAKER: **Jessica Malanaphy**

I have had to fire an assistant who was producing his own content from my desk and using my rolodex. And I told him you're gonna do great, you're gonna go on and sure enough he's producing his own movies now and doing wonderfully at it. But it wasn't appropriate to do from the desk

[00:45:30.750] - SPEAKER: **Andrea McCall**

The person that did it for me did not go on to….

[00:46:19.260] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

So either way, be very careful and very talented.

[00:46:23.040] - SPEAKER: **Andrea McCall**

Yeah, you had better be good if you're going to do that.

[00:46:26.580] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

OK so that brings up, when is it appropriate to show my superiors my work?

[00:46:32.310] - SPEAKER: **Laurie Luh**

I feel like we have a theme going here with you got to read the room. You’ve got to do your job first, be really good at it, make sure that everything's taken care of, have a relationship, maybe start dropping some seeds here and there and see if they bite on it but be really careful.

[00:46:48.030] - SPEAKER: **Andrea McCall**

You've got to be careful and you've got to you know understand the culture of promotion at your company. You've got to be really careful when you make that move. I mean usually people are pretty receptive that they want to see what you're doing. But it's your approach and it's your attitude and if you're cocky and a little over the top about it, probably not great. A little humbleness might work in your favor…

[00:47:14.000] - SPEAKER: **Eve Honthaner**

When you start a new job, the people who hired you are not looking to see how talented you are right off the bat. What's going to impress them is your great attitude and your work ethic. Once they fall in love with you and feel like you're a great fit and they like you, then they're gonna want to get to know you better. And then they may ask you, “So tell me about yourself. Tell me what you do and what you've been working on.” But in the beginning they just care about a great attitude and somebody who's there for them.

[00:47:48.439] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

And they've a job that needs to be done

[00:47:50.590] - SPEAKER: **Andrea McCall**

It's really all about building trust. Trust is the biggest test, it's the biggest factor of how much that person can rely on you and how honest and what your integrity level is to perform the task and then you grow with that and once you're comfortable and they like you then you can say “hey I've got this film” and people are usually more than happy to take a look once you've established that.

[00:47:44.302] - SPEAKER: **Michael Figari**

Make sure it's good though. Like don't show them your mediocre film, especially when it's a boss, unless they're really keen on getting feedback and helping you grow. But if you're showing it with the hopes of turning that into another position somewhere down the way, definitely show them your most polished work.

[00:48:34.790] - SPEAKER: **Jessica Malanaphy**

I think that's really key is just being respectful of their time. That's where it all goes back to for me is don't ask for notes on the first draft of your script, you know, make sure that this is something you think is 100 percent of the way there before you ask for that feedback and if you can make it easier for them, do it. Like if you have a friend who does coverage in another company or something like that and you can attach their coverage that's positive to your script and make it that much more enticing for them to read, I think that always helps too.

[00:49:00.219] - SPEAKER: **Laurie Luh**

Right, sizzle reel, trailer. You know, a short film. You know if you've got something that's a little bit light touch to get started once they've asked for it

[00:49:08.621] - SPEAKER: **Jessica Malanaphy**

Which goes back to being okay with rejection. Just because you show your work to your boss doesn't mean that they're going to be able to help you with that, doesn't mean that they're gonna be able to pass it on to their bosses. So being able to take no or take whatever constructive criticism they might be able to offer you.

[00:49:21.793] - SPEAKER: **Michael Figari**

I think approaching it just from wanting growth for yourself, not necessarily finding another job is kind of key, like getting there. Looking for their feedback to help you grow as an artist if that's, if you're a writer, director, or whatever is much more constructive for you long term.

[00:49:38.840] - SPEAKER: **Andrea McCall**

I think that's right. I think it's in the approach. Like if somebody comes to me and says, you know, “Oh I think this is ready to attach a director,” I'm like whoa, okay. As opposed to “this is you know my second, third Polish whatever it is, can you take a look and see what you think” is a much better approach than hey…

[00:49:57.981] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

I'm ready for you to package this.

So in the whole scheme of things there's a balance of talent and business skills and what do you think the mix of that is?

[00:50:10.000] - SPEAKER: **Michael Figari**

Talent without tact is really not very useful.

[00:50:13.250] - SPEAKER: **Jessica Malanaphy**

I think there's a third part of it, which is experience. Look I think what I learned… I always tell people that my film school was Andrea McCall and the reason why was because in the story department we had access to every script that was submitted to DreamWorks as long as it wasn't confidential. We had access to every single draft that had been written for every single produced movie and so that was my education was just reading and consuming and then reading what the professional readers thought of each script and talking to Andrea about it. And Andrea was wonderful because she'd come back from weekend read meetings and say here's what all the executives thought about it. And so it's for me it's about accumulating all of that data from your own work and experience that then boosts your talent and lets you have a place you're speaking from when you say that I would rather do it this way which is innovative or I know that this way works because I've read it four times in these different types of scripts. That to me outweighs talent or business skills.

[00:51:05.180] - SPEAKER: **Laurie Luh**

I'd say the other piece of that is attitude. Almost 90 percent of all terminations now are due to attitude. In every case with every client I'm working with, back at my Participant days, if there was an aptitude and they've got some experience depending on the level of the job I'll still be looking for the attitude. It'll get you so far. So, you have to have a great, great attitude.

[00:51:28.450] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

Okay. Now if you get the interview and you're in there what are some of the questions that you should ask when they say “Do you have any questions?” I think you should never say “Naw I'm good.”

[00:51:37.121] - SPEAKER: **Michael Figari**

And also ask just long term what opportunities are there for my growth whether it's expanding my skillset or whatever that means to you. Just ask them what opportunities they have there to learn. Not just what the job consists of but what you can learn while you're there. Hopefully you indicate that you're willing to work hard and do whatever the job takes to get done and have good work ethic. But also that you are wanting to learn and grow not just cash in very meager paycheck and go home.

[00:52:08.590] - SPEAKER: **Laurie Luh**

Yeah. I think also the, you know a lot of companies are listing their vision and mission and core values but especially if you're talking to the person that you'll be working for directly, kind of how they see that and how they keep those going at in the job at hand. How are they living the mission and the values? And then what type of person are they looking for in that role? Going back to attitude just to make sure that you're kind of lined up that way so you know what are you looking for.

[00:52:40.650] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

And then at what point if you are offered the job should you negotiate salary?

[00:52:44.400] - SPEAKER: **Michael Figary**

Ask them what it pays right when they offer you that position. You know, that's my mindset.

[00:52:40.650] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

That you negotiate that first offer for your very first job or do you wait until you're in a higher position?

[00:52:54.810] - SPEAKER: **Jessica Malanaphy**

You're probably not going to have the opportunity to negotiate on your very first job. They probably have a starting base salary and it is what it is. I think that once you've put in the time and proven yourself you should set a benchmark where you're going to ask for a raise and say I've proven myself, I'd like to stay at the company. Here's what I need and I think that there are a lot of people who are afraid to ask for those raises going forward at a company but probably not when you're hired.

[00:53:19.530] - SPEAKER: **Michael Figari**

I would respectfully slightly disagree though. Rule of thumb for life everything's negotiable. And if someone offers you a salary and you realize it might be a little lower than what you need to cover your base expenses which happens a lot with assistant positions unfortunately. I think just asking very politely if there's any more room on that or…

[00:53:41.445] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

Never hurts

[00:53:42.154] - SPEAKER: **Michael Figari**

Never hurts. The worst thing you're going to tell you is no and they're not going to rescind your job offer just because you asked for more money and a lot of employers actually they may not acquiesce to that but they'll respect you for it.

[00:53:57.440] - SPEAKER: **Andrea McCall**

I think that's right. I agree.

[00:53:55.475] - SPEAKER: **Michael Figari**

We all gotta get paid.

[00:53:56.890] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

As people who hire, are you rescinding an offer because someone negotiates?

[00:54:00.656] - SPEAKER: **ALL**

No no no no.

[00:54:02.210] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

Do you find that men negotiate more often than women?

[00:54:04.177] - SPEAKER: **ALL**

Hundred percent, Yes. I do.

[00:54:05.698] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

That brings us to our Martini Shot, which is our last shot of the day. What is everybody's parting advice? Biggest takeaway, point you didn’t get to make yet that you think is important?

[00:54:18.540] - SPEAKER: **Laurie Luh**

I'll start. Well I was speaking at the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences to their academy gold programs - worth looking up a great diversity and inclusion program The Academy puts together - and I told the students really the number one thing for me is a Steve Martin quote: “Be So Good They Can't Ignore you.”

[00:54:36.704] - SPEAKER: **Andrea McCall**

That's good. But work at a talent agency. If you're straight out of school, everyone seems to be really, you know, they don't want to do that path but you learn so much being at an agency. It's just so much and all the executives that I know of prefer someone who is coming off an agent's desk because that's how you learn the business.

[00:54:05.698] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

Because you could see all the parts.

[00:54:57.064] - SPEAKER: **Andrea McCall**

You can’t go wrong. Through a process of osmosis, just by sitting there you can't help but absorb and learn so much about the business and what's going on. And you're making your contacts, your initial group of friends that you're going to rise up through the industry with. I found it valuable, that's how I started out. And I just see it with so many other kids.

[00:55:17.310] - SPEAKER: **Jessica Malanaphy**

It's also kind of a stamp of approval that you've been through the fire and you know that as somebody hiring that that that person can cut it.

[00:55:24.246] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

Michael.

[00:53:25.656] - SPEAKER: **Michael Figari**

Don't let people's bad behavior or poor attitudes especially in players embitter you or detract from whatever reason got you here in the first place got you out here. There’ll be a lot of obstacles and don't let that detract you from your goal.

[00:55:41.310] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

Keep your eyes on the prize. Jessica, before the gardeners get any closer.

[00:55:44.466] - SPEAKER: **Jessica Malanaphy**

It's about exploring every avenue and taking you know the road less traveled as you're looking for those jobs but then also you know don't be determined that this is my path and I have to get this job to lead to that job. You never know where different things are going to lead and you may not want to take the job at the agency but it's going to open a lot of doors and being able to follow those moments of serendipity.

[00:56:07.400] - SPEAKER: **Eve Honthaner**

OK, passion. Have a lot of passion. It's very attractive. It's if you're passionate about being in a job and about the industry it will attract people to you. Also, know the business that you want to be in. Read the trade papers, go to events, watch old classic movies, know about the industry. Know who people are. Who's who, who's doing what. It's also very attractive to potential employers.

[00:56:42.000] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

And read Eve’s books!

[00:56:48.410] - SPEAKER: **Julie Harris Walker**

This has been Catch A Break the insider’s guide to breaking into and navigating Hollywood. I'm Julie Harris Walker. I want to thank our panelists Laurie Luh, Michael Figari, Andrea McCall Jessica Malanaphy and Eve Honthaner. And special thanks to our intern Akiva Nemetsky and our consultant Lee Schneider of Red Cup Studios. Thanks also to Audio Department who generously provided the recording equipment and Jean Malanaphy who designed our logo. And a big thank you to Andrew Joslin who created our theme song “Mantra for a Struggling Artist,” and any additional music you hear throughout. Catch A Break is produced by Jeanette Voltruno, Jessica Malanaphy, Marcy Browne, Rick Osaka. Shirley Davis and me. Julie Harris Walker. You're gonna want to check out our next episode which is entitled “What are all these forms and who are all these people.” This is the episode where we're going to go through a call sheet. Who is everybody on a set and what are they doing? And we're gonna do that for scripted TV and film and also unscripted or reality television. And we're gonna give you samples of those forms you can follow along so go find that episode next. You can find us at CatchABreakpodcast.com and that is also where you can go to download the bonus materials. Join our mailing list so you don't miss an episode or other programs. And we want to hear from you. So reach out to the web site. Again, that's CatchABreakpodcast.com and also follow us on Facebook and on Twitter. Thanks for listening and we hope this helps you to Catch A Break.