



5
MISTAKES
to avoid
while getting
started in
SPORTSCASTING

richhollenberg.com

Mistake #1: Pigeonholing Your Talents

At this point in your career, it can be hard to see where you'll end up. If you get too focused on one goal, you might miss out on other opportunities along the way. Always remember: There are no small jobs! I took a job at Home Shopping Network at an early point in my career. It wasn't a sports network, but it still helped me hone my craft. The cliché is true: It's not about the destination, it's about the journey.

HOW TO SHIFT:

Recognize that there's value in versatility. Good things come to those who hustle and keep trying. If someone gives you an opportunity, take it. JUST SAY YES! Make yourself available as a fill-in, and it could lead to something more permanent. That internship, that freelance gig, that job that isn't exactly what you're striving for... that opportunity could introduce you to the right person and also teach you some things about broadcasting you hadn't known before.

Mistake #2: Talking Too Much

NEWSFLASH: We don't get paid by the word! One of the most common mistakes young sportscasters make is talking too much. It may be nerves - or worse - lack of preparation, but over-talking is bad for so many reasons. Never forget: We are not the story. The game is. The person we're interviewing is. The analyst is.

HOW TO SHIFT:

Three words: Let. It. Breathe. After a big play, lay out! Let the viewer/listener hear the roar of the crowd. Even when it's not a big play, it's always a good habit to occasionally stop talking, so you can hear the sneakers squeaking, the crack of the bat, the puck ping against the pipes. What we say should punctuate the moment, not take away from it.

Mistake #3: Not Enough Networking

Sportscasting can be a small world. Someone you meet at a college game may turn out to be the hiring manager for an upcoming internship or part-time role you're interested in. Be bold and get out there. Too many people get nervous or intimidated about networking when they're getting started, but I'll let you in on a secret...those of us who are in sportscasting love what we do and love to talk about it.

HOW TO SHIFT:

This is a relationship business. Growing your networking tree is as vital to your success as your on-air talents. Make that phone call. Set up a meeting. You'll be pleasantly surprised how many people are happy to help.

Mistake #4: Reading Not Speaking

If you're a great researcher, it can be tempting to rely on your notes too much. However, relying too heavily on notes or on the teleprompter can detract from your overall presentation and have a noticeable impact on your energy and presentation.

HOW TO SHIFT:

Practice, learn, and practice some more, then have the confidence to show your personality when you're on camera. Anyone can read from a screen or a script – but doing it well is an art form unto itself. You have to write like you talk. And you have to talk instead of read! It will help build a connection with the people watching and listening to you.

Mistake #5: Comparing Yourself To Others

In today's social media-heavy landscape, it's easy to see others' successes and make comparisons. What you don't see is what's happening behind the scenes. They may have gotten a great job opportunity, but how many were they turned down for before scoring this success?

HOW TO SHIFT:

Run your own race. Your only competition is yourself – are you making progress? Are you doing something new/exciting/challenging that you weren't doing six months ago? Set goals for yourself when it comes to learning, researching, practicing, and networking. When you look back a few months from now, you should see consistent progress happening and be better equipped when the right opportunity does arise.

If you're looking for your opportunity to break into the business, I can help. My Break In & Break Through program is designed to help you hone your craft and navigate the tricky waters in a crowded, competitive field. This program could be the thing that sets you apart. The experience you'll have, the knowledge you'll gain, and the connections you'll make will help make you the best sportscaster you can be.

