



**TOP 10 THINGS I
LEARNED AT 100**

INTRODUCTION

Thanks for downloading this! It's been a rewarding & humbling experience to work with so many talented individuals through my Break In & Break Through program.

I'm amazed to see how fast it's taken off & how well it's been received by such a wide range of people looking to succeed in sportscasting. There are now over 100 announcers, reporters, & anchors who are **#BreakInBreakThrough** Alumni.

We all learn so much through the course of the 8 weeks together, me included!

Here are my Top 10 takeaways. I call it,

“What I Learned at 100”



1. CULTIVATE YOUR CONFIDENCE

Ralph Waldo Emerson said:

“That in which we persist becomes easier to do. Not that the nature of the thing has changed, but that our power to do so has increased.”

There are many ways to build your confidence as a sportscaster. The most crucial is also the most basic: **Practice**. Rehearse your on-camera open with your analyst and crew. Read over your stand-up before your live shot. Go over (& over) your script before you see it in the teleprompter.

Practice = Preparation = Power.

That power is **CONFIDENCE**. And confidence allows you to be your very best on-air.



2. COUNT THE WINS

Fear of failure can be the most hurtful emotion when you are trying to succeed in anything, and for our purposes, when you are trying to be the best sportscaster you can be. Just like the cliché says “It’s harder to smile than to frown,” it takes more effort to focus on the positives than it does to let the negatives creep in and take hold of your mental state.

To combat this, take time every day to celebrate the little victories that come along. I like to say, “**Count the Wins.**”

These wins can be professional, but they can also be personal. If you get to spend quality time with your loved ones, that’s as much a win as landing a great freelance gig. A great workout counts as much as a great game you call.

Always remember: **There is no such thing as a loss.** We either **WIN**, or we **LEARN**.



3. BE COURAGEOUS

I read a lot of books on the Stoics, the ancient leaders & philosophers whose advice & beliefs mean as much today as they did two thousand years ago. One of my favorite takeaways from these Roman rulers: We are not born courageous. But we can learn to be brave. What's more, we don't have to summon this bravery all the time. Sometimes, we just need to be brave for a few moments.

This holds true when you're nervous about an assignment (covering a new sport, interviewing an athlete/coach, etc.), but never more so than when you're anxious about reaching out to connect with someone you admire. You might think, 'What if they're rude? What if they blow me off?' Well, nothing ventured, nothing gained. You don't ask, you don't get!

Summon those few moments of embarrassing courage & put yourself out there. After all, as the saying goes, **"Everything you ever wanted is on the other side of fear."**



4. HUMBLE & HARD-WORKING

I was listening to Arnold Schwarzenegger on a podcast recently, & he was discussing how he never puts himself above others in whatever situation or environment he finds himself in – movies, politics, you name it. Arnold is famous for eating lunch with the crew during breaks on his movie sets. When someone asked him why he does that, his answer was simple: 'I am the crew.'

The greatest compliment I've ever been paid as a sportscaster came from one of my first partners calling college basketball games for ESPN. Adrian Branch, a former Maryland Terrapin star, & NBA champ with the Lakers, told me he enjoyed announcing with me because I'm "humble & hard-working."

Everyone has talent. Everyone can be passionate. But if you possess those qualities & still have the modesty & work ethic like the Terminator... then you're ready to be your very best.



5. THE THIEF OF JOY

Social media provides a number of positives for anyone who uses any of the multitude of platforms out there. But the biggest pitfall caused by Instagram, X, TikTok, You Tube, & Facebook? Our lives are laid out for everyone to see, all the time. And the moments posted & shared with the world are only the varnished, filtered, edited ones to make everything look... perfect. No wonder we all suffer to some degree from trying to keep up with the Jones's!

This phenomenon existed long before social media, though. President Teddy Roosevelt said "Comparison is the thief of joy." Mark Twain took it one step further when he wrote, "Comparison is the death of joy."

Both are true, then & now.

Run your own race! Don't compare yourself to your classmates, your coworkers, or your colleagues. It will sap you of every ounce of passion you have for this craft to pursue; this path you've chosen for yourself. It's wasted energy. There's no one single road to success in sportscasting. Enjoy the journey, because it's yours & yours alone.



6. LESS IS MORE

A lot of what we cover in the Break In Break Through cohort is universally beneficial for all disciplines of sportscasting. The best example of this is something I learned in journalism school at Syracuse: **Less is more.**

Easier said than done, right? I know! We all have so much to say, & so much of it is good stuff! **But you have to be your best editor.**

Broadcasters have to follow the same rule as broadcast writers: Keep it short. Keep it simple. This is true for reporters & anchors & PxP announcers. If you script something, scan it with a critical eye & ask yourself, "How can I make this tighter?"

When you're calling a game & a big moment arises, lay out after that moment. Depending on the situation, that can last a few beats, or 30 seconds. But the unwavering truth is this: **the less we speak, the more valuable our words become.**



7. GET COMFORTABLE BEING UNCOMFORTABLE

Nothing about finding success in sportscasting is easy. Improving your delivery is hard. Finding a job is hard. Creating a demo reel is hard. You must embrace the difficulties, and double down on them. When I advise people to get comfortable being uncomfortable, I do so because being uncomfortable is where you will grow the most. It literally takes you out of your figurative “comfort zone.”

Try new things on air. Experiment with your assignments. That’s why I say, **“Get in the lab!”** Do the hard stuff. The results you want will come quicker & be more satisfying if you do.



8. NETWORKING

I am a Networking Evangelist. I used to suck at it. I learned the hard way how valuable it is. And now I look back on my career & realize it's the single most valuable tool in my toolbox. You are fortunate. You have the internet. E-mail. Social media. It's easier than ever to get in touch. **But the key is staying in touch.**

We are in the relationship business. If you don't maintain relationships, they disappear. If you don't keep in touch with people who can help you, why should they be motivated to help you? These are people who will go to bat for you, advise you, critique your demo reel, recommend you for job openings.

Think of your sportscasting network like a tree. If you water your tree, it builds strong roots & grows beautiful branches. Those are your relationships. If you don't tend to this tree, it will wither & die. Carve out time to grow new branches of your network, & strengthen the ones you already have.

Your success in sportscasting depends on it.

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9. VALUE IN VERSATILITY

I used to worry incessantly about being a “**Jack of all trades, master of none.**” Even though in my heart I loved reporting & anchoring as much as I loved play-by-play, I feared that doing all of these things would make me less attractive for specific jobs, and worse, even if I did all of these things well, it also meant I could never be great at any of them. **I was wrong.**

Now more than ever, there's an emphasis placed on your ability to be versatile within the sportscasting industry. Can you call multiple sports as a PxP announcer? Can you be an MMJ, shooting & editing your own reporter packages?

The more versatile you are, the more indispensable you become.

10. AND FINALLY ... FEEDBACK!

I started this **Break In & Break Through** program with one main goal in mind. I saw something that is fundamentally lacking in our industry, & I wanted to provide a solution.

What do we all need to be the best version of ourselves as sportscasters?

FEEDBACK.

What are we missing from our colleagues, let alone from our bosses? **FEEDBACK!**

Critical feedback is so scarce on every level of this business. Whether it's local, regional, or national, the farther up the ladder you advance, the harder it is to find out what you're doing right, & what you can do better.

You can fool yourself into thinking social media provides feedback, but all you really get is a quick-fix ego boost. Likes & Thumbs Ups & Hearts.

(A side benefit of this process: obtaining feedback helps you develop a thick skin, which will come in handy. We all hear a lot more No's than Yes's in our careers. Get used to it!)

I've seen the positive results of critical evaluations firsthand from the 100+ alumni who've come through this program.

It's real & it works.



These 10 learnings will serve you well as a sportscaster at any stage of your career.

But they are just the tip of the iceberg. There's so much more valuable information to share with you through my cohort.

I invite you to visit richhollenberg.com to read what people are saying about their experiences & find out how you can be part of the Next 100.

COUNT THE WINS!