

What Else Can I Do With These Skills?

ACES National Conference, 2009

Job Resources

Breaking into a new career often requires creativity, but employers in many fields rely on writers and editors. It would be impossible to list every possible area to search, but what follows are some categories we are familiar with and some advice for looking into these areas.

Getting started: Large online job sites such as Monster, CareerBuilder, Craigslist and Yahoo contain many jobs related to journalism. Search for terms such as *editor, editing, communications, Web producer* and *media*. Don't forget your local newspaper or its Web site.

The [ACES site](#) is an excellent resource for jobs, as are sites for organizations like [PRSA](#) (for public relations), the [Poynter Institute](#) and the [Society for News Design](#). [JournalismJobs.com](#) has listings for everything from newspapers, magazines and online sites to trade publications, newsletters and public relations.

Start networking: If you're interested in a certain field, become a member of the professional umbrella group. Attend functions to learn and network. Let your friends, neighbors and business acquaintances know that you're looking. You never know – your next job lead could come from a neighbor's friend over coffee.

Use resources like [LinkedIn](#), [MySpace](#) and [Facebook](#) to circulate information about you and your skills.

Some areas to consider

Advertising and public relations

- Many companies use editors in what they call “quality assurance,” meaning someone who can see through the problems in ads or press releases.
- Jobs are sometimes listed under *copywriter* or *tech editor*.
- Jobs are generally posted on the sites of individual companies.
- Some of these jobs require both writing and editing. For instance: internal communications for larger companies, and public or community relations.
- Also look into thriving industries such as energy.

Businesses

- Health organizations (see www.healthjournalism.org/) and financial services companies such as the Capital Group (www.capgroup.com/careers/) rely on journalists of all types to write and edit publications and manage Web sites.
- Many businesses are eager to provide information on the Web, so knowledge of content management systems and other types of Web publishing will open doors at many types of organizations.

Education

- Individual colleges and universities post jobs on their Web sites, whether for traditional teaching positions or for writers and editors for publications, sports information, alumni associations, public relations offices (sometimes called *university relations*). These jobs often have the added benefit of reduced or free tuition to that college or university.
- If you are interested in teaching a class, watch for openings for *adjunct professors*, meaning people from outside the universities hired to teach specific classes.
- The [Chronicle of Higher Education](#), a newspaper devoted to higher education, contains perhaps the largest collection of job advertisements from across the United States.
- Create your own class. Many colleges, especially community colleges, offer continuing education classes.

Freelance editing

- Many small publications hire freelance editors, as does the book industry. Freelance Success is a good resource for finding these types of jobs: www.freelancesuccess.com/.
- Many university presses and academic journals use only freelance editors. Having a subject specialty (history, biology, art, etc.) helps.

Government

- The federal government and state governments employ writers and editors in many different agencies. Each state's official site is a good place to start, as it usually lists jobs within all state agencies. For an excellent listing of state government sites, as well as sites of individual agencies and county and city governments, see [State and Local Government.net](#). For federal government jobs see USAJobs.gov.

Magazines

- Editing jobs take on many forms, from proofreader to fact-checker to production editor to management.
- [Media Bistro](#) contains news about journalism, including a running blog of media news and job listings from around the country. The site also offers tips on how to improve in one's journalism profession.
- [Ed \(2010\)](#) was started by a group of graduates whose goal was to become magazine editors by the year 2010. The site includes access to a weekly newsletter about the magazine world, including open jobs and rumored open jobs.
- [Folio magazine](#) prides itself on being the "magazine for magazine management." It not only updates readers on what's new in the magazine world, but also includes articles and interviews from insiders and experts whose advice can help those with magazine careers.

Nonprofits

- Foundations, civic groups and other nonprofit organizations all have editors of some type, as do museums. A recent [article](#) in the Christian Science Monitor described a trend toward nonprofit newspapers.

Web publications

- Copy editors are well-suited to the jobs of content editors and producers for Web sites. Often, these jobs involve selecting the best, most relevant content and writing the snappy headlines that appear on home pages and places on the sites. In Seattle and other large cities, talent agencies place people with big corporations (i.e., Microsoft). After you register with them, they look for opportunities that align with your skills and interests.

Other places to look for online jobs:

- [Online News Association](#) Considers itself “open to those whose principal livelihood is journalism with experience or interest in producing news for online publication.” Requires a \$50 annual membership fee to gain access to jobs database and other information.
- [CyberJournalist.net](#) Calls itself “a news and resource site that focuses on how the Internet, convergence and new technologies are changing the media.” Access to its jobs database is free.
- Online-only new sites such as [examiner.com](#).

Trade publications

- Trade publications, trade associations, law firms, lobbying groups and similar organizations employ writers, Web editors and copy editors. Many of these publications operate much like traditional news operations, except they are for specific groups or industries.
- Some of these jobs require specialized knowledge of groups or industries, but many do not. For a list of many of these publications, see this site: <http://www.newsdirectory.com/index.php>. It also contains a specific [page](#) about trade publications.

Information sources

Colleen Eddy's weekly column on careers www.poynter.org/column.asp?id=84 is an excellent source. In a [column last year](#), she offered these suggestions for assessing your next career move:

Ask yourself what you really want:

- What are your top 10 priorities for your personal life and your career?
- What work would you be happy doing?
- What are you good at that will give you a sense of satisfaction?
- Where do you want to do that?
- What are your core values that keep you committed to your job?
- Where is a company that shares those values?
- Where do you really want to live? (Is this a time to get "back home," however you define that?)
- How far are you willing to move?
- How much money do you need to make this move good for you and your family?

Ask yourself what you have to offer:

- What are your accomplishments?
- What strengths have you developed as you met challenges that seemed overwhelming?
- How have you survived in such a changing world?
- What technology has become part of your repertoire?
- How have you cultivated teamwork, leadership skills, learning on the fly?
- What were some of the results of your work and how did they help the company?
- Who at your company would speak well of you?
- What would your bosses say?