

Contacts - building them

Wisdom and Inspiration · By Simon Townsend · 1 min read

Building contacts is one of the most important things a journalist does. Say you're in insurance broking, so you already have a list of contacts: people for whom you've brokered insurance or people you're hoping to do work for. Everyone whose phone number you write down is a "contact". Everyone is a story. Everyone knows of a story. Everyone you involve in a story becomes a contact, as you may return to them again some day for information or quotes, or to do another story on them. All contacts must be put into a Filofax type diary/addressbook or into a PDA (personal digital assistant, like a Palm Pilot). Editors say: "Every reporter is only as good as his contact book." Your big fat Yellow Pages directories are a kind of contact book. Everyone in there wants people to phone them, everyone in there would be willing to participate in a story . . . think about it. The most "productive method" of building a contact book is to never miss an opportunity an opportunity to take a business card or write down a name, company or organisation, title, work phone, home phone, email address, mobile and fax number. You can note other matters like: spouse's name, PA's name, and so on.

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