

Working For A Living: The Workplace Beat

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Maybe this is cheesy but since we're promoting our blogs and stuff I brought a copy of my book.

Nobodies bio was that complete, I'm a little embarrassed that you'll know about my basset hound. By the way if anybody wants a basset hound. No, he's a darling, just a little smelly.

I'll start with my book because I write about a lot of things. As a staff writer at Time I don't have a beat per say, none of us really do. We don't have columns, we don't have sections so much in the magazine as we all are sort of deployed to write about whatever comes up. I've recently written about the gaudy love child; I've written about porn studies at colleges but I also write often about the workplace.

And here I'll tell you that many of you may have heard that Time magazine is undergoing some changes. And so if you invited me three or six months from now I might have a completely different take on what it is that our esteemed editor likes in workplace stories. But I'll tell you under Jim Kelly's Time Magazine we look for... I think Lisa Belk in of the New York Times puts it best when she says she likes to write about the intersection of work and life. And that's very much Jim Kelly's take on all things business and/or work.

Things that pertain to people first and foremost; I'm not interested in many company products; I don't for the most part do executive profiles; I don't review management books and stop sending them to me. I have so many and I alone and responsible for the destruction of many forests but it bothers me greatly; it keeps me up at night. So please keep the pitches to emails. I'll take phone calls occasionally although I may be terse and abrupt. It's not because I don't care or aren't interested in a subject it's because I'm on a deadline.

The workplace subjects that we're interested in are trends for the most part. I'm curious to hear about how people are working today; how the workplace is changing; what's new, what's interesting? I wrote recently about personality trends or tests for people looking for jobs. That's not necessarily new and at

times we don't necessarily need it to be, you know, razors edge news. You know something that's news worthy and a newish trend is good enough for us.

I've written recently about executives that lie on their resumes, obviously no news hook there but an interesting pitch would have been at that moment when I was writing that story for instance if you represent a company that has software that helps track lies on resumes. I got such a pitch today, a couple weeks too late so I couldn't use it in the story but had I gotten at that moment.

A lot of it, I imagine your jobs are extremely difficult because a lot of it has to do with timing right, if you happen to catch us exactly when we're writing that story then we're all over you, otherwise we're not. And how do you gauge that? Often media impacts, I'm sure you all know this and if something is happening or somebody is writing about something you notice that everybody else is writing about that at that exact same moment probably that's a good signal.

If you see a big story in an influential publication, The Wall Street Journal and you know The Boston Globe, probably the rest of the national media are going to start looking into that. And I promise you it's not all about copying, I don't know it's this weird convergence, a lot of us, we're like monkeys, we're all thinking about the same things at the same time for whatever reason.

So if you, and I can't tell you how to do this other than to think like journalists, but if you start to feel a trend coming on probably we're thinking about it too and probably it's a good time to contact us right then and say hey 'if you're working on this kind of story I have a client that might be of interest to you'. Tell me why and have that be that.

E-mail is best and please leave the trend itself; if you have a study or a survey or any kind of numbers, figures that might help us build such a storey then that's always of use. Please feel free to follow up with a phone call or an email but in general I think that the focus from your end that will be most helpful to me is again to focus on the trends. Thank you.