

**Amy Staniszewski – BA English and Creative Writing
Marketing and Sales Assistant for ACUTEK Limited**



How did you get your job?

Towards the end of my studies I was trying to apply for as many jobs as I could in Marketing, PR and Communications. I found the job at ACUTEK on LinkedIn so it was actually a really easy process where I just sent my profile to the company. ACUTEK then emailed me and asked to have a chat on the phone where I was asked to prepare a piece of writing on Windows 10 to bring to an interview. My modules in Creative Writing really prepared me for this aspect of the application process because I had been taught craft writing in an engaging and thought-provoking way. I was offered the job during the interview and the company were happy to take me on after I had handed in my dissertation.

What does your role involve?

ACUTEK is a small company of twenty five people so I am the only person running the marketing activity on a day-to-day basis, which enables me to gain a lot of experience in many different areas of marketing. I produce all content for the company comprising of: blogs, videos, playbooks, emails, case studies, press releases and printed marketing collateral. One of the major aspects of my role is organising and implementing events in the form of seminars, webinars and trade shows. Additionally, I manage the social media for the company posting updates on Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube and Google Plus. I also liaise with our partners and clients to compliment the company's marketing activities, which involves working with household names like Microsoft and Dell. The company is currently supporting me in studying for a Diploma in Professional Marketing from the Chartered Institute of Marketing which will give me the skills needed to become a Marketing Manager.

How has your degree helped you?

My degree has been extremely useful. I studied a range of modules ranging from Literature, Language, Creative Writing and modules outside of the main discipline. I don't feel like I have just received a piece of paper that says that I have a degree. I have been well educated. One module I found particularly useful was 'Hacking the Book: Skills for the Digital Age' which involved looking at different digital communications and applying knowledge in groups to the development of an iPhone app named 'iBrum.' Different groups worked together throughout the year including: Finance, Planning, Design, Content and Marketing. I was part of the Marketing team whilst also contributing to Design and it really helped me to discover what I was good at and how I could use it in the real world. 'Hacking the Book' definitely shaped my career aspirations and helped me know where I was going.

What Careers Network services did you use whilst at Birmingham?

I attended two Careers Network workshops in my second year. One was for publishing and the other was for marketing. At this point in time I was really set on the idea of going into publishing but I didn't know much about the different avenues. I just wanted to be an Editor. I learnt a lot from the workshops and realised that marketing was a better choice for me personally.

What experience did you have before you applied for your role?

For three and a half years while studying for my BA, and then an MA at the University of Warwick, I worked as a Library Assistant at Walsall Council. While this job was a great student job it also helped me in my role in marketing. The library service attended community events which I helped to organise and implement. As time progressed I became involved in producing marketing collateral. My confidence dramatically changed when I started working in library services which has helped a lot for my career. I also created further experience for myself with online activities. I created an online artwork portfolio called 'The Quotes Project' which amassed over 1.7 million views and generated a successful merchandise store, Tumblr and YouTube channel.

What advice would you give to students who want to get into the area you're working in?

Raise your own profile online - make sure you're using social media (professionally!) to be able to show you have a basic understanding of digital communications. I would also start building your knowledge in different areas of content creation, for example I am proficient with using video editing software.

Amy's top tips:

- **Think about what's possible.** One of the turn offs for publishing for me was there is very little work outside of London, and while I would love to live there, there are also a lot of points to consider before doing so.
- I would **make a plan of what you want to do.** It doesn't have to be a strict plan but just so you have an idea of where you are going. You need to decide if you want to go into work straight away or do further study and if you do what that further study will be.
- Starting your first graduate job can be a really tough change to experience. You're used to studying and knowing what you are doing and then you're thrown in at the deep end. Remember that **any pressure that you get put under is good for you**, it's all good experience and you will know what you are doing in no time.
- It's important to know that you are not going to know what you're doing straight away even if you feel like you should. **Everything takes time.**