

Career Profile

Jessica Kostka, Corporate Sales Co-ordinator: Edmonton Oilers Hockey Club

By: Megan Teall, Student Career Leader

Following an Honours Bachelor of Arts degree in kinesiology and physical education from Wilfrid Laurier University in 2006, Jessica Kostka developed a keen interest in the business side of the sports industry. With this in mind, she went on to achieve a Graduate Certificate in Sport Business Management from Durham College, which included a Hockey Operations internship with the NHL's Nashville Predators. The key to any successful job search is capitalizing on your network, which is exactly what Jessica did. She utilized her many contacts within the hockey industry including her father, who played and coached for York University as well as her brother who is the Captain of the University of Massachusetts Minutemen Hockey team. Jessica currently holds the position as corporate sales co-ordinator for the Edmonton Oilers – a position that allows her to apply her passion for hockey in an exciting and challenging way.



Within her position as Corporate Sales Co-ordinator, Jessica is responsible for planning, organizing and executing sponsorship agreements, which primarily involves planning and executing specific sponsorship events and activities at live games. Each sponsorship project that Jessica is responsible for is a new challenge and adds a great deal of excitement to her position. Through her experience, dedication and excellent time management, Jessica is able to work with a wide variety of clients from larger corporate clients such as Bell or Molson to smaller, local-based Edmonton clients such as Apple Fitness and 630 CHED radio. Each client has different sponsorship needs and requirements.

For anyone considering an event planning role within the sports industry, Jessica has one main piece of advice to offer: volunteer! Volunteer experience will allow you to determine what you truly enjoy doing, as well as build up your résumé and skill set. During Jessica's second year sports management class at Laurier, she was required to organize, plan and execute a sporting event. This experience was a key influence in helping her to decide that a career in sports was in fact what she wanted to pursue. She enjoyed the many management aspects that were involved in holding an event. In addition to gaining relevant volunteer experience, anyone considering a similar career in the industry should consider a post-graduate degree in sports management, or event planning, where you can obtain hands-on experience and ideally an internship.

The sports industry is very competitive and the key is to get your foot in the door. Even if your first volunteer or paid role is not your ideal position, you will want to network, as well as utilize your knowledge and experiences to make the most of the opportunity. Jessica mentioned her many volunteer experiences at charity golf tournaments which required a great deal of personal time, often on weekends. However, many of the organizers and participants often had a strong sports background such as professional hockey alumni. At these events Jessica would take the opportunity to meet and build relationships with as many people as possible who could become beneficial contacts in the future and lead to possible future career opportunities.

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