

Episode 67 - Stephen Friedman

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SPEAKERS

Moira McCullough, Stephen Friedman



Moira McCullough 00:00

Welcome to the College Scoops podcast. I'm your host, Moira McCullough and today we are talking with Stephen Friedman, about what it takes to get a job in the entertainment industry.



Stephen Friedman 00:09

It's my dad who introduced me to his friend who had a TV research business. So just knowing certain people can get you in the door. The hardest thing is to get in the door.



Moira McCullough 00:29

This is the College Scoops podcast and I'm your host Moira McCullough, we focus on everything college related from the admissions process to where to eat, stay and explore on and round campuses. Our guests include founders, educators, authors and experts in the college space. Join us as these experts share their knowledge, experiences and lessons learned to help you have stress free and formative and tasty college journeys. Whether it's your first or last child going to college, or you're just interested in going to a college town for a game or meal, we've got you covered. If you haven't already, please subscribe to the College Scoops podcast to get the inside scoop on everything college related and leave us a review. Thanks to all of our sponsors partners in the entire College Scoops

Ambassador team for helping us bring valuable content to our community. If you would like to support College Scoops as a sponsor, please head over to [patreon@patreon.com/collegescoops](https://patreon.com/collegescoops) and sign up as a sustaining listener, insider or Deluxe sponsor. We have exclusive benefits for our members free ebooks and even a College Scoops care package. Stephen Friedman, a graduate of the University of Rochester began his career with TV research in New York City. After a few years he transitioned to a studio career at 20th Century Fox, rising through the ranks of research in Fox's syndication division. Stephen later became head of research and spent four years learning TV sales as head of Fox's syndication office. Following that he returned to LA as head of market research for Fox. In 2000. Stephen was recruited by Discovery Networks in Miami to oversee their marketing research and communication efforts in Latin America, Spain and Portugal. Adding international experience to his repertoire was invaluable as it provided a new perspective on what constitutes success, and was extremely helpful when he returned to the US business. After three and a half years in Miami, Stephen went back to the domestic side as VP of Northeast sales for Warner Brothers domestic television based in New York. He then spent 17 years building up invaluable station contacts that have been a great asset in his long TV career, and even helps tremendously now in his current consulting job. Stephen can count on these relationships now as he helps to give young people critical access to how the television business works. Stephen currently resides in Boca Raton, Florida, and is now available for speaking engagements and podcasts as well as mentoring young people on how to pursue a very rewarding career in TV. Welcome to the College Scoops podcast. Thank you so much for joining us today, Stephen.

 **S** Stephen Friedman 03:16
My pleasure.

 **M** Moira McCullough 03:17
Well, you and I met through a very dear friend of mine, Emily Weiss, who is the ultimate connector, she's always introducing people, she

 **S** Stephen Friedman 03:25
She has boundless amounts of energy. She is very powerful, and very intense and gets the job done. And she saw that with my television background I might be of use to her in recruiting young students and millennials. And one of the things we had a long talk about was, do you use the ability to connect people together is something that's very important

when you're just starting out in business, because frankly, the way I started out is my dad introduced me to his friend who had a TV research business. So just knowing certain people can get you in the door. The hardest thing is to get in the door. Once you get in the door, if you're talented, you can go in a million different directions. But getting in the door sometimes especially these days is really a hard thing to do. So I was for I got very lucky.

M

Moira McCullough 04:22

No but you know what, you said something that I think is so clear right now and in fact because I have a high school senior but I have a college senior who is graduating and a college junior and I tell them it's about your network, go out and connect with people because you never know what might occur from that. You got your job through a family friend, I got my job through a family friend,

S

Stephen Friedman 04:43

You know on your own is great in good times, in hard it is tough. And not only is doing it on your own hard, you might end up in a situation where you can move laterally if you want to into a different field. You might get stuck at the lowest end of the totem pole. But if you have that connection, if you had somebody in your corner for lack of a better word, you're able to pick and choose a little bit more. What's your field, you want to really master in while you're in your entry level positions?

M

Moira McCullough 05:14

Absolutely. Well, you also said something you have such a vast career and in the entertainment business since you graduated, you were a PoliSci major when I looked at your background. How does the political science major fit into the entertainment business?

S

Stephen Friedman 05:26

When I got out of college, all my friends were making \$25,000 in their jobs, I was told that any political job is an internship or volunteer. And back in the 80s, you know, the job market was a little easier than it is now. So I was like, I can't be making zero while all my friends are making \$20-\$25,000. So actually, it took me six months to find my first job. My first job was at what's called Petry Television, which was a TV rep firm. A TV rep firm is a firm that represents TV stations, who can afford to keep reps in New York to sell to national advertisers. So a rep firm does it for them. So I did research for them for two years. And I had much less money than my friends who were working in banking, I can

assure you. But what's great about that is, and what I tell everybody who comes to me to start out in the business is I learned about what's successful and what's not successful. I learned about ratings and shares and research and how to project numbers, I learned about the most boring stuff, but I'll tell you, if you know how to rate, same judge success, and you know how to read a rating book, which now not a book, it's on all on computer and desks and all that. But if you know how to judge success and read a rating book, you are ahead of the game, I can assure you, that was the greatest experience I ever had, was learning in that way.

M

Moira McCullough 07:07

That was the training ground - we always say try to get in with a company and go through their management training program. That was probably at that industry level a great place, as you said, to lay the foundation.

S

Stephen Friedman 07:19

You're not going to be CEO right away. Everybody should take that out of their mind that I'm going to be CEO of this new startup. When I'm going to be the chief marketing, you have got to learn the basics, right? The basics were - what's your rating, what's his share? To be successful in the business, you know, a lot of television is human nature. And we'll talk about that if you want as we go on. But a lot of knowledge of television is human nature and learning how people spend their day. And you can learn a lot that way. But what was really important for me was to get the experience reading ratings, and back in the 80s ratings were everything.

M

Moira McCullough 08:00

So then you did that particular research job, which gave you a good foundation that you understood the industry language, right? And then how did you progress? Where did you go from there?

S

Stephen Friedman 08:15

Well, I did that for two years. And I did one at a rep firm and one had what was then called MCA Universal, which became Universal Television and it is now NBC Universal. So it's gone through a lot of iterations. So I did research there for a year. And then I get a call from 20th Century Fox to come out and join their research team. Now, I never have been west of Ohio. So going to Los Angeles was a huge step for me, and going to work for Fox

was a huge step for me. And it felt like the bigger leagues if you will, from what I was exposed to. and funny story. First day I got to Fox to interview with the president of the division there was an earthquake that woke me up in the morning. I had my first earthquake, my first day in Los Angeles.

M Moira McCullough 09:11

Well, that would have been a good icebreaker for that interview. Does this happen all the time?

S Stephen Friedman 09:16

No, it doesn't. I've only went to a couple. But going to Fox was a great opportunity. Because at some point, if you want to work for a studio, you got to get the feel of what it's like to work in Los Angeles which is a totally different animal than New York.

M Moira McCullough 09:32

And is that is that unusual to have been called out because you weren't searching for it? So you were kind of recruited for that particular position.

S Stephen Friedman 09:41

So again, it was because I knew somebody okay. I had a friend who worked for Paramount at the time, who said hey, there's a job opening at Fox. Do you want to apply for it? I said sure. And I went out there and applied for it. It was great to go to LA when you're 25 years old, and you've never been to Los Angeles. Man, it looks great. It's like I've never been to a place like this.

M Moira McCullough 10:09

Absolutely. So what were doing? You do you stayed in research?

S Stephen Friedman 10:16

Yes, I stayed in research for three years and I grew through the ranks of the department to ultimately become the VP of Research for 20th Century Fox syndication. I think we should explain what syndication is first. Networks fill their broadcast day in a certain way,

network affiliated programming, which is like General Hospital in the afternoon, Good Morning America in the morning, Grey's Anatomy at night. Those are network programs that stations pay an affiliation fee to run those programs. Okay, another part of their day is spent with news, especially if it's an ABC, CBS, NBC or Fox. They run a lot of news. But they still have to fill 24 hours. So studios will fill the rest of the day with first run syndication like I've worked on Ellen generous. I've worked on extra, the magazine show I've worked on TMZ, the magazine show, or if they're what you would call an independent of my network as CW or Fox, they'll buy sitcoms. I've sold Simpsons was the first big sitcom I sold. And then I sold the X Files for weekends. And then I sold Big Bang Theory in Two and a Half Men.

M Moira McCullough 11:39

Did you like that job? I loved being the head of research. And I'll tell you why. It's funny, because it translates into what I'm doing now. It's fun to teach people the business. We brought you on today because to do exactly what you're doing, which is sharing the industry knowledge and what how you got into it, careers that you've had within the industry. So now you are helping college students and millennials to learn more about the business.

S Stephen Friedman 12:04

All thanks to Emily. She's the one who brought me on board. But what was great about running a research department was you learn so many different when you're in research, or you're in marketing, or you're in support staff, if you will, you deal with a lot of different people might deal with finance, you might deal with sales, you might deal with creative, and they rely on you to tell them the truth. And the funny thing is a lot of people don't like hearing the truth.

M Moira McCullough 12:37

Now, that hasn't changed.

S Stephen Friedman 12:40

I don't think delivering bad news and ratings is one of the hardest things you can do as a head of research. Background ratings really meant something.

M Moira McCullough 12:49

So in terms of understanding the basics, like research, is it really if you had to pick one area to get involved in research would be really good, although it doesn't sound glamorous, it's probably the best training ground, as you said, for that particular industry to kind of find your way of where you would want to go next.

 13:07

Well, it's funny. Once I left research, I went into sales. And I sold the X Files and I sold the Simpsons. And I went to local stations and I sold product, having the knowledge of how to read a rating book, or how to know what successful or how to know what airs when and where gave me such an advantage over just pure sales people.

M Moira McCullough 13:33

I can imagine you're like the deadly salesperson because you know so much.

S Stephen Friedman 13:37

Well, a president my division at Warner Brothers who has ran our division for a while taught us there is like a pyramid. Have you ever seen a pyramid of sales? At the bottom is an order taker. If you want to be an order taker, you can be an order taker in sales. And nobody will be none the wiser. And you'll just stay as an order taker. But the key to be a good salesperson is being a consultant advisor. Somebody they trust somebody they rely on somebody they know has the knowledge to not lie to them to not hoodwink them. And having a research background helps you be a consultant advisor for lack of a better word, so much more than just being a salesperson, because salespeople don't get a great reputation would have stations call me up and say, Do you think I should buy this? And this is not even my program? Right? I was like, No, well, sometimes I said yes.

M Moira McCullough 14:35

So then you were doing that. And then I remember you mentioned in our earlier conversation, you were plucked away and recruited to head up the Latin American Division.



14:46

Well Head of Marketing and Communications and research for Discovery Channel. Latin America, which is the most bizarre thing possible.



Moira McCullough 14:54

Why?



Stephen Friedman 14:55

Because I have no knowledge of the Latin American market.



Moira McCullough 14:59

Why would they want you then?



Stephen Friedman 15:00

You tell me - I had no idea. No, I think what they wanted was, they wanted my US experience. Having knowledge in the US and broadening out to international, you bring a knowledge of the most sophisticated television market out there. So I'll tell you a funny story. They call me up. And they say, Discovery, we'd like to interview you to be the head of whatever marketing, research, communications, whatever. And here's my answer - why? And what I found out was, I was different than anybody they looked at. And I had knowledge of US marketplace dynamics that they would like to apply to Latin America. And it was really interesting, because it applied, it gave me something to apply to today's television marketplace. So I get down to Latin America, and go to 11 interviews, all in English, but they all speak Spanish. You know, so everybody's speaking Spanish. And I don't know Spanish. And everybody has been to Latin America, and I've never been to Latin America. But the knowledge of us experiences what they really wanted. So I go down there, and they say to me, now, I want you to prepare you. ratings in Latin America are in very different than ratings in the United States, where a five rating is considered successful Latin America, I mean, in the United States, maybe a one is considered successful in Latin America. So you have to adjust your perspective. Funny thing is where the US market places today, a one is considered successful. So in 20 years, the ratings barriers of Latin America become the rating success of the United States market. As well, one rating is successful now. But I liked it, I got to travel and it was fun.

M Moira McCullough 16:59

You did the job very well, then.

S Stephen Friedman 17:01

I you know, it's funny, not every job. And this is a good lesson. I think, not every job is perfect that I knew early on that I would like it. I knew early on that it was going to be something that I got a lot of experience out of I traveled a lot, I went to Brazil, it was very weird, I would give interviews in English in Brazil, and they would come out in Portuguese because I always had a translator.

M Moira McCullough 17:30

So in that scenario, when you're coming in, and as you said, you're being brought in because of your US knowledge, and you try to ramp up their particular division, bringing in experts in knowing that you have a good team, right, as well as making sure that people who knew a lot more than I did, I was just there to bring what my knowledge was to the table. So it's great experience when you're talking with college students or millennials now too. If you would never have applied for that job in a sense, because you would have thought there's nothing that I have that they would want. But you don't realize what they were looking for was exactly what you had.

S Stephen Friedman 18:09

But the thing that describes Moira - that you got to look at all the angles. It's not as obvious as it seems. I would never have thought the reason they wanted me was because I was the opposite of what they were used to. And it turns out that what they really wanted, what they really wanted to do was take US initiatives and bring it to Latin America. So you know, we did the silliest things. That sounds so stupid. Now, what were so important back then, putting your website on screen, they didn't do that. So we put the web address on the screen. Always promote. I'll give you an exact example. When you promote, I always tell the viewer where they can find something, when they can find something, and what it is. They never did that. So I always said whenever you do a promo put the time on the channel. Okay, so I mean, it sounds like I'm talking to a five year old. But these are things that are so ingrained in your mind that when you go to a new territory, maybe people aren't doing that, because it's just not done that way.

M Moira McCullough 19:26

Right. So there are a lot of like

S Stephen Friedman 19:28

What we would say like low hanging fruit that you could go in and just immediately tweak a couple things, revamp a couple things and just alone that was incredibly useful and powerful for them. The most valuable thing you have in a TV operation is the screen because that's what people are fixated on. Be at any screen now they they are looking at. If you can put information and you see a now on cable all the time. If you can put information on the screen that helps promote your channel helps from a What's coming up, helps remind people what they're watching. You got to take advantage of it.

M Moira McCullough 20:06

So that's a good segue to my next question is that so much has changed. You've just even described in that how much it's changed in 20 years? What advice do you have for students looking to get into the business now?

i 20:17

Well, the one thing I will tell you is, you have to expect change. What the television business looks like, it's not even television business anymore. It's the media business. It will not look the same in five years. I remember for the first time watching a show on a telephone, I'm not selling my cell phone. And everyone said, nobody's gonna watch a series on a cell phone. Now they do. I remember that. People were like, oh, Netflix, all they do is overnight desks, and you have to return them on what a pain in the butt that is. Now look at them. Absolutely. Why advice always is to expect change. Because that's what you can't stop change. Well, the syndication business, which I grew up in and spent 30 years, and it's in big trouble, in some ways, because it's good. It's relying on linear broadcast television.

M Moira McCullough 21:27

Have you heard about Anchor, it is the easiest way to make a podcast and it's free. You can use their own creation tools to record and edit your podcast right from your phone. Anchor will distribute your podcast for you. So it can be heard on Spotify, apple, podcast, iTunes, and many more. You can make money from your podcast with no minimum

listenership? If it sounds easy it is because it is, here's how you do it. Download the free anchor app, or go to anchor.fm to get started.



Stephen Friedman 22:02

And linear broadcast television is not the hot thing right now.



Moira McCullough 22:06

You know, we always joke about Should we just get rid of it? Because we're not everyone's watching it on their laptops? And what are they watching? And you and I talked about this briefly in our in our first call, you know, Roku, you know, Netflix, you have, as you said all these different streaming platforms.



Stephen Friedman 22:23

I have a 30 year old son. I asked him this question, what is the last time you watched a primetime broadcast show on the time it aired? He said 10 years. Ten years is not watched a broadcast show in its regular time period and 10 years, it is not about the Primetime schedule anymore. People have to adjust to watching that people are watching things when they want to on what they want to. And that's just technology. And that's what students have to realize that things are changing drastically.



Moira McCullough 23:03

Well, I actually think though, that this generation is pretty good with that, right? I mean, they're pretty resilient, savvier than I am, I can assure you. They're constantly learning about new technologies and commuting, communicating in different ways. But what are some of the challenges that you see, having been a successful professional and in an industry that some of the students are coming in with? Like, what do you advise them from that perspective?



Stephen Friedman 23:30

Well, you got to look, you got to look at what the ratings are for broadcast television. ratings have dropped so much that a one rating is considered a success in a lot of ways. When I started out in the business, there was a show called USA Today. This was 1986. It was a television magazine based off of the newspaper. And even saying newspaper makes me sound old. Did a five rating in my business. Got cancelled after one year for low

ratings of five today would be the highest rated show out there.

M Moira McCullough 24:07

I was just going to ask - what is a five? Is five considered the highest?

 24:12

It would be considered a very strong performer. Now a five means that 5% of the homes with television are watching your show. That's what's considered successful. You know, when I was at Fox 25 years ago, Rupert Murdoch said something I thought was very interesting. He said in the future, the only things that will be worth of great value is live news and live sports. And why? Because to the only things that are not real TV that are DVR proof. And that's true. You don't DVR sporting event. You don't DVR live news, because you want to see it as it happens. Right now. There are certain shows in television that people still talk about the bachelors one for example. If you can catch on to one of those, that's a good show to have, because people talk about the next day. And or they recorded watch it the next day. So they still have some recency to that. But you look at CSI or NCIS, or, or sitcoms on television, young Sheldon, which is a show I worked on. It's it's not urgent to watch it when it airs. And that's the biggest change that's happened in the last 35 years.

M Moira McCullough 25:33

No urgency and it's on demand kind of people are, as you just said, they'll watch it when they want, for how long they want. on whatever stream they're watching.

S Stephen Friedman 25:44

I read an article that the network's are downplaying their daily ratings. the network's used to have ratings calls every morning. And now I read an article that the network's are downplaying that. Why are they downplaying that because the ratings aren't there anymore? And they're not they're using different measures of success? They call it impressions now? Yes - But that's what I would say to people who are starting out, have an open mind to what to find success, because what to find success is drastically changing in the media business. Now, it's about subscribers and revenue. And ratings don't mean as much.

M Moira McCullough 26:23

So if you were your younger self, where would you go? If you had a chance?

S Stephen Friedman 26:28

You know what, if my younger self would be very confused, I'd still be at my dad's video store waiting for one of his friends to pick me out of the crowd. Where would I go? I still think the Hollywood studio system has value, because content will always have value. Now they've been hurt, because the pandemic has limited their ability to produce episode. But that's a hard question. I would cast a wide net. Let's put it that way. I would encourage everybody to look at everything.

M Moira McCullough 26:58

And I'd love to ask you this. I am a Blacklist junkie.

S Stephen Friedman 27:02

So I love Spader as well.

M Moira McCullough 27:04

Yes. And I just saw, it's not a spoiler alert at all. But with the COVID hitting most of these shows could not produce the shows. They could not be in person, they could not get together. And they did something very creative.

S Stephen Friedman 27:19

What did they do?

M Moira McCullough 27:20

They basically brought in a bunch of animators. It was like a Marvel cartoon type ending. It was phenomenal. I mean, I didn't know what to expect.

S Stephen Friedman 27:35

I think they're slowly getting back to production. Once everyone's vaccinated, I think

production will ramp up. But here's the problem with production and syndication. If your production slows down, the number of episodes you can deliver for an off net sitcom, like a big bang theory, or young Sheldon are Two and a Half Men, or and Everybody Loves Raymond lowers, and you need to preamble to provide about 85 to 90 episodes, for a syndicated show to be viable, slowing down production makes it harder to get to that number in a shorter amount of time. And you want to get to that number, because that gives you your money back for putting all the money in to produce the sitcom it's called the back end, the back end, which is basically what you do. You're licensed for your pay to run Big Bang five days a week in Boston. You get 40,000 a week or 50,000 a week, you get whatever number. That's called a license. Oh, by the way, one more thing, the other thing the pandemic has done is you've had to find different ways to promote shows that haven't been on for a long time. For example, I watched Manifest. Do you ever watch manifest on NBC?

M

Moira McCullough 28:45

No, I haven't, should I?

S

Stephen Friedman 28:47

It's about people got on a plane in 2013 and landed in 2018. But anyway, regardless of that, they're bringing it back April 1 for like eight to 10 episodes. That's all they can produce. Interesting, but they have to now you have to have a show that hasn't been seen in over a year and you have to bring people back to watch it. It's really hard to do

M

Moira McCullough 29:12

in an eight and 10 episodes, try to make your money's worth or pay back for making a decent season that you can get renewed. Right. So what are some internships that when you talk with your your students, what are some interesting internships that you would, you know, help them with

S

Stephen Friedman 29:32

My best ability and it comes from my years in my most recent tenure at Warner Brothers and being in sales for 17 years in the northeast, I can connect students and millennials with station people who can help get them into the business. I had a student who I just spoke to this morning who wants to get into marketing in Florida. So I picked up the phone, called one of the stations in Florida that is not too far from where he lives. He said, hey, can you

help me out? Can the Creative Services Director meet for an informational interview with this college student? He graduated from a school in New York. And I said, he's a good kid and maybe you can do an informational interview. Not only did they give him an informational interview, they may have an open position. So you never know. Again, we go back to what we said in the beginning, it's your contacts and your know how that combined is what's going to make the difference between whether you succeed or takes longer to get ahead,

M

Moira McCullough 30:44

Talk to people and ask them about what they do. Because you learn so much by just asking about everyone and what they do. They're different professions. And not necessarily that you're looking for a job, but you never know when that person may think of you and say.

S

Stephen Friedman 31:03

A good resume, and an informational interview makes you memorable to them. Emily's much more of a resume expert than I am. I'm just learning my way through that. But I can tell you, the one thing that that is a shame from someone who's interviewed and hired people is in person, you can really tell if someone's got it. That's what they share one of the shame to the pandemic, in person interviews are completely necessary in terms of knowing if someone's got that Id factor. Like, we got to hire this person, because we can put them in five different places.

M

Moira McCullough 31:46

So is there any advice you'd give to somebody who doesn't have that option? Who has to like impress you, Stephen, right now, I'm having an interview right now,

S

Stephen Friedman 31:56

Have a great resume, be versatile, know a lot about a lot of different things? Because, you know, they may not have a digital production job open, but they may have been out in the field marketing production job open. Being versatile - you know what you're talking about the very people like, in my opinion, when you interview people who can speak the media business. So read up, I'm always sending articles out to the kids and millennials to students that we're working with always to get them more well versed. Someone once told me, who was my head of sales at Fox, as a matter of fact, he doesn't know everything. But

he knows a lot of little about a lot of things. And when you know a little about a lot of things, you can converse on a million fronts with someone new turns you into a good salesperson, actually.

M Moira McCullough 32:52

I like that I think that sometimes students kind of think, Okay, I need to know so much about going for this particular job. And that's all I need to become an expert at. But what you're saying is also, you know, read up, get to know a little about a lot of things so that you can make yourself in a position where if that particular job you'd have voted for is not available, they might think of you for another two or three openings that come up down the line,

S Stephen Friedman 33:16

in everything we do, whether we're interviewing, whether we're doing a meeting, we're in a sense presenting. And presenting is the hardest thing to do. Some people get it. Some people don't. Some people get really nervous. Some people tighten up, and some people lose, the more you know, and this goes back to what we said in the beginning, ratings, be a consultant advisor. Having knowledge of the business, the more you can sprinkle in that knowledge and not look like a robotic reader of words. You'll go farther that way, because people will know hey, this guy knows what he's talking about. This guy is credible. This guy or gal has credibility. And you know what, we should do business with him?

M Moira McCullough 34:02

Absolutely. You have so much to offer. And I know we're going to have you on many times, but I have two big questions for you to end it. What do you wish you knew when you were attending college?

S Stephen Friedman 34:17

I wish I knew economics in business. I am so regretful about lacking in finance, and the nuts and bolts of the business revenue versus cost. Amateurs zation of programming. I wish I knew could speak that language. I feel like my language I speak is more research than finance. And sometimes that gets a little in the weeds. I wish I knew the business aspect better. Business not being the whole media business, but business meaning what's production costs, power, you know how much each episode, amortize amortizes over, you know I wish I knew all that stuff.

M Moira McCullough 35:03

And to that point, just out of curiosity, does the entertainment business do they typically have training programs that would rotate you throughout like the investment firms have or management consulting? Has?

S Stephen Friedman 35:16

When I was at Warner Brothers, we had a couple of people in our division who came in and learned different parts of our division. I don't know if they have it full time. I don't know if they have the full time mentorship program. I can't answer to that. But I can tell you, it's incredibly valuable. If I knew every department, in a year in a division, I'd be so much better versed. When I'm talking to clients. So much better verse. Again, it goes back to giving them the sense that you know what you're talking about credibility and being able to know a million a lot about a million different little about a million different things

M Moira McCullough 35:58

That's good advice. Lastly, do you have a favorite restaurant or, or dessert place on a college campus? I know your kids are been there done that, but are college town.

S Stephen Friedman 36:14

I will tell you the last place I was in before COVID was at Penn State University, because I used to call on the market attended the state of Pennsylvania for Warner Brothers. And that is a lot of fun. But I remember so much because it was the end of January. And there was no virus in popularity. But everybody was packed in. Everybody was shoulder to shoulder. And you know what? We I don't remember exactly what he ate or dessert or whatever. But boy, that was fun to be there. So that's a shout out to Penn State.

M Moira McCullough 36:52

I love that ice cream place. They have their own dairy the Penn State Creamery.

S Stephen Friedman 36:56

Well that wouldn't make sense. They're in Happy Valley. What's a shame Moira - that there's a lot of traveling my job at Warner Brothers. So I would go to Miami, I'd go to Boston, I go to Pittsburgh, I go to Detroit, every city has their own little character. And by

zoom calling presentations and dealing with clients over the phone or via zoom, you lose that. I remember going to Chattanooga, never been there in my life. But it was great to have a great Riverfront had a chicken and waffles. It was phenomenal. Way to barbecue in Augusta, Georgia loved it.

M Moira McCullough 37:35

You can't go wrong with a chicken and bar and waffle

S Stephen Friedman 37:37

You can't go wrong with getting a flavor by traveling for business. And I think we've lost out a little bit, unfortunately,

M Moira McCullough 37:45

Do you think that your industry and the entertainment industry that they'll be going back to that travel aspect to the extent that they can?

S Stephen Friedman 37:56

I don't think so. I don't think there will be travel. But I don't think there'll be going back as quickly as possible. And I don't think there'll be going back with his wider net as possible. Because let's say you're living in Los Angeles, and you sell the big bang theory in Augusta, Georgia. So maybe you get a few 100 bucks a week for the license fee, your plane ticket is going to cost three times as much to get there as it is going to be for the money you bring in. So I think what my business will be in I don't know, I been out for a few months now. I'm much more zoom oriented some trips to major clients. But that's a shame because that was the fun part was learning about the nuances of different places.

M Moira McCullough 38:49

Absolutely. I couldn't agree with you more it made it made all the travel the the negative aspects of the travel, leaving family long lines in middle seats.

S Stephen Friedman 39:00

Exactly made it all worthwhile to losing that upgrade. Running into thunderstorms. Oh

plane problems.

M Moira McCullough 39:11

Stephen, thank you so much for joining us today and for all your valuable and information and guidance that you're helping students as they navigate you know, kind of a challenging time.

S Stephen Friedman 39:23

It is really it's a pleasure to be here. But I will end by saying I don't wish this. I'm sad in a way because there's a lot of talented kids out there who are having a harder time and taking below what they're worth. Because this pandemic and the economic repercussions have dictated tougher time, be it on a station level beat at a streamer beat at a studio creating content. It's a tough time but we'll try and make the best for them. Use my contacts to help them get the best jobs possible.

M Moira McCullough 40:04

Absolutely. Thank you so much.

S Stephen Friedman 40:07

Thank you.

M Moira McCullough 40:11

Thank you, Stephen for joining us today to share your knowledge and experience in the entertainment and media industry. As a mentor to college students and millennials, you advise students to cast their net wide. Reach out to family, friends and industry experts to ask them about their experiences, lessons learned and what they would do differently entering the business now, it is important to learn about the industry before you contact references or hiring managers talk a little about a lot of things. Don't be put off or scared to take entry level jobs that will provide a good training ground for the business. You can find all of our show notes and links to the helpful resources mentioned throughout our conversation on our website at collegescoops.com/podcast. You can read Stephen on LinkedIn or through Emily Weiss Consulting. Please take a couple of minutes to rate review and subscribe to College Scoops. Thank you for listening to our College Scoops podcast. Our entire College Scoops team strives to make the college journey a little bit

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