



From Evaluating Plays to Evaluating Risks:

Taking the Leap from Sports Writing to Insurance Underwriting

By Katie Hopewell

Kyle Hopewell sits at his desk in the Harvard University Football Faculty offices and stares intently at the screen before him. He analyzes the film he obtained during that afternoon's practice, paring down and preparing clips to be sewn together in a compilation aimed to promote the *Crim's* upcoming Saturday game.

With a degree in digital journalism and longtime aspirations of becoming a sports broadcast journalist, Hopewell was working a job of his dreams, acting as the first public relations and social media coordinator for the Harvard football team.

“Yeah so when I was at that position, all I saw was: I’m gonna be in football for the rest of my life,” Hopewell mentioned in an interview. But it has been nearly three years since he’s held such a job. Hopewell was forced to realize that feasibility tends to eclipse ambition—especially when developing a career path.

Hopewell’s decision to leave Harvard Football did not come easily, as he entered the position a mere intern and was offered a much-desired part-time paid

position with the team by the end of his internship. He knew, however, a part-time wage was not sufficient pay for Boston living



Hopewell, in front of his previous office at Harvard University

arrangements and that picking up a second, and even third, job wouldn’t quite make financial ends meet. Initially after concluding his time in Boston, the future seemed fairly dim to Hopewell.

He moved back home to eastern North Carolina reluctantly and landed what he believed to be a menial job as an assistant insurance underwriter.

This was not an easy transition for Hopewell and for more reasons than just having to let go of what he saw as his ideal job. Hopewell had spent his entire college career prepping for a career in sports broadcasting and journalism—not technical insurance writing.

“So the biggest transition from what I was doing at Harvard to what [I am now doing] for the insurance underwriting company was basically [learning the new] terminology,” Hopewell noted, and that seems to add up, given how drastic of a shift he made in career-related writing.

His basic duties while working with the Harvard Football team included drafting write-ups about games, drafting emails to send recruits, editing digital footage from practices and games and helping with graphic design and team branding. He even planned how recruits would spend their time while making campus visitations and working with the current team.

Each of these tasks involved the employment of esoteric football language about positions and plays-- which Hopewell was well-acclimated to, given his extensive involvement with the sport.

This all quickly changed at the start of his next job. “Despite how everything is similarly formatted, there’s always going to be a language barrier when you’re starting off anywhere. Coming into the world of insurance was just like, *I have no idea*, you know, *what a ‘hard cap’ on insurance is; I have no idea what the ‘base rate’ we’re trying to get is*—I didn’t know anything” Hopewell explained.

This drastic change of tone in his career path was thankfully eased, however, by his current employers and colleagues at the underwriting company. Hopewell explained how the insurance underwriters provided him with a thorough orientation for his new position and were always readily available to help him become not only acclimated to it, but also comfortable doing it.

“After going through the typical H.R. tutorial videos, my trainer Jennifer [almost always] sat right behind

me so I [could] easily turn around with any questions I may have had...there was zero expectation for a while there, [my employers] were just like: ‘Do what you can.’” Hopewell mentioned.

It is with extreme gratitude that Hopewell looks back on his transition from sports media writing to insurance underwriting. Without that transition, he had explained, he would have never realized his full potential as a professional writer nor how many opportunities there are in the world of career-related writing.

When describing how this transition truly allowed him

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to grow as a professional writer, Hopewell explains: “I’ve been there for almost a year now and, you know, you learn something every day and I think you can just focus on that. Just learning something

new, taking something that you weren’t [originally]

aware of away, every day, then you'll really be able to move further in the directions that you want to."

"I feel like once you realize that you don't know everything, you can accept that, and start to pick those little nuggets of information people give to you, sometimes without them even knowing it," Hopewell said with contentment.

Although his career has not gone in the direction he once anticipated, Hopewell's leap from one end of professional writing to another speaks to how vast the world of career writing is, and how each writing job offers a niche knowledge base, which allows writers to grow in ways they never knew they could.