



Tom Gent with The Stig

Jun 27, 2016 16:45 BST

Top Gear? Top career!

A Northumbria graduate currently working with Chris Evans says his career is literally in 'Top Gear' thanks to the skills and experience he gained during his time at university.

Tom Gent graduated from Northumbria's Media Production degree in 2003 and went on to work for BBC Sport as a trainee producer following a work placement in TV organised by his tutor. A high-profile career at the BBC followed, with Tom winning a Royal Television Society award in 2014 for the closing montage to the BBC's World Cup coverage. Tom now works as a producer on BBC's Top Gear with Chris Evans and recently told graduate

recruitment agency [BrighterBox](#) about his time at Northumbria, the impact the University had on his career, and his top tips on standing out in the graduate jobs market.

Speaking about his time at Northumbria, Tom said: “It was absolutely key to putting me on my current career path. I had a real passion for script-writing and there was a significant part of the course dedicated to it. That was a really good learning experience. Another segment of the Northumbria course was a work placement on Byker Grove, organised by the course tutor. That eventually led to me being put in touch with CD:UK and SM:tv (which first brought me down to London) and put me on my career track. Meeting the right people and getting a bit of luck were also a big part of it.”

Tom recalls how his big break took place shortly after he graduated from Northumbria and how it led to a career with the BBC. “My big break was probably being introduced to an exec at MTV when doing work experience in London just after graduating from Northumbria,” he said. “He helped me land an interview there for an internship and from that I progressed to a full-time role and eventually ended up, three years later, with a job interview as Junior Assistant Producer at BBC Sport. There had been 300 people going for one job so I never expected to get it. This helped as I was totally relaxed for the interview and went in and the answers kept flowing. I got the job and eight years on was making sport documentaries and I won an RTS Award for the BBC World Cup closing montage which was my second big break I guess.”

Tom was interviewed about his career by BrighterBox, a company created to help ambitious graduates kick start their careers in media, digital and entrepreneurial businesses. They asked Tom to give graduates his top tips for standing out from the crowd.

He said: “If someone is prepared and has clearly done some their homework, whether it’s new ideas or having some intelligent constructive comments, that kind of thing can really help. Persistence also pays off. Some people nag and become annoying, but they stay in your mind. As long as you’re personable, go about it the right way (and stay the right side of annoying!) you’ll be fine. It’s a cliché but don’t give up on what you want to do. Getting on with people is a big part of the media industry. It’s a very sociable line of work so if you’re enthusiastic and easy-going you have every chance.”

For more information about BrighterBox go to: www.brighterbox.com

Northumbria offers a range of Media and Digital courses. To find out more about studying at Northumbria sign up for one of our upcoming Open Days on 1 July and 2 July by clicking [here](#).

Northumbria is a research-rich, business-focused, professional university with a global reputation for academic excellence. To find out more about our courses go to www.northumbria.ac.uk

If you have a media enquiry please contact our Media and Communications team at media.communications@northumbria.ac.uk or call [0191 227 4571](tel:01912274571).

Contacts



Rik Kendall

Press Contact

PR and Media Manager

Business and Law / Arts, Design & Social Sciences

rik.kendall@northumbria.ac.uk

07923 382339



Andrea Slowey

Press Contact

PR and Media Manager

Engineering and Environment / Health and Life Sciences

andrea.slowey@northumbria.ac.uk

07708 509436



Rachael Barwick

Press Contact

PR and Media Manager

rachael.barwick@northumbria.ac.uk

07377422415



James Fox

Press Contact

Student Communications Manager

james2.fox@northumbria.ac.uk



Kelly Elliott

Press Contact

PR and Media Officer

kelly2.elliott@northumbria.ac.uk



Gemma Brown

Press Contact

PR and Media Officer

gemma6.brown@northumbria.ac.uk