



## First Job Fridays: Katie Couric

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From CEOs to star athletes and TV personalities, America is home to all kinds of successful people. And many of the faces in the public eye have honed their craft over the years—their success has followed early mornings and late nights of hard work. They climbed the ranks by learning from their experiences every step along the way. And that was only possible because they found the first job needed to launch their professional career.

In our regular First Job Friday feature on Information Station, we highlight American success stories who thank this first job for the valuable lessons they learned—and now help them navigate the spotlight.

This week, we're profiling Yahoo Global News Anchor Katie Couric, whose first job was as a camp coun-

selor at Columbia Lighthouse for the Blind—a Washington, D.C. summer camp for the visually impaired. (She also scooped ice cream at Gifford's and served as a Pizza Hut hostess at a young age.) Couric had worked at the camp for three years as a high school student before collecting her first paycheck at the age of 18. The news anchor's task back then was not only to monitor the children at Columbia, but also entertain them on a daily basis. Couric's challenge was to think of new ways to engage the campers entrusted to her. As she puts it, this included "arts and crafts, gymnastics, [and] singing," as well as field trips to the Air and Space Museum and other D.C. area attractions.

It wasn't always easy—Couric recalls plenty of "very tense situation[s]"—but taking care of her camp troupe taught her the importance of respon-

sibility. "I learned so much about people from all different backgrounds, understood the importance of getting to work on time, sticking to a schedule, being patient and inclusive, and navigating group dynamics," Couric wrote in a recent blog post. She even saw deeper meaning in the job: "It was very humbling, very gratifying, and really life changing in many ways," Couric has said. In her eyes, the Columbia Lighthouse experience proved "that everyone, no matter what their limitations, has something to offer."

It's a lot to take away from a camp counselor position. But it shows even campfire hymns and museum field trips can shape one's professional experiences.

One thing is clear: The Katie Couric we see on TV today is who she is—at least in part—because of her first job.