

**Career Pivots: Jason Mikell's journey from working as a Recruiter  
to being a TV Anchor/Meteorologist  
EPISODE 18 - Transcript**

[INTRODUCTION]

**[00:00:08] TF:** Welcome to Job Search Strategies with Tiffany Franklin. I am so excited for this episode because I am interviewing Jason Mikell and we used to work together in Philly. We were both recruiters at AQuent and Vitamin T. Jason was on the Vitamin T side, I was on AQuent. Not only that, but I'm so happy to consider him a friend. We were trained buddies doing the reverse commute from living in Center City, Philly, and then working in Conshohocken. So, lots of time on that train to get to talk, and just have a lot of fun in the city during, what was that, '13 and '14.

**[00:00:45] JM:** Yeah, it's so long ago. I haven't heard the words AQuent and Vitamin T together, it's probably since I left there.

**[00:00:54] TF:** I knew I wanted to do an episode with you, Jason, because you are just such a fun person and you bring so much to the table, and you really care about people, and of course, super smart. When I thought of career pivots, I mean, what better of a career pivot from going from a recruiter to a meteorologist on TV. So, tell me a little bit about your career journey, because it's an exciting one.

**[00:01:19] JM:** You have the unique presence and position, Tiffany, of knowing me when I was recruited, as you said. I did a hard 90-degree angle turn, going from recruiting over into meteorology, and it didn't happen overnight. It was sort of something that I needed to play it out, I needed to strategize with myself. If I'm going to leave this field that I know and going into a completely different field, how am I going to marry those skills, and that was a really hard thing to do. I really had to sit down and kind of go into a think tank of what can easily transfer from recruiting over into news. Being behind the scenes, and then in front of the camera. I really thought about, "Hey, Jason, you're good at talking to people. So, you got networking skills there. You're communicating information, not just in recruiting, but also certainly going to be on a news program. And also, you have a scientific and social science background, connecting with people

providing them with information they need to know, to guide their day to day.” Once I had that kind of laid out in front of me, the rest kind of just followed suit.

**[00:02:22] TF:** Tell me a little bit more about some of the details of what led you into recruiting and then what was the moment that you said, “Okay, I want to do something different.” And then what your path has been in your meteorology career?

**[00:02:39] JM:** Oh, great question. Because I have had a very interesting road in my career field. I got my degree. It all started at University of Southern Mississippi, where I graduated from there with a psychology degree. I had a Human Resources internship and in my early 20s, I really looked to corporate America as that segue into growth, development, career building skills. That's kind of what I really wanted to start out at. And then my brother was living in Philadelphia at the time. So, I visited him then eventually made the move to Philadelphia, worked at the University of Pennsylvania, then moved to a staffing agency. It's also a thing where people, really, I think we naturally are rough at planning for the long term, and we over obsess with the short term. We don't realize that the long term is not only defined by the short term, but it's defined by a segment of the events.

So, I didn't realize when I moved to Philly, that even that temp job that I had, I was a placement for someone. And then I went to placing people by mere experience, what that was like for me to be a placement. Once I got into recruiting on my own, placing candidates, sourcing resumes, I took those skills into sourcing schools. How are they placing their students? Where are the students placed? Where does the students fall, once they enter into the meteorology industry? Are they're going to be in front of the scenes or behind the scenes?

With that, that easily transferred over into searching for an internship. Because at the time, I didn't know, Jason, do you want to be on camera? Do you want to be behind the scenes? Do you work at a news program? Or do you want to work at National Weather Service? So, I was blessed enough to get two internships, one at Fox 29 Philadelphia and the other at National Weather Service, just outside Philly. So, I was overwhelmed with joy, extremely excited. I didn't want to choose selfishly, Tiffany. I didn't want to choose between the two. I prayed about it. I talked about it. I talked it over with my friends and my family and it's just one of those things it was meant to be, because Fox said you can do your hours anytime you want. You can do about

24 hours a week. National Weather Service said, we require that you do 16 hours in this internship weekly and we'll tell you which days we want you to do them.

So, I was able to build in my Fox internships hours around the National Weather Service hours, so, I was able to do both in internships that summer.

**[00:05:18] TF:** What I love about your story, it really shows the true essence of what an internship should be, that opportunity to not only gain skills and connections, but also to see if it's a good fit for you and to try and gain clarity about which direction you want to go next.

**[00:05:36] JM:** Yes. Yes, it did. And it afforded me that right to because I learned so much in that summer, not just in the meteorology side, but also how a newsroom operates and how newsroom operates in a big market. Philadelphia is number four, and markets across the country in the top 10. It's very much so a busy, busy sequence of events and how a newscast is laid out, how the information is gathered, how the information is delivered. And those are all key things that we still require and need every single day in this country, when it comes to news and how the news is covered for us.

**[00:06:08] TF:** That's incredible that you were able to do your internships in such a big market. And of course, I love Philadelphia. It's such a great town for me. So, contemplating that career pivot can be so intimidating and you were very thoughtful, as you were strategic planning. But how did you get past that thoughtfulness planning stage into the action stage of that transition process?

**[00:06:34] JM:** I take you back to one night I had, it was while I was in school, studying, spending grueling hours studying. I had resigned my position at Vitamin T, as you know, and about two to three months later, I really started to think about how am I going to immerse myself in the field. I guess, a nontraditional student, I was in my late 20s, at the time, how am I going to do this? And I was doing it remotely versus my counterparts doing it on campus where they have these resources, they have this faculty and staff, they can go to the answer questions. I can do that. But do it remotely and also remote with my fellow students as well.

So, I was overwhelmed or not necessarily overwhelmed. I had kind of succumb to a woe is me moment of how am I going to do this? I've taken on this big venture, I'm investing in myself. So, I went right back to my recruiting background, and I got on LinkedIn. And I started sourcing through as many meteorologists as I could, in Philadelphia, in the northeast, in the state of Pennsylvania, over in Jersey, who could I talk to you that will listen to me, that would take me seriously, to get information to gain knowledge on what steps I need to do at my age, going in jumping into this career. Out of about 15 to 20 emails that I sent out that night, I think I got maybe two responses. One, who I believe, was Carol Erickson at the time, she was a meteorologist working at CBS 3, and Philadelphia and the other was Glenn Hurricane Schwartz. He then at the time was the chief meteorologist at NBC 10 in Philadelphia and they both gave me incredible feedback, heartfelt feedback.

But Glenn went a step beyond that and actually invited me to the studio to talk to him. That was my first time ever coming into a studio, new studio before he – probably one out of thousands or hundreds, he's done that too throughout his lengthy career. But he made a mark on my career, he will forever make a mark on my career, because he didn't have to do that. But he took time for me and he gave me a very much so endearing come to Jesus meeting, right after I watched the newscast. And he said, "Coming into this field, you have to know what you're getting into." I remember this so clearly. He said, "Someone may not like you because of your voice. They might not like you because of your tie. They might not like you because your shirt. They can find something that they may not like about you and change the channel. That should not deter you from doing your job and doing it to the best of your ability, because you're there because you want to be and you're providing information."

**[00:09:19] TF:** What powerful advice. I just love stories like that where people who are so successful and they take the time to give back and to help others in the field. I mean, it really makes all the difference. It doesn't even have to be these huge mentoring relationships. Sometimes just a few meetings or just like you said, answering an email, inviting you makes all the difference in the world.

**[00:09:41] JM:** Yes, all the difference. As you climb, you should also lift and that's one of the things I've heard and I try to incorporate that as much as possible in my career.

**[00:09:51] TF:** That's amazing. Now I do have to ask for the audience, what was the content of that outreach email? Because hearing back from two big people out of 15, those are good odds, especially when you're talking such high-profile people you are reaching out to. How did you approach that so it had just the right tone?

**[00:10:11] JM:** I think what jumped out to me was continuing to work hard. This is not going to be an easy industry and the classes, I will tell you, they were not easy. They were hard. But they took a lot of time. It took a lot of devotion. It took a lot of discipline as well. You have to be disciplined when it comes to science and learning and meteorology. How do you convey the information? How do you break the science down? So, they reminded me of that, and they also reminded me of making connections, quality connections, not just a number, but also quality connections and being sure to absorb the right information and be and surround yourself with the right scientists. The right people that can help elevate you.

As I said before about Glenn, just the human aspect, the social science aspect. We're dealing with people, meaning we have a lot of different opinions. We have a lot of different thought process. We have a lot of different ways in which we interpret things, feelings, emotions, and information. That really helped guide me to move forward towards the TV aspect rather than being behind the scenes at National Weather Service. Throughout that internship, it was pretty clear that I think I'm gravitating more towards the TV rather than being in an office space, working shift work with National Weather Service. Now, by all means, I will stop and say National Weather Service is vital, very much so vital to all the weather information and observations we get here in the country. But being able to deliver it on air came a bit more easy and natural for me.

**[00:11:40] TF:** Jason, what's the best career advice you've ever been given?

**[00:11:44] JM:** The best career advice I've ever been given. Oh, my goodness, I think I've been given so much. But I think back to when I was at the recruiting firm, before I met you at Vitamin t and AQuent, and my manager at the time, I was waiting for a promotion and waiting, waiting waiting for a promotion. I think I was also going through something as well and I needed to convey that information on to somebody and I was really struggling. I've never forgotten him. His name was Paul. I've never forgotten that he said, "Jason, always be ready to have the

difficult conversation.” And that is translated professionally, personally, religiously. You always have to be prepared to have the difficult conversation and not shy away from it. Because we all know it has to be had.

So, if you just say, “You know what, it's got to happen. But swallow our pride. Let's take a deep breath. Let's just talk.” And that has helped me through a lot of difficult situations.

**[00:12:46] TF:** That's great advice. Now, how do you prepare? How do you approach those difficult conversations? Because as you mentioned, these are something that are part of the journey, but I think a lot of people get so scared on the how do I do it?

**[00:12:59] JM:** My brother always says, he waters things down for me and just a very layman type of way. He says, “What's the worst they can say? No?” You could use that to ask for a raise. If you want something extra in your work or your line of work or your career, what's the worst they can say? No. But what if they say maybe or hmm. You can deal with the hmmm, because there's a window of opportunity there. Right?

So, for me, I have really thought about what is it that I want? How is it attainable? What measures do I need to take to allow such things to happen? I've been into contract negotiations and I've had to think about some of those things, how am I going to get them to say yes, rather than no, or perhaps even meet me in the middle. We really think about your worth. You think about the things that you can do, what you can provide. You can act on a promise for them, because everyone wants to know, what can you do for me? How am I also going to win out in this as well? So, go through a thinking process. Go dive into a think tank. Make a web of things that you want and different reasons as to why you deserve it.

**[00:14:08] TF:** One thing I often talk about is people being able to articulate the value they can deliver. Oftentimes, it's in the context of the interview, and making sure that you're pulling out what's important to your target position and the person with whom you're interviewing with. But it really speaks to what you're talking about with negotiations for salary, doing the research ahead of time, understanding what's for the market, but then it's not just about what you want. It's what you've had delivered and how you have earned that value.

**[00:14:40] JM:** What are the deliverables? What can I provide for you? How is that going to work? Because if you're just sitting on the side of the table where you're just saying, "This is what I want, this is what I need, this is what I deserve." What is the other person on the other side getting from that? It's just the me, me, me conversation. Well, it needs to be a dual conversation both sides.

**[00:15:01] TF:** I love it. So, do you have any advice, Jason, for interview prep, especially for a high-profile career like yours?

**[00:15:09] JM:** Any information that I can provide somebody that is looking or searching for a high-profile position, know your market, know your value, know what's needed and necessary to take your position, your company, everything that surrounds it to the next level. You have to be well researched in every aspect. If you're looking to be the CEO, what does your company need? Where have they been? Where are you wanting to take them? What can you provide for them? What do you need your staff to provide? It has to be a very well-rounded view, but also quite strategic as well.

**[00:15:46] TF:** It really seems to mirror what a lot of management consultants do, because they go into a company or with a client, and they do that deep dive to see where are they now? How do they stack up to their competitors? Where do they want to go?

**[00:16:00] JM:** Where are the problem spots?

**[00:16:01] TF:** Exactly. And then how can they address those?

**[00:16:06] JM:** Mm-hmm. That works the same way in the newsroom, what our strengths and where our weaknesses, what those that can provide a different level a different angle of the story. For me, when we're doing storm coverage, what is necessary for us to provide great wall to wall coverage. I've had experiences where it's been kind of lackluster coverage. I've had experiences where it's been pretty top-notch coverage. For me, when I had to do wall to wall coverage, if there's a tornado or if there's severe thunderstorm warning, or there's flash flood warning, especially living here in Central Texas, flooding is our biggest threat.

So, it's important for me not to just be on air talking for incessantly amounts of time, just regurgitating information over and over and over and over again. I love to have an anchor at the desk. I love to have reporters in the field. One or two reporters that I love to have the storm chaser out there. I love to get information about power outages, flooded roadways, little water crossings that have also popped up populated as well. Viewer pictures, viewer video, all of those things play a part in what people are seeing, what they're hearing, what they're feeling, because there's a lot of fear associated with severe weather as well. And we have to be mindful of that when we're talking about tornadoes. The path they're going, the intensity of the wind.

**[00:17:28] TF:** That's something that down here. I mean, I live in North Florida and we just had some warnings about two weeks ago, and had to get in the pantry for a little bit because that doesn't have any windows. I know we had the news coverage on and it was such a comfort because they were providing the information, but yet it wasn't a panic thing. It was be informed and I knew, okay, so even when had the TV up really loudly, so we could still hear it.

**[00:17:57] JM:** Yes. And might I bring this back full circle. My first degree is psychology. So, there's their social science background there.

**[00:18:04] TF:** I love how it all worked together. And hey, I was a psych major as well. How do you, Jason, continue to grow as a professional at this stage in your career? So, what I'm looking at is how do you give people advice about how they can take control of their own career growth and just not let it happen to them or inertia in their career?

**[00:18:23] JM:** You never get too old for learning. You can never get too old for having mentors. There's always going to be room to learn and also your value differs as well as you move stages within your career and welcome that, because your value may start off in one particular area, and you might find that area becoming a little bit more difficult.

For instance, people that have worked in corporate America for a number of years, they may struggle with social media, but the continuous updates. Instagram, start off with just pictures, now you have Insta Live, you have the Insta Stories, and then you have multiple stories, and collages and things and how do you share. Sharing on Instagram is different than sharing on



Facebook. So, finding and welcoming different valued points within your career. Mentors, find someone who mentor is not always an older person either. It could be a younger person.

**[00:19:16] TF:** Interesting. I like that. It's a great point as far as just how they have different experience and you can help each other.

**[00:19:23] JM:** Because a lot of bosses in these office spaces, the C suites in America right now are younger. They come from a very different background than your eye and they have different experiences that they too, have also had to transfer over from a previous position or previous career field.

**[00:19:41] TF:** For people who know they want to change but they are not sure what they want to do. Instead, what would you recommend as they begin to explore other career options?

**[00:19:50] JM:** One thing that I did that helped me too, when I realized I like recruiting but I don't think I can do this for the rest of my life. I don't think I can see myself being happy and fulfilled during this for the rest of my life. I think I did some personality tests. I think I did some skill tests and I started to list things, what do I like? What come of interest to me? What do I like to spend my spare time thinking about? Wat do I admire? And you'd be quite surprised. If you enjoy creating different recipes, if you enjoy working with businesses, critically thinking, "Hey, maybe you want to go into a culinary incubator or work with startups", help them move from a food truck to a brick and mortar. Perhaps you may want to open your own business. There's a lot of business owners out there that don't even know they have that capability to start their own business. But hey, it comes natural to them once they start really outlining a business plan.

**[00:20:48] TF:** It's funny, I've even connected near Jacksonville. I know they have these across the country (SCORE) for people who are launching their own businesses, and they have great mentors that they can connect you with, and they come from all these wonderful backgrounds, and you really go in there and say, "This is the help I need." And they'll pair you with somebody. So, in the show notes, I will put that and there are other resources that you have mentioned, because that's such a big thing. Another thing I like when you were talking about some of those personality tests, and also values exercise, this is one thing for people who listen to a few of the episodes I talked about this often. But at UPenn career services, we had this – it takes five

minutes, but it's what are 30 different aspects that any career could have, from location, working with others, helping people, salary. Is it more quantitative or qualitative? I think it goes back to what you had said that can change over the years. Because what you value at 27, maybe when you first major pivot could be very different than at 35.

**[00:21:52] JM:** Exactly. Do you lead? Do you follow? I mean, those are things that we learned when we were children. Do you like working solo? Or do you like working with other people? Now, we're in the age of the pandemic? Do you prefer working from home? Or do you miss and you want to go back to the office because you missed the social aspect of working with other people. Indoors or outdoors, or a mix of both? Or big city living or small town? There are so many things that go into it, it doesn't have to be overwhelming. When you really kind of think about it and sit with it and imagine and fantasize about it, that can actually be fun.

**[00:22:27] TF:** Oh, so true. The cool thing is that throughout your career, because people do change careers so often, or at least change jobs. I mean, you're not stuck at any one thing. I think that takes off some of the pressure, that you're not looking for the end all, be all perfect job. You're looking for something that's the next logical step, where you can add value, you can gain skills and make relation, make connections, and meet people. But don't put so much pressure on yourself that this job is the one that you're going to have for 50 years and get the gold watch.

**[00:23:01] JM:** Absolutely, because it's not going to work out that way. Life doesn't happen that way. It has many twists and turns, highs and lows.

**[00:23:07] TF:** So true. Now, you made some big moves across the country for your career. Any advice for job seekers looking for roles in another city and how that adds a layer of difficulty or challenge to their job search?

**[00:23:19] JM:** Yes, it's something that definitely comes and goes hand in hand with my career field. I knew it going in. It never gets easy, though. Because you build friendships and you uproot your life to move to a different place, and perhaps even relationships, you start a relationship, and then, "Oh my gosh, I got this bigger opportunity and I have to move." You have to almost Tango with reality when it comes to that. But make a choice, and be okay with the

answer. Because if you're not one 100% okay with the opportunity or with the fact that you're going to be moving, or even if it's one move, or if it's two moves, or three moves. If you're not okay with it, and you don't understand it, you may need to reconsider and kind of go back to that space and reevaluate, recalculate, recalibrate, if this is something that I want to do, and can see myself doing, and be 100% okay with it.

**[00:24:15] TF:** That makes so much sense. It's also good to I think, with remote work being much more accepted nowadays, people are applying from other cities. So, it doesn't automatically discount you if you have a different city on your resume. In many cases, all I'm seeing is people putting their name, email and phone number and not even the city location on their resume anymore.

**[00:24:41] JM:** Because they're choosing more remote work. Or they say, "Oh, I can do it from here or I can come in the office two, three times a week and then go back home." What we're going to be seeing, I believe, in this country is a more fluid way of working, because we know we can do it now.

**[00:24:58] TF:** That's true. I mean, you see so many articles and productivity has not gone down.

**[00:25:02] JM:** No, no people are looking, they're wanting to connect, they wanting to keep striving for more and wanting more in their career advancement. Despite the pandemic really coming in and sort of giving us a whiplash of reality, our work habits are still the same. For most people, they're still the same. Everybody still wants to climb.

**[00:25:20] TF:** Going back to your recruiting days, what made candidate stand out to you for the right reasons, and what should they avoid? I couldn't help but ask this since you've done that for years.

**[00:25:31] JM:** Yeah, I think what stood out for me was the quality of their work, not that they weren't necessarily at six, seven places within the past four or five years. But what do they do? I didn't care about their title. I cared about their duties and their responsibility. Did they have tenure? Did they have a long history of doing projects there? Their cover letter, yes, I read the

cover letter. I'm not sure if – I've been out of recruiting for about six years now. I'm not sure if that's antiquated or not. But I think it's still necessary to have some sort of added value there that isn't just a bullet point. But it's also a moment where we get to know you as the candidate, your desires, your history, and what you're looking to achieve in your career.

So, candidates need to be aware now that the old age of applying for a job, slapping on this lengthy resume, and listing Microsoft Office or calculator or something like that. No, we're in a very much larger tech space now. Those coding skills are necessary, those networking skills still very necessary. One of the connections that you've made here, and how thorough can you be in selling yourself, because you're a resident. What you have on a piece of paper is a selling point. So, if you're giving a rinky-dink selling piece of paper of your work, then it's just going to end up in a pile.

**[00:27:03] TF:** Yeah, that's what I tell people so many times, and that, as you said, the cover letter should bring the resume to life, because it's where you're taking it to the next level, and showing them how – I mean, people love stories.

**[00:27:15] JM:** They love stories.

**[00:27:16] TF:** I think that's what this has to convey is the value you deliver and how you understand who the company is you understand who you are, how those two go together, and you can contribute and move forward with them.

**[00:27:29] JM:** For sure, for sure. We're always going to need resume. Oh, and also, I will just say this too, as well, Tiffany. Find a different way to set your resume apart. I think maybe about five years or so ago, people started putting QR codes on their resume. And I've always found that to be pretty cool. But find a different way to make your resume come to life, to jump off the page, even if it's not even a page, just saying.

**[00:27:55] TF:** Actually, it's so funny you mentioned that. One of my episodes that's coming up probably in the next two weeks or so, it's going to be about TikTok resumes. So, what are your thoughts on those video resumes?

**[00:28:07] JM:** I actually worked with a meteorologist. He's also on my team. And he has probably at least 10,000 TikTok followers, and you see him in the studio, you see him doing his work, I truly believe that's probably going to be one of the selling points for him going to another market because he's involving his followers. He's connecting with them. You don't think that, okay, in TV, he's just going to slap on a montage reel of some of the storm coverage in and outside of the studio in the field forecasting, traditionally, but there's also a social media aspect of our field and TV news, meteorology now. So, if you are a corporate financier or a real estate investor, a real estate broker, there's going to be ample opportunity of you to come up with different ways of selling yourself.

**[00:29:02] TF:** If you had to distill it to one piece of advice, because I started this asking the best piece of career advice you've ever been given, what would be that one bit of advice for job seekers in general. and then aspiring meteorologists in particular?

**[00:29:17] JM:** I'm going to try to answer this question as it pertains to myself.

**[00:29:21] TF:** Okay.

**[00:29:22] JM:** I would say, don't get so hung up on the process. Because the process is going to be what it is, you're just following in those daily steps. So, the path is already written, don't work so hard to go against the grain. A lot of times we have to relax and go with the flow. Because opportunities come and people are going to see your work. They cannot ignore if you're putting out great work, good quality work, great quality work, superb work, even if you don't get that promotion, somebody is watching. My dad told me, Jason, somebody is always watching.

**[00:29:55] TF:** And then for the aspiring meteorologist in particular, just that same advice, basically?

**[00:30:01] JM:** I will say that same advice, yes. And constantly hone in on the latest research that's coming out, different ways in which to do a forecast. Because your way of doing a forecast is not going to be the way that I do forecasts. It's not going to be the way the same way that we deliver. Find your own way of delivering that information as you deliver it. Don't try to

mirror someone else. You can admire another meteorologist, but do it your own way that feels most comfortable to you. You're the best version of yourself.

**[00:30:33] TF:** That is such good advice, I think, for any career field. Because sometimes I've noticed with people, they look at who the influencers are, or the big people in their field, and instead of getting inspired, they get so intimidated that they say, Well, why should I even try? And instead, look at everybody, see what are best practices, but then when it comes down to it, make it your own.

**[00:30:59] JM:** Make it your own, be authentic, and that will never get boring. Be authentic, be yourself.

**[00:31:03] TF:** Well, that's one thing I've always been struck. And I think you know, when we first were working together and getting to be friends is just how genuine you've always been with everybody you know and that's why people gravitate to you. But do you have any networking tips for people? Because that can be tough for a lot of people, especially if they're not as extroverted.

**[00:31:24] JM:** I do, I do. Because I remember it being quite hard for me. Now, I was very nervous going into some of these networking events, whether they're small, whether they're large. Either way, you're meeting a new person, they don't know you, you don't know them, how are you going to make that initial connection? I think I best answer that by go into it with a buddy system. Going into with a buddy that's been there before, they understand it, see how they do it to allow yourself to be more comfortable. In that time, if you're going to let's say the first Friday mixers. Let's just name something, let's pull something out of the air. First Friday mixers, and you go into it with your friend Tiffany. Tiffany has been doing, for quite some time, she has her own business, she's well versed and networking and connecting with people.

See how Tiffany does it. See what conversations and what questions she's asking and make it a habit of trying to make it – if you can't make it to all of them, make it to every other month, maybe every two or three months. That way you develop a familiar face, keep in contact with the people that you meet, see if you can meet them one on one outside of that mixer and ask

are you going to be at the next one. If they are, make sure that you're there and let them know you're coming. So, that way you have another friend, and then you just build upon that.

**[00:32:39] TF:** That's great advice. What I like about this, too, is telling people don't look at any one person as the one who's going to get you your job. Just think about them as someone you know, getting to meet some great people, and maybe you'll learn little tidbits from each that that can help you maybe understand what you want to do next. Or maybe it's introducing you to someone or giving you just some insights of conversation that then you can pull back into your interview conversation, because you've talked about it before. But trying to take the pressure off yourself, which I feel like goes back to your advice about people let the process happen.

**[00:33:17] JM:** Yes, let the process happen. Because we only have – the locus of control are only within our fingertips. Outside of that, we have virtually no control.

**[00:33:26] TF:** Definitely. Also, you can't cram a job search. I mean, it's one of those things. I mean, yes, maybe you could get a temporary position a little more quickly. But for the most part, it's going to take a little bit of time. I sometimes jokingly say it's like a background app that then when you're actively seeking comes to the forefront.

**[00:33:45] JM:** Absolutely. It does. Because you want something to quality, you don't want to something of quantity. We want to minimize the job hopping, minimize the job hopping, because if you want that big-time position, you want that high power position, you're going to have to put in work for it. A lot of the greats that have started their companies, they started from the bottom and risen to the top.

**[00:34:04] TF:** Awesome. When did you first know you wanted to become a meteorologist? Was that something from when you were a kid you thought about? Or was that during that time when you were really contemplating and purposely exploring during your time at Vitamin T?

**[00:34:19] JM:** There was a mix of both of them actually. I've always enjoyed meteorology. I've always enjoyed weather, the many facets of it. I grew up in South Mississippi. So, we were no stranger to severe weather. I lived through hurricanes and been through numerous tornado warnings in school growing up. So, I always was fascinated about how weather worked. But did

I ever consider doing it as a career? I did not until I really went back to figuring out what could I at least see myself doing for 10, 15, 20 years. Never ever did I consider being on air for TV. It was just something by the time I got turned 27, 28, that part was already natural to me, because of I've had that experience in networking and meeting new people. It shows that field because those, those skills easily transferred over. So, it became more of a common and comforting setting for me.

**[00:35:14] TF:** That's wonderful. Now, when you were talking about looking at the top people in meteorology, and all of that, is that how you found Mississippi State's atmospheric sciences and operational meteorology program? Because I do have some episodes on people who they're looking at going back to grad school or they realize that critical for their pivot. So, what research did you do? Was there a website or a book or something to help you know which place to apply?

**[00:35:43] JM:** Some of those emails that I sent out, I did I get responses back from but a couple of them that I did get responses back, they briefly talked to me about the different schools and different programs that I should possibly consider. Now, I was living in Philly at the time. So, I, of course, had heard of Cornell, which was up the I 95 corridor. I heard about Millersville. Of course, I knew Penn State had a phenomenal meteorology program and actually visited their campus to check it out, see if I wanted to go there. But I also knew of Mississippi State and I didn't know if I wanted to leave Philly or stay in Philly. And thankfully, I was able to find that Mississippi State had a distance learning program that many, many meteorologists across the country trust and they've earned their certificates and they've earned their degrees and they've earned their masters. So, that's why I ended up landing because it made the best sense for me.

**[00:36:33] TF:** That's awesome. Well, I can't thank you enough, Jason. I mean, it's always just so fun connecting with you again, and we can't let it go so long for us catching up this time around.

**[00:36:44] JM:** I know, it's so great to see you too. I just want to say, for everyone that's listening to this, Tiffany is beyond, beyond intelligent. She's smart. She's radiant. She's every



single thing that you can imagine that she is being. I'm very happy to call your friend, Tiffany. I'm so proud of you, and what you've been able to accomplish also.

**[00:37:03] TF:** Oh, Jason, thank you. You are just amazing. We're doing this remotely right now, but I wish I could give you a big hug right.

**[00:37:09] JM:** I know. Next time I'm in Florida, I'm certainly going to look you up.

**[00:37:13] TF:** Definitely. Thank you again.

**[00:37:16] JM:** You're welcome.

[END OF INTERVIEW]

**[00:37:17] TF:** Thank you for joining Job Search Strategies with Tiffany Franklin. I appreciate you and hope you will go to [tjfcareercoach.com](http://tjfcareercoach.com) for more information about this episode, and to schedule a career exploration or career strategy session with me.

[END]