

**Q. You have an unusual way of hiring. Why do you do it:**

A. 1) Because it works very well, 2) It is how I would want to be treated if I were on the other side, 3) If you like meeting interesting people, it is a lot of fun (most of the time).

**Q. Why should I read all this just to land one lousy job?**

A. Then, please don't read it. If you do not find this interesting, then the job will be lousy one for you. The market is so awful, and there are so many candidates. Please don't hold that against me. I am trying to give everyone a fair chance, and I am hoping to find people who think this way of hiring is intrinsically interesting, even if it does not lead to a job for them directly – those people are the kind of people I'm looking for. Put differently, instead of having me eliminate you from my consideration, I'm giving you the chance to eliminate me.

**Q. What does this process look like? What can I expect?**

A. Consider reading:

<http://www.noshortageofwork.com/pages/658>

[http://sciencecareers.sciencemag.org/career\\_development/previous\\_issues/articles/2007\\_11\\_16/caredit\\_a0700163/%28parent%29/158](http://sciencecareers.sciencemag.org/career_development/previous_issues/articles/2007_11_16/caredit_a0700163/%28parent%29/158)

**Q. Will I actually hear back from you?**

A. Yes, you will. How about everyone else? If you are receiving this, then you are hearing back.

**Q. Why is Brooke doing all this stuff with No Shortage of Work?**

A. I feel there is a need. I'm at that age where people who have been successful enough begin to think about how they can give back; how they can be of use to others, particularly subsequent generations. One way to do this is to promote a philosophy that has helped me so well for me when the economy has been in the dumps.

**Q. By what date are you hoping to have the Executive Assistant position filled?**

A. We can make an offer immediately, but as a practical matter, it is unlikely we can make a decision before April 9<sup>th</sup>. This is because: 1) We're not in a hurry, 2) We're thorough.

**Q. Is there more than one job available?**

A. Sadly, we have budget only to hire one person. **We might be able to hire some contractors for a few short-term projects, however.**

**Q. Are projects more often Web-centered (i.e. YouTube example) or writing/research based?**

A. Can't answer that yet. We're still feeling our way.

**Q. Would you consider a student who will not be available immediately since they must finish their senior year?**

A. Perhaps. We are not in a tremendous hurry, so if you cannot begin until May, that might be OK. But we have many candidates that have no such constraint.

**Q. Do you need a college degree?**

A. No, not for this job. There is a high correlation between people who go to college and people who have the skills we want, but if you got the skills elsewhere, that is fine.

**Q. What type of writing does Brooke Allen do?**

A. He writes essays about the job market, family life, and some humor. See: [www.brooketallen.com](http://www.brooketallen.com). There is a more famous writer, who has written a number of books. She isn't him. There are some other Brooke Allens that are not him, including the porno star – she is also not him.

**Q. Does the job only report to Brooke?**

A. No. As most recently hired / low man/woman on the totem pole, you pretty much will report to everyone!

**Q. Is there travel involved?**

A. No, not for the job. (Well, perhaps once a year or two you might get sent to a conference. And also, we've gone on a couple of trips on cruise ships... but for fun more than for work.)

**Q. Will you pay relocation expenses?**

A. No

**Q. Will you sponsor someone for a work visa?**

A. No.

**Q. What educational benefits would you offer?**

A. We might pay you to go to college at night. We've done that with 3 of the 5 people who work here now. But there has to be a business need. It is more likely we'd send you to learn specific skills. You would also be invited to join our book club. Once every six weeks, you would need to read and present a non-fiction book to everyone else in the group. Everyone gets a copy of each book. We're only 12 weeks into it, but if we do it for a year, each of us will have a library of about 50 books.

**Q. When may I start? / When do you need me to start? / May I have the job?**

A. I like spunk. That depends on what happens next.

**Q. What brought Mr. Allen to pursue mathematics?**

A. When I went to college, I took the courses I liked and told my academic advisor to tell me what major I was getting. He told me that it appeared I was accumulating enough credits to be a math major. A better question is: Why did I get an MBA? Answer: I have no idea; it was mostly a waste of time.

**Q. How many ventures did Mr. Allen begin before he was able to become successful?**

A. I think I've been successful from the beginning. After all, just being born is like winning the lottery. Even failures are a success if you learn something.

**Q. Has Mr. Allen had an Executive Assistant before? If so, why did s/he leave?**

A. Yes. She had to leave to take care of a family member. You will have a chance to find the answers to your questions directly from her.

**Q. Is there room to grow within the company when the time is right?**

A. We are a very flat organization, so if your question is, when can I get a promotion, the answer might be, "a very long time." However

**Q. Is there any one general field of study you'd want your applicants to be well versed in?**

A. Not so much field of study, but an interest and aptitude in studying... and thinking... and doing.

**Q. What is the reasoning behind seeking out a candidate with a quality attitude as opposed to a distinguished resume? As a recent college graduate, I feel it's this mindset in and employer that I'm best suited to work for, but it's surprising to see such a request posted in an ad.**

A. As one person told me once, "I used to hire for skills and fire for attitude. Now I hire for attitude and aptitude and train for skills." Another person said, "I can teach you how to do everything I need, but I cannot be a substitute for being raised well."

**Q. Since the candidate will be working directly with Mr. Allen, can the job be extended to other business he is in?**

A. Yes.

**Q. How much room is there for growth at NSoW?**

A. Who knows? There is room for doing interesting things, but there is no revenue model, so at some point either one has to come along, or, better yet, it gets taken over by volunteers who run it without us. Don't worry, if that happens, there are plenty of other things to do.

**Q. Being a Canadian based company are any of the Board of Directors natives of The United States.**

A. Don't know. Is that important? If so, to whom? The major shareholders are the teachers pension of the province of Ontario, a bank, and a bunch of wealthy people.

**Q. Does Mr. Allen work with programs aimed at helping urban area residents acquire jobs such as the NYC Back to Work program, i.e. Giving presentations in their employment workshops.**

A. No.

**Q. While reviewing the no shortage of work website on my blackberry I noticed it is not very mobile accessible, would it be acceptable to start projects to make it more mobile accessible under the assumption it would better the agency and would be accepted?**

A. That would be a very low priority.

**Q. Would it be allowed to take extra training courses to better familiarize myself with the demands of the industry?**

A. We won't keep you from taking any training you want. We will pay for some training, but not everything you can think of.

**Q. Is it acceptable to work past standard hours to finish a project?**

A. This is one of those silly, self-serving questions that are best left unasked, along with, "Would you object if I worked harder than you expect me to?" and "Would my incredible brilliance be held against me?"

**Q. In reference to the radio interview powerpoint for youtube, can I submit a rough draft for review and critique?**

A. Are you asking to try your hand at the project even before I hire you; sort of as a sample of your work? If so, sure, why not? Here is a snippet, not the entire thing, but probably 80%:

[noshortageofwork.com/pages/BrookeChicagoJobTalkRadio-NSOW.mp3](http://noshortageofwork.com/pages/BrookeChicagoJobTalkRadio-NSOW.mp3)

**Q. How flexible is the work schedule when it relates to schooling and the pursuit of a higher education degree?**

A. Not very. Your day begins at 8:00 sharp. You need to be there week days (except for 3 weeks of vacation.) The day ends before 5:00 (except in the first weeks when you'll be learning and not very efficient). You should have time to take one or two courses per semester, as long as it is at night. Day courses are pretty much out of the question.

**Q. Why is it that you chose to post your ad on craigslist?**

A. We really like the people we get from Craigslist. They tend to be more interesting – not drones.

**Q. It seems like you need help with a lot of creative projects, is that so?**

A. Glad that is the impression you got; it was the impression we were trying to give.

**Q. Is work always at the same location?**

A. Yes. We're at 10 Exchange Place, Jersey City, NJ 07302 27<sup>th</sup> floor.

**Q. How about Casual Friday do you practice that?**

A. We practice casual every day. You can wear a wool suite if you want, but the rest of us mostly wear jeans.

**Q. And is it okay if I eat at my desk?**

A. Yes. On Wednesdays we bring in either breakfast or lunch for the whole office, and then you pretty much have no choice.

**Q. I have been unemployed for a while. Is that OK? Or are you like most employers; you only want to hire someone who is currently working?**

A. As someone is quoted on [www.NoShortageOfWork.com](http://www.NoShortageOfWork.com), we don't mind if you don't have a job. We will want to know what you have accomplished with the time you've been unemployed. Catching up on day-time soaps doesn't cut it.

**Q. I cannot start until September. Is that too late?**

A. Yes.

**Q. What are your goals for the future? Are you planning on expanding and/or adding offices? If so, where have you set your sights?**

A. Our goal is to see how far we can go with what we have already. We have no plans on adding offices.

**Q. How would you describe the work environment?**

A. Casual, collegial, open office (we rub elbows)

**Q. Is there room for advancement in this position?**

A. There is much more room for making something big out of this position than there is to use this position as a stepping stone to something big.

**Q. I am car-free and would need to walk from the public transportation. My main question for you is are you located within walking distance of the Path Train in Jersey City?**

A. The entrance to our building is less than 100 feet from both the Exchange Place PATH station, and the Light Rail.

**Q. What are the routine tasks like?**

A. That is best explained in person.

**Q. If I accept a position with your company, what degree of mentoring should I expect?**

A. Probably more than you can stomach. Brooke's wife is always accusing him of educating people against their will.

**Q. What types of events would I be working on for your company?**

A. We might do parties. We might do an all-day seminar series. We might do a week-long course. We don't know yet.

**Q. For the programs I'm not yet familiar with and which I would use while working for you, how helpful is your company in my learning process?**

A. We have 3 programmers on staff, however they are not well versed in building web applications. The kind of people we hire are usually good with manuals and trial-and-error. However, we will send you to training if needed.

**Q. How free would I be with your company to present my own unique ideas for company success and, if approved, develop them?**

A. This is a dangerous question, because it is usually asked by people who have a track record of being upset at having their ideas shot down. The two most frequent reasons for ideas to get canned are: 1) they aren't very good, 2) nobody wants to pay to have you (or someone else) do it. That said, we are in trouble if Brooke has to come up with all the ideas.

**Q. I know little about finance and trading, which I see are Mr. Allen's areas of expertise. How much of an opportunity would I have to learn about these things in this job?**

A. Actually, there won't be too much opportunity for two reasons: 1) our kind of trading is very automated – more mathematics and computer science than finance, 2) the job doesn't involve any actual finance or trading. This is not a stepping stone onto a trading desk.

**Q. I have found that my education gave me little knowledge on how the politics of an office work. What is Mr. Allen's overall approach as a manager when it comes to this?**

A. The thing to learn is not how to deal with office politics, but rather how to create an office free of politics. You will get a big lecture about office politics only if you become part of a problem.

**Q. Please give me a brief overview of Maple, USA. While I read about the firm online, I'd still be interested to know how you would choose to describe the company, in just a few lines, to someone who had never heard of you before?**

A. I struggled with this for years (I've been here from 1995). I've worked at a bunch of other companies, and this is by far the best I've ever worked at. A colleague, Rolando, was also trying to put his finger on it, and he finally did. He told me, "The word is 'decent.' It appears that in Canada, they raise their children to believe it is more important to be decent than rich." I second that. This is a Canadian firm, although I am not. (But both my sons go to McGill in Montreal.)

**Q. What are the hours of this job?**

A. 8:00 AM Sharp – come late too many times and we will replace you with someone who will not. The day usually ends before 5:00.

**Q. I have absolutely no trading or investment experience, and not sure I want to ever get any (unless somehow I win the lottery and become stinking rich). Am I still a candidate?**

A. Absolutely. We need someone different from us to round out the group.

**Q. Has your company been affected by the economic downturn?**

A. Yes. We have just completed 3 of our best years ever. How did we do it? We just avoided doing stupid things, and our competition that did went down.

**Q. Will or Can I learn about Trading? (The stock Market)**

A. Not directly. Perhaps tangentially.

**Q. Secondly, how technology-heavy is the job?**

A. It is not technology heavy in the sense of hard-core programming or computer hardware. However, you need to know how to use tools like Wordpress, HTML, SQL, css, Photoshop, etc.

**Q. How often would you foresee the job running past 4:30 pm?**

A. Every day in the beginning. Once or twice a month later on.

**Q. How important is English fluency?**

A. Critical.

**Q. Do you care if I speak a foreign language?**

A. I cannot hurt, but it is not a requirement.

**Q. What is the support structure of your office like, specifically in regard to new employee acclimation?**

A. Even before we hire you, if you were a leading candidate, we'd ask you to come in and spend ½ day with the group, going over the work. The firm isn't big – 50 people in a really big room (with a beautiful view). "Employee acclimation" has never been an issue before.

**Q. What are your goals for the person you hire after one month? After six?**

A. 1 month: not make us feel we made a mistake in hiring the person, 6 months: see a big pile of stuff accomplished.

**Q. Why should you hire me?**

A. That is the question we will ask you. More specifically, we will ask you, "If you were us, why might it not be in our best interests to hire you?" If you come up with something ahead of time and we address it, that is good. If you could have found a problem, but you don't mention it, we are not beyond getting rid of you and starting over.

**Q. The only question I have at the time is how much interaction there is between the Jersey City office and other Maple branches, if any.**

A. Very little.

**Q. To what extent is the hierarchy defined at your office?**

A. We are very flat. You would work for Brooke who works for a guy who works for the President.

**Q. Is it possible for your employees to relocate to any of your other offices around the world?**

A. Very unlikely.

**Q. Is there an age bracket that you consider for this position?**

A. Not at all.

**Q. Will I learn about quantitative trading? If so, to what depth?**

A. It is very unlikely that you will learn much; we want to hire someone with complementary skills, not another person like us. In other words, if you have the skill to get good at quant trading, you are not the right person for this job.

**Q. Do your employees tend to stay with the company for the long term?**

A. Yes. The people in the group and their start dates are: Brooke(1995), Steve(2000), Al(2001), Orlando(2004), Mustafa(2005). Some people have left to go to grad school, to move to another country, to have a kid, etc. We almost never have lay-offs (knock on wood), but we have let some people go for not being very good.

**Q. Is Mr. Allen based in the Jersey City office or in the main headquarters in Toronto?**

A. Full-time in Jersey City (except that he will often work from home – something that you will not be able to do).

**Q. Are projects more often Web-centered (i.e. YouTube example) or writing/research based?**

A. Perhaps 40%/40% plus another 20% other stuff.

**Q. Will the incumbent mainly work on projects for the <http://www.NoShortageOfWork.com> website, or will they work on projects throughout the MapleUSA company?**

A. Mostly for NSoW and similar projects. A few others within the department. None outside of the department.

**Q. I also saw that three out of five people opted to earn a Masters Degree within the company, I just wanted to clarify, did those people start in the same position that is currently being offered?**

A. No. Two were hired as programmers and one as a trader. We would consider sending someone for grad school for this position – although probably not in the first year.

**Q. Will this job help me advance a career in money management, finance, or trading?**

A. Probably not.

**Q. Would i be able to get connected with financial professions from global network?**

A. This job won't help much with this per se. To do this, join a bunch of financial societies, network, connect to people on LinkedIn, etc. Feel free to send connection invitations to Brooke on LinkedIn.

**Q. Why did you advertise under “writers/editors?”**

A. “How do I know what I think until I read what I write.” This quote is attributed to many people – and it is true. Research shows that you can't think complex thoughts unless you write things down. You can't do math without writing, and you can't think about much else without writing. Oh, you can get by, but you don't do well. Besides, this job requires writing.

**Q. If you were not to interview or hire me, who would you recommend I contact, or where would you suggest I seek for employment?**

A. The best people to contact for jobs are the people you've worked for already. The best way to expand your network is to work for people you don't know. How do you break the chicken/egg problem? Find people and work for them for free. Read:  
Read: <http://charliehoehn.files.wordpress.com/2009/07/recession-proof-graduate1.pdf>

**Q. Why should I want to work for Brooke Allen? What will I learn? What will (or should) keep me wanting to stay for a long time?**

A. Good due diligence question – don't take our word for it; find out for yourself.

**OK, I'm going cross-eyed.**

**Some questions I am not going to answer.**

**I'll make you a deal, you don't ask me the questions below and I won't ask you, “Where do you envision yourself in 5 years?” and “What is your greatest weakness?”**

What is the best thing about working as an assistant to Mr. Allen?

What is the most challenging aspect of the job?

What is it like working for Brooke? / What is the best thing about working as an assistant to Mr. Allen?

What is the most challenging aspect of the job?

I recently got engaged to my high school sweetheart of 10 years and noticed Mr. Allen is a family man. My question would be does he consider New Jersey a better place to raise a family versus New York as it relates to safety, schooling and way of life.

I am still curious though, what are the most immediate challenges of the position that need to be addressed in the first three months?

What does Brook Allen despise in a person?

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**Next step:**

Hang tight.

A few of you offered to do something to illustrate your capabilities. If you want to send that to me, go right ahead. Otherwise, please hold on for this week, I'm in overload mode right now.

The next thing you will receive is a survey that will ask you to rank yourself on some skills.

And it will give you a choice of dates to come in to visit.

If you don't hear from us by March 22, please write again and make sure we didn't lose track of you.

OK?

Brooke