



# Investigative Journalist

**SALARY RANGE (2017):** \$54,000–\$119,000

I collect and analyze facts about newsworthy events by interview, investigation or observation. I produce stories across different mediums from print to video to audio. My job is to pursue and communicate the objective truth by engaging and connecting with a diverse audience in a manner that is relevant to them. My reward is making a difference in my community.

**The Tip:** Get used to thinking beyond your comfort zone. Go into every situation with intentional curiosity. If you can see ways to connect the dots in a story using diverse media, you'll be a high-value colleague.

## PRIORITY KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS:

### Advanced Research & Analysis Skills

- Formulating research questions
- Ability to critically analyze literature
- Ability to develop and execute qualitative research
- Ability to synthesize key themes from multiple sources

### Contextual Knowledge

- Knowledge of human behaviour
- Understanding of context and values of audiences
- Essential understanding of topics and themes as they relate to an audience

### Advanced Communication Skills

- Formulate and defend positions
- Sensitivity to how communications is shaped by circumstances, authorship and intended audience

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### Evidence-based Storytelling Skills

- Ability to use research to develop an evidence-based story
- Ability to generate story ideas
- Ability to identify target audiences
- Ability to create compelling narratives across media

### Additional Skills

- Contextual knowledge of media industry
- Excel at core communication, interpersonal and organizational skills
- Project management skills
- Systematic understanding of current events
- Ability to use specialized communications technology

## BUILDING BLOCK EXPERIENCES:

### Education & Learning:

Being a journalist today is challenging. To

- Bachelor of Arts (English) with a minor in business & society
- Certificate in video production from local college
- Investigative reporting is evolving rapidly, but my favourite book remains the classic *All the President's Men*
- Gerard Ryle's TED Talk on the Panama Papers and investigative journalism is inspiring

maintain a competitive advantage, I need to be agile enough to work across media. I developed an educational plan to deliver on this. My English degree, combined with my certificate in video production gave me the fundamental skills to pursue this career.

Today, I focus on informal learning to ensure I understand emerging trends and how they may impact my profession. Learning is core to my job every day.

**Employment Experiences:**

- Joined school newspaper in first week at university. Wrote 12 articles in my first year. Six had accompanying video.
- Did a work term at local community newspaper. Hired for two summers while in school.
- Hired as a digital media specialist with local TV station. Promoted to the investigative news team.
- I am a passionate photographer and generate \$200 per month in iStockphoto revenue

In journalism, networks create opportunities. I knew this on Day 1 at university and wanted to ensure I used my time, both inside and outside the classroom, as an opportunity to gain experience and build my reputation as an investigative journalist.

**Community Experiences:**

- Editor of school newspaper while in university. Remain an alumni mentor.
- Active member of the Canadian Association of Journalists

I am passionate about investigative journalism. I am intentionally curious. I ask questions all the time and look for community opportunities that need this skill.

**Contextual Experiences:**

- I did a semester in France in university to refine my French. I have travelled to 17 countries in 10 years. Travelling is an education in itself.
- This profession is highly competitive and requires mobility to progress. I have lived in four cities in 10 years. It is a lifestyle you need to embrace.

Exposure to diverse cultures reinforced my humility because it showed me the world is big and what I actually know is so small.

**Relationships:**

- To succeed as an investigative journalist you need to have a reputation and respect. I invest in building social capital every day. I built an active mentoring team when I was in university.
- My spouse is my best friend. They are my greatest supporter and champion and have been flexible as my career progresses.

I know success as an investigative journalist is about building strong relationships and networks. All relationships must be win-win. Being a journalist can involve long hours (early mornings and late nights), so I need to have strong personal relationships.