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all about you/working girl



The Assistant Diaries

Nightmare bosses, rookie mistakes, and parents who call your employer?! Here's how to master an entry-level job (or, well, any job) in a crazy-tough economy.
By Lilit Marcus

"When given opportunities to prove yourself, there's no excuse for showing up empty-handed. As a reporter in Chicago, I used to go to diners and ask people what issues they cared about. Yes, it meant working extra, but I sounded more informed when pitching ideas to a news director."

—Nicole Lapin, founder, recessionista.com

"If you don't know something, admit it"

—Nicole Lapin, 28, former CNN and CNBC anchor and founder of recessionista.com

"I used to just smile and nod when people threw around industry terms I didn't know. But when you're new to everything, it's completely OK to admit you don't know something—and ask questions to figure it out. I changed my routine when I was a junior-level reporter at CBS, covering a breaking news story about a fire in a local apartment building. The anchor asked me on air whether the building's tenants had renters insurance, and I said, 'You know what? That's a great question. Let me find out, and I'll update you.' It sounded much more professional than stammering."

