

How to work in New York City



Amelie Marie Weber in New York City for *Focus* magazine © HBM

Walking the streets of New York as a young journalist, meeting exciting people, conducting interviews, visiting exclusive press events and simply feeling a bit like Anne Hathaway in "The Devil wears Prada".. Burda's journalism school makes it happen. But what does the daily work in the US correspondence office look like? What are the tasks of a trainee in NYC? Focus trainee Amelie Marie Weber spills the beans:

In the New York office, the editors of *Elle*, *Instyle*, *Freundin*, *Bunte* and *Focus* sit together. Although their tasks differ considerably from each other, they naturally support each other. Our colleagues always have our backs and since they have all been living in NYC for a long time, they can always help. As a *Focus* trainee, however, you also need to frequently communicate with the editorial staff in Berlin. In the meantime, you can work very independently.

Good Morning in the Morning

Our day starts at 9:00 in the 85 Broad Street office. After my arrival I pick up the newspapers at the reception. All Burda editors here have subscribed to the New York Times and it's just part of it to skim them in the morning and get an overview of the current

news situation in the USA. I also look on the internet to see what's new in Germany, because it's important to keep in touch with that as well.

Collecting and Suggesting Topics

Whenever I notice exciting topics that could be interesting for *Focus* magazine, I write them down. At least once a week I send my suggestions to several colleagues in Berlin. Although I actually write for the political and economic department, I am very flexible with my topic suggestions. Exciting things just happen every day in New York and I'm there to track them down and bring them closer to readers in Germany. No matter whether culture, fashion, people, science ...

In addition to reading German and American news daily, it is advisable to subscribe to newsletters and check them regularly. There are newsletters for everything here: food, sightseeing, exhibitions, concerts, news from individual companies, from agencies, from bloggers... They are very useful not only for research, but also to be able to follow the insider tips after work or on weekends! I walk through this exciting city with eyes and ears wide open and talk to as many people as possible. This is how I find my best topics.

Researching, Interviewing, Writing

When the editorial staff responds to my suggestions and decides on a topic, time is often of the essence. Searching and contacting protagonists and contacts, researching facts and often finding a photographer. For example, I wrote about a college scandal and interviewed a young college applicant. She lives in the Hamptons, about 2.5 hours from New York City. After making an appointment with her, I drove to the Hamptons with a photographer and met her for an interview. The photographer also took pictures of her, then we went back to NYC and I could start writing. Depending on the topic, you might even have to fly to some other place within the US. This is always arranged individually.

When writing, I am always in close contact with the editorial staff in Berlin. What needs to be considered is the time difference. At 1 p.m. at the latest, the colleagues in Germany go home, because they already passed 7 p.m. and thus the end of their work day! So it's best to discuss important things first thing in the morning when I get to the office. I email finished texts to my colleagues in Berlin, who of course proofread them and then (in the best case) put them in the magazine.

Work never passed by so quickly

I usually take my lunch break between noon and 1 p.m.. Usually I bring some bread and some fruit, because the food here in New York and especially on Wall Street is not cheap. At the same time there is a huge selection of different lunch possibilities and usually at least one person in the office brings some sweets. So we are all well-fed.

I also receive invitations to interesting events and lectures by email from time to time. There I often met inspiring people and experienced a lot of new things. You have to drive through

the whole city from time to time, but that brings some variety into your working day. Tip: Always have a chic, business-suitable outfit with you. If you suddenly have to go to the Foreign Minister's reception and only have jeans and sneakers with you, you may feel a bit uncomfortable. Believe me...

Well and since the days here seem to go by faster than anywhere else, which is probably due to the fact that so many exciting things happen, the end of work always comes incredibly fast. I usually leave the office at 5 p.m. - it always depends on how much there is to do. From time to time there are also evening events, which of course I also attend. No day is like the next! And that is damn fine.

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