

# Erica Grow

Broadcaster Manager for the AccuWeather Network



## **What is your current occupation?**

Broadcaster Manager for the AccuWeather Network, AccuWeather.

I oversee a team of 11 on-air meteorologists for the AccuWeather Network (available on several cable networks, Roku, DirecTV, etc). Daily responsibilities include scheduling, coaching/talent development, leading weather coverage decisions, and working with other members of management to ensure our Network thrives and grows.

## **What is your educational background?**

B.S. in Meteorology, Penn State University

Certified Broadcast Meteorologist (CBM #593), the American Meteorological Society

## **A key message for students is that the geoscience workforce is dynamic, and boundaries between sectors and occupations are fluid. How has this been true in your career?**

My career path is atypical for someone in geosciences; someone could do this job without having a science background at all. Before joining AccuWeather, I spent 18 years as a broadcast meteorologist. Every day, it was my job to translate the complex science of weather to a general audience, an audience with a wide range of backgrounds and lived experiences. Along the way, I learned other skills necessary to produce a TV newscast, like creating weather graphics, editing video, reading TelePrompter, conducting interviews, building a rundown, and writing copy.

**Where do you see your sector moving in future years? How would you advise students to prepare to be competitive job applicants and successful employees?**

The viewing public is moving away from live TV and toward on-demand viewing. The whole business model is changing. But, for people who want to become broadcast meteorologists, it's a pretty good environment. The need for credible, educated on-air personnel continues to grow, but the growth will probably accelerate in the digital space and move away from broadcast television (i.e., your local news).

**What is the role of networking in your sector? Do you have advice for a student who is just beginning to build their network? What is the best way for students to get their foot in the door?**

Networking is HUGE in TV. Go to AMS and NWA meetings. Reach out to broadcasters you admire on social media. Start small by asking if you can send some of your work for a critique when they have time. If you find yourself in their town, ask if you can meet them for coffee. These relationships may grow into mentorships, and maybe even coworker/colleague relationships.

**What does a “typical” day of work look like for you?**

Lots of meetings! But seriously, my current role of manager is very different than my previous life as a broadcast meteorologist, a role that was much more relevant for the geosciences.

As a TV meteorologist, I would start my day by looking at the latest round of forecast model data for my region. I took notes on a grid, starting with the upper troposphere (the jet stream level at 250mb) and work my way down through the “mandatory layers” (required reporting layers for upper air observations) in order to get a full picture of the current and future weather conditions. I compared the different available model outputs, looking for discrepancies and areas of agreement. Then, I would call upon my knowledge of the area, model biases, and other factors to create a full forecast for my area. After all that, I would input the forecast data into the weather graphics I planned to use on the air. Finally, it's time for hair and makeup before the newscast begins. Throughout the process, I'm thinking about the important takeaways for the viewer at home, and methods for making this complicated science of the atmosphere interesting and relatable for the viewers at home.

**What is the best part of your job?**

As a TV meteorologist, I loved answering people's burning questions about the weather. School visits were my favorite part of the job; I even created curricula for different age ranges to use in our classroom presentations.

Now, as a manager, I still love teaching and learning. My team members are like students in a way, and it's my job to make sure they're continually learning and improving. We regularly meet for coaching sessions to make this happen.

**Do you have any other comments or advice for students looking to enter your sector of the geoscience workforce?**

Be flexible! You will likely work weekends, holidays, long hours, consecutive days. Your workday may start at 2am on Wednesday and end at midnight on Thursday. You will start to look at your social media platforms as a burden, because they are now a part of your job, poking at you from the time your alarm goes off till your head hits the pillow. You may have to move 100s or 1000s of miles away from home to start your career. Glamorous, right? 😊

**Connect:**

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/ericagrow/>

**Learn More:**

I was on TV for 18 years, so I'm pretty easy to find online. The things I'd rather highlight, however, are much less visible.

I was recently named an Alumni Fellow of Penn State's College of Earth and Mineral Sciences: [125th Anniversary Fellows named by the College of Earth and Mineral Sciences, Penn State University](#)

I also have a study coming out shortly; I researched NOAA's Weather-Ready Nation Ambassador Initiative and explored options for strengthening the Initiative. The study will be published through the American Meteorological Society's Policy Office.