

# Gordon Deal Is a Self-Described Gatherer

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Only hot dogs and beer have spent more time in sports stadiums than Gordon Deal.

In 2011, he became the New York Giants PA announcer at MetLife Stadium. Today he's the PA announcer for the New York Giants football club, a job he snared in 2011. "That's the year they went on to win the Super Bowl," Deal said. "This season will be my 12th season."

Deal did the same for the New York Knicks. He was also a PA announcer for the New York Liberty of the WNBA.

"The year I joined the Giants in 2011, they went on to win the Super Bowl later that year. This season will be my 12th.

Deal spent a lot of time in the booth for Rutgers football. Play-by-play broadcasting was always close to his heart, and he says that a play-by-play guy is essentially a breaking news reporter in the grander scheme of things.

“What I mean by that is you’re talking about something that is unfolding before your eyes. You’re the voice at the scene of the fire, with flames pouring out the window. That’s like calling a pass play, interception, or a blocked punt. It’s always breaking news.”

“My first public address gig was at Rutgers, when at WRSU. I was randomly asked to announce a women’s volleyball game. These, to me, at the time, were the most beautiful women on the planet, so I may have had ulterior motives.”

Deal believes professional teams these days are looking for a ‘homer atmosphere’ rather than the unbiased announcers.

“I used to do that ‘homer’ stuff for the New York Knicks. The fans responded. In football, if the other team has the ball, I’ll really play up the ‘*It’s third-down.*’ Trying to rally the crowd.”

His ambitions to be a play-by-play guy started in his driveway. He would shoot hoops, envisioning hitting the game-winning shot. I was that suburban kid who had a basketball hoop nailed to the side of the house, and I’d narrate myself playing.

*‘Deal moves to his right... it’s a floater to beat the buzzer. Nets win. Nets win.’* He did the same thing with a soccer goal rigged up between two trees in the yard.

Since the beginnings of mankind, there have been the proverbial hunters and gatherers. For daily news, Deal is most definitely a self-described gatherer.

“I’m an aggregator,” Deal said. “I’m not a news organization. I source everything. We don’t have correspondents. I’ll always tell you where the story is coming from.”

Deal said you might not like his sources, but that’s not something he can control.

“I’ll get an email or tweet accusing me of bias on one thing or another,” Deal explained. “You could drill down all day and not find bias in what I do. If you say you have proof of something, show it to me. Prove I’m a liberal or on the *right.*”

He said on Twitter that he’s willing to take a kick in the pants if he’s wrong. “Still, show me I’m wrong. I get it from both sides. That’s a good sign.”

“We do a news analysis on our show. We compliment those with sound bites. My job between 5:00 and 7:00 in the morning is to make you the most knowledgeable listeners out there.”

Deal worked at WINS and WCBS as a writer and reporter. Later, he worked for *The Wall Street Journal This Morning*, which went belly up in 2014. Deal’s show, *This Morning with Gordon Deal*, is available on over 300 terrestrial radio stations. It’s also on TuneIn, iHeartRadio, Audacy, Apple Podcasts, Google Podcasts, Amazon Music Podcasts, Spotify, Stitcher, and Pandora.

Deal attended Rutgers and graduated in communications in 1989. Like most first-year college students, Deal had no idea what he wanted to do. “I guess I chose a generic degree. My grades were so bad, I was on academic probation in my freshman year. I was too stupid to keep a routine. I thought I was going to play soccer.”

He said he didn’t have the grades to declare communications as a major, so he took business classes until his GPA was high enough to declare communications.

“It was a communication degree, not broadcast journalism,” he explained. “This was a curriculum that didn’t include sitting behind a microphone to hone skills. WRSU was our radio station, and I found out they were looking for people to work there,” Deal said. “Everything I learned about radio broadcasting came from there.”

“I wasn’t the most informed guy back then. I could tell you the name of the assistant coach at Boise State, but I couldn’t name the governor of my own state.”

In school, Deal started writing for *The Daily Targum*.

(I know. I had to look up *Targum*.)

“Some of my classmates were writing for the paper. Then in the same paper, there was an ad for the radio station. They were looking for people to do music, news, sales, sports.”

When a play-by-play gig opened up at Rutgers, they didn’t have to ask Deal twice. “I liked to travel, and the school was picking up the tab. I got to fly on the plane with the teams. It was a dream come true.”

After Rutgers, Deal joined the local radio station, WCTC. It was Rutgers’ flagship for sports. WCTC was the first radio station built post WWII.

“I was hired as a news guy, but I was promised the chance to climb the play-by-play ladder as time went on.”

“You have to tell a good story as an announcer. When I listen to the guys in the booth, it’s all about the stories for me. There are a lot of complaints about announcers, but they’re critical to the experience.

Deal said he makes sure he’s discussing the right angle for the story. To prepare for his shows, he listens to talk radio and sports.

“I’m trying to absorb it all so I can ask good questions. I need to know as much as the average listener.”

His show doesn't take calls. During any 60 minutes, you will hear a range of talk from trendy stories or something that piques Deal's interest. "In one segment, I might spend four minutes of analysis on how pro-life advocates will take their fight to the states. For the next six minutes, you'll hear why homeowners in Boise are experiencing dropping home prices. I like to mix things up. That's the pace we like."

He said he does have fun doing a segment called 'Mike Drop.' This segment features producer Mike Gavin's humorous but entirely true yet outlandish stories from around the world.

"It focuses on stupid criminals. That's where we let our personalities fly, and listeners love it. It proves we're not robots."

"We don't bring people into the studio. I'm outside of Princeton, New Jersey," Deal said. "Some oil executive isn't going to be strolling into our little studio. I'd say 90 percent of our broadcast is news. The rest is industry analysis and entertainment."

Lots of good things have happened to Deal. Unfortunately, some memories are not so pleasant. A man might judge himself by how he treated an ailing person. In that case, Deal said he felt a strong sense of duty to his dad. In 2012, he became the New York Giants PA Announcer at MetLife Stadium.

"My father died more than a year ago," Deal said. As close as he was to his dad, he's said he's holding up pretty well. "When he had his stroke, we felt we lost him that day. He struggled physically, but I think the hardest part for us was the fact he could no longer speak."

Deal's father was a salesman, and he lived off his ability to speak. "He could walk into a room and chat with anybody," Deal explained. For him to lose his speech was particularly grueling. "No more stories from Dad. No more hearing about his old red-neck stories from Georgia."

After five years of struggle, Deal said they were almost relieved when he passed. Not because they didn't love him. They only had a shell of the man he once was.

"He was my hero," Deal said. "I loved him. We had a country music bond between us. It was hard to see an old sales guy lose his most valued asset-his words."

There's a video of Deal singing with his father to work on his father's speech therapy. "It was a Toby Keith and Willie Nelson mashup," Deal said. "We'd piece together some songs. One of the hardest aspects was we could see him formulating a response to a question, but the words wouldn't come out. He couldn't muster an answer."

His mother is still with him. "She's as sharp as a tack, fit as a fiddle," Deal said. He left out *In Fine Fettle* and *Picture of Health*.

Deal said his mother still works out each day. “She just came up to New Jersey from South Carolina for my daughter’s graduation from high school,” Deal said. “I had several people suggest she was my wife. She looks like she’s in her fifties. Either she looks young, or I look old.”

His father met his mom on a blind date. “Dad was one of those guys who could sell anything. He had that southern charm, one of those guys you instantly liked. People felt like they knew him for a long time. He knew how to make people feel important. Feel good.”

Just as his father used his words to make a living, his son followed in similar but vastly different footsteps.

Deal says he tries to make himself useful when he’s not on the air.

“My son and I started playing golf together. He plays soccer at Stockton University. We have that in common. My daughter is a dancer and is off to school this fall.”

There’s a YouTube video of Deal jamming out to George Thorogood with his daughter and one of her friends in the backseat. It’s touching to see him so connected to his daughter.

“I’m into blues in general,” Deal said. “I’m not musically inclined at all. My sister was a good piano player growing up. They wanted me to play, but I got lucky. I broke my wrist. I was never so happy in my life.”

Imagine Deal’s joy if he ever breaks a leg.