

Neil Jensen ('96) currently serves as Vice President of Strategy & Advisory services for Appirio, a global consulting firm that specializes in crowdsourcing strategies and cloud technologies. Since joining the firm in 2012, Jensen has demonstrated his expertise in project management and technological development to optimize workforce technologies within the cloud economy. Before joining Appirio, he served as Vice President of Strategy Services at Knowledge Infusion, and Director of Human Resources at Charles Schwab. Neil Jensen has a B.A. in Speech Communication from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.



**1. What aspects of your education as a communication student have been most beneficial to your career?**

The ability to communicate is key to success in any setting. I'm always amazed when I find professionals that struggle to communicate their ideas. It's limiting and creates barriers to move quickly and drive big business outcomes. My education at the University of Illinois gave me a leg up in my ability to interact with other professionals, communicate my ideas and push for results. It really is the foundation that's gotten me where I am today.

**2. What advice would you give to current communication students about the professional realm?**

My best advice is to build a broad base of skills. U of I offers a wide range of opportunities to build skills that are attractive in the business world. With an education

in Communication as the foundation, you can supplement it with other domains that help broaden your capabilities. While working toward my degree, I also took courses in business administration, accounting & finance, advertising & marketing, etc. to ensure I had a wide range of skills. It has paid dividends throughout my career.

**3. What is most memorable about your experience as a student at UIUC?  
What were you involved with on campus?**

Some of my most memorable experiences as a student really involve the relationships I was able to develop with classmates, roommates and friends in student organizations. I still interact with many of them today on both a social and professional level. While on campus, I participated in the Greek system and spent a lot of my time with the Student Alumni Association (now called Student Ambassadors). Both provided exposure to lots of diverse opportunities.