

The importance being a PR all-rounder

By [Miranda Lusiba](#)

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For any young public relations (PR) hopefuls out there, who would like to master this craft, it is important to be open to learning everything.



Source: © -andrea-piacquadio [pexels](#) Young PR professionals need to expose themselves to all aspects of the PR profession

When I look at my PR journey over the last two decades, I'm grateful that I had mentors that exposed me to all aspects of the PR profession.

What is PR?

Our profession entails everything from PR and communication strategy and planning to media publicity and external communication; media relations and engagements; internal communication and employee engagements; stakeholder relations and engagements; thought leadership; crisis and reputation management as well as investor relations for JSE-Listed companies.

I have been lucky enough to gain experience in all these principles of PR because I was open to learning – basically I was like a sponge in water.

During my career, I've always been more than happy to assist young PR professionals to grow and I've done this in different forms of on-the-job practical training that included mentorship and coaching.



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Samantha Hogg 24 May 2022



Desperate but complacent

However, I have come across youngsters with sad stories about not being able to obtain internships or experience from different companies. They told me how desperate they were, going as far as saying that they were willing to do any kind of

job to gain the experience needed to graduate or progress in their careers.

What I found disappointing is how they got complacent the minute they were given the opportunities.

Don't get me wrong, there are definitely jewels in today's youngsters.

Patient learning

I've always advised youth to have a solid foundation before their careers start flourishing and they start moving up.

I've asked them to be patient with their process of learning – to take it one step at a time and master each skill before moving to the next challenge.

This means starting at the very bottom and doing every task given with a smile.

However, you can see from their faces that they were bored when they were given PR administrative jobs because most of them want to jump straight to developing strategies before even knowing how to file or make a photocopy.

I always like use the example of a gentleman who posted on Twitter about his daughter who had finished her masters after studying at University full-time and had never worked anywhere before, but was looking for a job as a CEO of a company.

She felt her Master's degree gave her the licence to move straight from varsity to being a CEO without grafting and starting at the bottom and moving up slowly, but surely.

PR is pure slavery

This impatience in starting at the bottom and learning gradually, means that many young PR professionals miss crucial stages in their development, moving up too quickly in their careers resulting in holes in their expertise.

This is because they are impatient and want to move up to management roles before mastering the basics.

Also, what I picked up is that they chose roles that look easy and nice, not wanting to do anything that expects a lot of effort.

The unfortunate thing is that PR is pure slavery, but we do it because we love it.

It is content and admin heavy and we work with volumes – those who are lazy do not survive. The ones that have been in the profession for a long time make it look easy to those watching from the outside until they start doing it themselves and realise that it's not as easy as it looks.

My advice to youngsters who want to succeed in this profession is to have the willingness to do any task they are given no matter how small or tedious it may look because it's grooming them for the future.

Doing everything will most definitely turn youngsters into all-rounders that will always have an upper hand over anyone when they are competing for future jobs.



Global PR industry grows by 10.6% in 2021

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Today big companies and agencies, unfortunately, do not have the luxury or budgets to employ PR professionals who are just coordinators or client service agents.

Companies need people who can develop strategies, manage client expectations, be able to implement the strategies they develop, write content, and manage media and any crisis that arises.

These professionals must have the ability to handle a project from beginning to end on their own and deliver on all the requirements.

Gone are the days of companies hiring specialist writers, media relations specialists or client relations professionals, making it a tough environment to find a job.

To stand out from the crowd you need to be an all-rounder with the best attitude and work ethic. This will take any determined and hardworking young PR professional places.

ABOUT MIRANDA LUSIBA

Miranda Lusiba is the Founding Director of Strangé Consulting - a boutique PR Agency specialising in Communications, Freelance Writing, Media Relations, Reputation Management and Media Training.

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