

PRWEEK

When applying for a PR job, how can I use experience with other marketing disciplines to my advantage?

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Now is actually a great time for people who have experience in other marketing disciplines to knock on our door. Today, the lines between advertising, marketing communications, branding, digital media, and PR are increasingly blurry— some may say obsolete. In PR, where we are increasingly partnering with other communications disciplines on behalf of our brands, an understanding of integrated marketing is a key transferrable skill. Here are some skills from other marketing disciplines that we find valuable:

Advertising: Advertising creatives are strong at developing the big, innovative ideas that are so valued by current and potential clients. They are familiar with the pressure of the pitch process and pulling it all together for that one shot at the win. Account executives have the strategic planning skills required to develop client programs and are intuitively capable of managing multiple projects, thinking quickly, and operating in an ambiguous environment. They also bring a client service mentality and a desire to build and cultivate relationships, which are essential tools in PR.

Marketing and branding: Identifying and tracking customer insights and trends are among the most critical skills that branding experts bring. Brand marketers also tend to be highly analytical—an important skill in measuring and assessing ROI in PR.

Digital: Digital and interactive specialists bring the added advantage of social media expertise to a PR agency. They understand search engine optimization and can enhance the impact and reach of the online conversation.

Anybody considering a career move to PR should also hone the skills required to develop a deep knowledge of a client's market and competition. Additionally, strong business acumen is essential. Everybody looks for a problem solver who can analyze an issue and solve it effectively. If you have good business sense and can anticipate problems, you're already one step ahead.

The key to success in any role outside of your traditional area of expertise is to keep an open mind and a willingness to learn. Be patient. Allow yourself time to get up to speed — you don't need to know everything on day one. You should also be prepared to spend time teaching yourself—don't wait for the training course to be offered. Your ambition, passion and dedication will drive your success.

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