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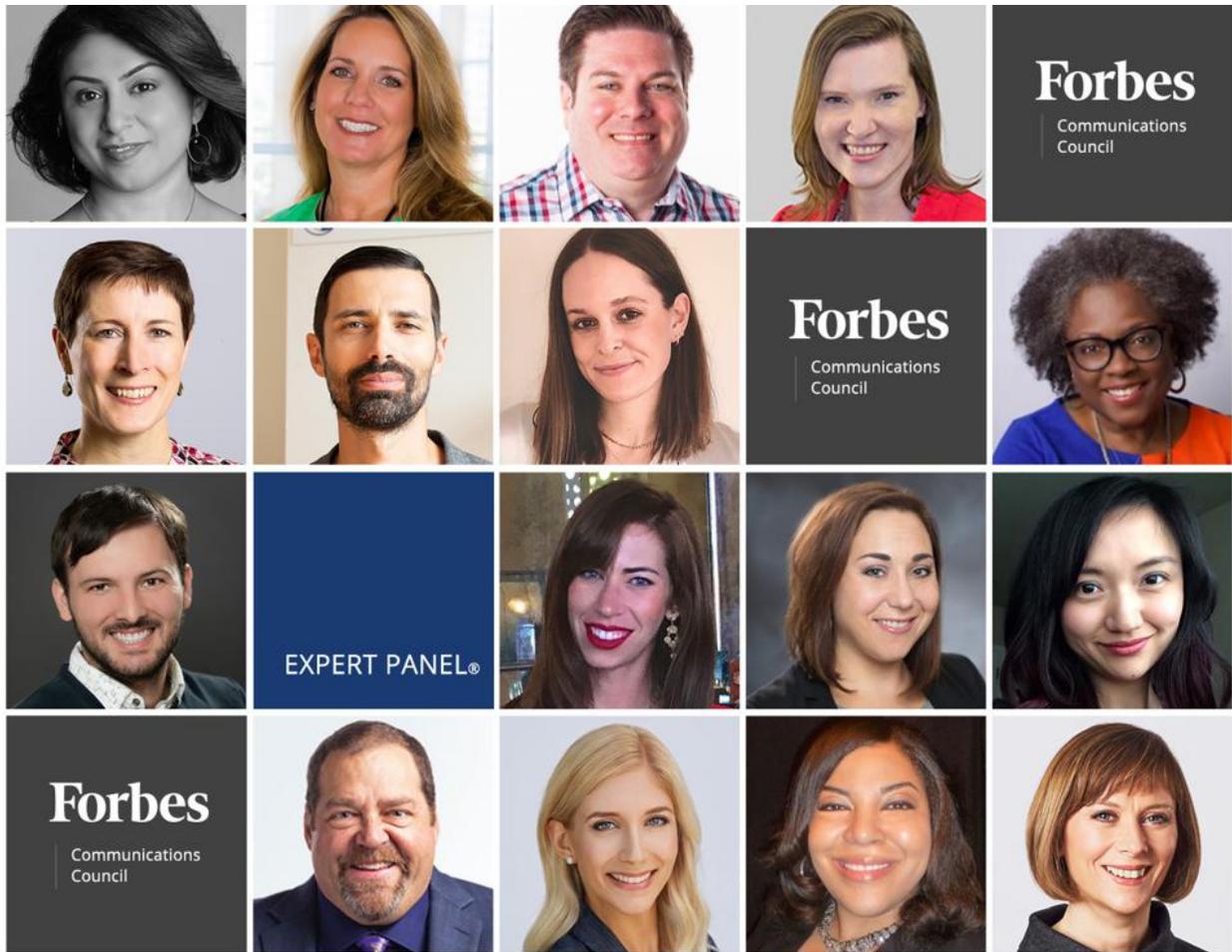
# 16 Career Tips For Newcomers To The World Of PR And Communications



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Being new to the world of communications and public relations can feel overwhelming. Getting your foot in the door is the first step in building a long and fulfilling career, and the actions you take now will influence how your employer and audience view you in the long run.

As a newcomer, how can you set and achieve professional goals that will help you advance in a field that seems so complicated when you're first starting out? To help, 16 leaders from [Forbes Communications Council](#) offer their personal advice on what those new to the sector should be doing to set themselves up for future success.



Forbes Communications Council members offer their best career advice to those who are new to the field of communications and public relations.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS.

## 1. Invest In Yourself

Invest in yourself through learning and connections. Our profession guarantees that you can never quite know it all, so make learning a part of every day. Equally important is building connections through a genuine interest in people and an openness to share and listen. Learning through connections has been a constant in my career and will continue to be. - [Jyoti Khan](#)

## **2. Create A Positive Sphere Of Influence**

Create a positive sphere of influence around you by connecting, communicating and collaborating with peers and leaders within your organization who are well-respected. Learn from them and lean on them for advice when you hit a bump in the road. It will help build your own respect in the company and ensure that you continue learning within your craft. - [Eileen Canady, BST Global](#)

## **3. Be Open With Mentors And Bosses**

Have open dialogues with your mentors and bosses. You may not have your next step defined, or your desired next role or specialization might change after you get into the industry. Keep open communication with those who can help guide your growth plan so that everyone is in the know on what your goals are and you don't get stuck or led onto a different path than the one you want to be on. - [Corey Morris, Voltage](#)

## **4. Always Be Curious**

Successful PR professionals are able to quickly learn about new ideas or technologies, synthesize them and distill them down into more easily understood concepts that are relevant to buyers. Continually keeping your ears and eyes open to the latest trends and world news will help you more easily make those connections. - [Kathy Sucich, Dimensional Insight](#)

[Forbes Communications Council](#) is an invitation-only community for executives in successful public relations, media strategy, creative and advertising agencies. *Do I qualify?*

## **5. Remember That You're In The Driver's Seat**

Remember that you are the designated driver of your career bus! While others will help along the way, the person responsible for getting you to the end destination on time is you. Have the sometimes-uncomfortable conversations about what you want. Seek out mentors who can guide you. Seize opportunities and push yourself out of your comfort zone. Don't wait to be asked for help; offer it up. - [Niamh Whelan-Reiter](#), [Avanade](#)

## **6. Win The Trust Of Your Superiors**

The PR and communications field has a high ceiling, and if you dwell on small, day-to-day affairs, then you're bound to stay at the bottom. Do whatever you can to win the trust of your superiors so that you're given planning and strategizing jobs rather than tactical tasks that help carry out a project. You want to be the one designing it. - [Amine Rahal](#), [Regal Assets](#)

## **7. Make Sure You Know Your Audience**

Know your audience and realize that, although the product (or service) you are trying to promote may be the same, the story you are trying to tell may differ based on who you are speaking to. Be thoughtful with your communications and outreach, and cater your message to fit the voice of the outlet you are trying to land. Attention to detail and thoughtfulness go a long way with the media. - [Kate Haldy](#), [David's Bridal](#)

## **8. Understand The Value Of Your Voice**

First of all, make sure you understand the value of your authentic voice and lived experience. The next step is to listen deeply to bring forth the authentic and action-oriented narrative of your clients or colleagues. - [Sylvia Ewing, Elevate Energy](#)

## **9. Create Trends Instead Of Following Them**

Don't follow the trend; create the trend. Too many communications professionals run around like headless chickens. It's tempting to follow what's "in vogue," such as the latest tool or rapidly rising social media platform, but doing that is the key to being mediocre and replaceable in the field. Instead, look to find ways to create trends. If you can develop a formula for that, you'll win every time. - [Patrick Ward, Rootstrap](#)

## **10. Strive For Excellence In All You Do**

Whether it's a caption for a social post or copy for an internal, organization-wide email, make sure everything has your stamp of excellence on it, always. You never know who might read and remember your work years later, and the best way to expand your burgeoning professional network is by showing team members and leadership exactly what you can do. - [Melissa Kandel, little word studio](#)

## **11. Learn How To Read The News**

It sounds simple, but this is an art, and it can help newbies stand out from their peers. All PR and communications professionals should have a solid understanding of what reporters are writing, what information they are including and who their sources are. Being a consumer of the news will bring strength to a person's career in this field. - [Beth More, Mazars USA LLP](#)

## **12. Be A Generalist First**

Gain experience in all parts of the field so that you can understand the full depth and breadth of PR and communications. This enables you to learn more and figure out what you like and don't like, and it prevents you from being siloed into a specialty early on. - [Laurie Wang, Legal Aid Alberta](#)

## **13. Learn How To Tell A Story**

You start by telling your own story and helping your clients tell theirs. Communication success is no longer about putting press releases out; it's about engaging with others to make them want to hear the story. - [Ira Gostin, Gostin Strategic Consulting LLC](#)

## **14. Be A Digital Voice In Your Area Of Interest**

Networking in person is a good foundation for any career and a must in PR, but in the digital age, building an extension of your personal brand online is essential. If you don't feel comfortable putting yourself out there, choose a nonvisual social media option, such as [Clubhouse](#). - [Christina Utz, CRK](#)

## **15. Do Your Work And Know Your Value**

Do your work, know your value, and network. Learn what it takes to succeed in PR and communications in your industry. Work hard to master your craft through continuous education and practical application. Learn how to measure and speak to your success, and then use it to help create added value and advance. Network inside and outside of your field and industry to build new connections and insights. - [Callie Johnson, PhD, Bold Lines Consulting Firm LLC](#)

## **16. Understand How You Contribute To Your Company's Goals**

Make sure you understand the strategy and goals of the company you work for and how the work you are doing contributes to those goals. Keep that as your north star—and a personal elevator pitch for advancement. - [Sarah](#)

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