

EARLY YEARS IN COMMS

Career Guide

Created By

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"I don't know what I am doing!"

These were words I uttered quite frequently in the early years of my career in Communications.

I was thrown into the deep end a lot but somehow, I managed to stay afloat. Ok, at least most of the time. You can read all about it in my book, [From Clueless to Success](#).

The point really is that I didn't drown. Even in the moments when I failed and made serious mistakes, I was able to pick myself up, learn from my mistakes and keep it moving.

I believe a reason I went through that experience is so that you wouldn't have to. It's true that our personal and professional journey will be different but it's also true that learning from those who have gone ahead can give you some sort of soft landing and a boost of encouragement on those days when you feel overwhelmed.

This guide has been specially created to help you navigate your early years in Comms and PR. While I hope you find it useful, I do hope it serves as a reminder that you can do this! You can be a successful Communications and Public Relations professional!

My name is Adedoyin and this is a special gift from me to you. Do enjoy this resource and also share with your network too.



The Different Areas of Communications



01. Corporate Communications

It involves communicating with an organisation's stakeholders and the public at large, in order to shape how they perceive and relate with the organisation. It is usually broken down into internal and external communications.

02. Internal Communications

This refers to the processes and tools that are used to coordinate effective communication and collaboration among the people within an organisation. The goal is to provide a shared understanding of the company's goals and values.

03. Crisis Communications

This involves managing the reputation and public image of an organisation and individuals within that organisation. This requires coordinating the flow of information to protect and defend that reputation in the time of crisis.

04. Development Communications

This involves the strategic use of communication for social impact and development. A key end goal is to achieve behavioural change through dissemination of information and raising awareness.

05. Policy/ Government Communications

This requires using communications to inform citizens of the activities of government or the existence of a policy and persuading them to engage or comply with the requirements of the policy.

06. Other Specialist Areas of Communications

There are other fields where the specialist skills in communications are required. This includes health communications, diversity, equality and inclusion (DEI) communications, church communications and so on.

Key Functions

There are many tasks you'd be required to perform as a communications professional. While it's good to have a broad understanding of as many of these functions as possible, work towards being a master in the areas that you are either interested in or have the greatest strengths.

✔ Public Relations

Managing and disseminating information between an organisation and its stakeholders in order to influence their perception of the organisation's brand and reputation.

✔ Media and Public Relations

A subset of Public Relations where you interface and engage with the media to amplify newsworthy stories about your brand.

✔ Content Creation

Developing and creating written, visual and video content for different channels, targeted at different stakeholders. Examples include blog posts and other website content, social media content, reports, scripts for video content and so on.

✔ Social Media Management

Managing scheduling and posting of content on the social media platforms that are relevant for the organisation to ensure timely engagement with the target audience and to create awareness for the organisation.

✔ Stakeholder Management

Managing the relationship between and organisation and its stakeholders. This requires understanding their needs and expectations and meeting them in a way that aligns with the objectives of the organisation.

✔ Event Coordination

Project managing events for the organisation. This requires developing an event strategy/ plan, coordinating vendors and resource persons and ensuring the success of the event in alignment with the outlined objectives.

✔ Issues & Crisis Management

Managing the coordination and flow of information to prevent issues from scaling into a crisis and protecting the reputation of the organisation when a crisis does arise.

For a detailed breakdown of Communications Competencies, please check out this resource from Sola Abulu - <https://thecommsavenue.com/sola-abulu-communications-competencies/>

The Core Skills You Need

- Writing
- Research
- Presentation
- Storytelling
- Public Speaking
- Critical Thinking
- Attention to Detail
- Relationship Building

Mapping Your Career

Breaking in

- Focus on getting your foot in the door, especially if you are transitioning from another field.
- Leverage volunteering to gain the required experience that will help you demonstrate knowledge of the key functions/ skills and show results.
- Network and attend industry events.
- Leverage opportunities to pitch yourself.

Year One

- Lay a strong foundation.
- Understand and build on the core functions and skills.
- You can opt to start as a generalist to broaden your knowledge.
- Ask questions and be hungry for knowledge. Be prepared to learn on the job.
- Practice, practice, practice.

Years Two to Three

- Deepen your competency in some of the core skills required to succeed.
- Track your results and improve on them.
- You can still maintain a generalist track.
- Become aware of your strengths and weaknesses.
- Begin to build your professional relationship.
- Leverage professional communities and associations.

Years Four to Five

- You can think about going into specialist areas based on your strengths and passion.
- Review the LinkedIn profiles of people in senior roles and identify any skill gaps you may have.
- Work on closing the skill gaps and gain the necessary experience for senior level roles.
- Document and communicate your results.

Courses and Training

1. [PR Training Academy](#)
2. [CIPR Training](#)
3. [London School of Public Relations](#)
4. [Public relations: Media Crisis Communications](#)
5. [Storytelling for success, communicating with narratives](#)
6. [Make your ideas stick: communicate with impact](#)
7. [The content writing course](#)
8. [Writing with flair: How to become an exceptional writer](#)
9. [Integrated Marketing Communications: Advertising, Public Relations, Digital Marketing and more](#)
10. [The nuts and bolts of public relations](#)
11. [Viral Marketing and How to Craft Contagious Content](#)
12. [Working with the media](#)
13. [Creative Writing Specialization](#)

Long Programs

1. [PRCA Diploma in Integrated Communications Management](#)
2. [Master in Corporate and Marketing Communication \(IE, Spain\)](#)
3. [Programs in Communications and Public Relations \(Ghana\)](#)
4. [MSc in Strategic Communications \(LSE, UK\)](#)
5. [Masters in Communications Programs from the US](#)

Associations

1. [Chartered Institute of Public Relations](#)
2. [International Association of Business Communicators](#)
3. [Public Relations and Communications Association](#)
4. [International Public Relations Association](#)
5. [International Communications Consultancy Organisation](#)
6. [African Public Relations Association](#)
7. [Global Women in PR](#)
8. [Global Alliance for Public Relations and Communication Management](#)
9. [Chartered Institute of Marketing](#)
10. [Association of Writing and Writing Programs](#)

Certifications

1. [Professional PR Certificate](#)
2. [Professional PR Diploma](#)
3. [GCCC Communication Certification Programs](#)
4. [The Digital Marketing Institute](#)

Groups & Communities

1. [The Comms Avenue](#)
2. [Africa Communications Week](#)
3. [Corporate Communications - LinkedIn Group](#)
4. [Women in PR Ghana](#)
5. [Nigerian Women in PR](#)
6. [Not Enough Writers](#)

Blogs and Websites

1. [Ragan's PR Daily](#)
2. [Catalyst by IABC](#)
3. [PR Times Africa](#)
4. [HubSpot](#)
5. [Meltwater Blog](#)
6. [PR Couture](#)
7. [PR Say - The Voice of Public Relations](#)
8. [Hootsuite Blog](#)
9. [Communique](#)
10. [PR Futurist Blog](#)
11. [Forbes Communications Council](#)
12. [PR Strategies Blog](#)
13. [Garrett Public Relations](#)
14. [Africa PR Report](#)

Some Thought Leaders to Follow

There are many great thought leaders to follow on LinkedIn. I have listed a few that share great content and insights.

- Mimi Kalinda
- Sola Abulu
- Zainab Umar
- Armand David
- Nkiru Olumide-Ojo
- Henry Nii Dottey
- Gina Din
- Antoinette Kamau Bonita
- Frank David Ochieng



Books to Read

1. [PR Technology, Data and Insights](#)
2. [Internal Communications Manual](#)
3. [From Clueless to Success](#)
4. [On Writing Well](#)
5. [Copywriting for Marketing Communications](#)
6. [Everybody Writes](#)
7. [Building Brand Communities](#)
8. [The Storyteller's Secret](#)
9. [Brand Storytelling](#)
10. [Business Essentials for Strategic Communicators](#)
11. [Made to stick](#)
12. [Strategic Writing](#)
13. [Ethics in Public Relations](#)
14. [Contagious](#)
15. [All Marketers Tell Stories](#)
16. [Building a Brand Story](#)
17. [Skin for Skin: The Prima Garnet Story](#)
18. [This is Marketing](#)
19. [The Copywriter's Handbook](#)
20. [A Modern Guide to Public Relations](#)

Podcasts to Listen to

1. [CSCE A View From The Top](#)
2. [IABC Podcast \(PodCatalyst\)](#)
3. [GovComms: The Future of Government Communications](#)

Digital Tools

Canva

To create diverse designs to complement work done by a professional Graphics Designer.

Substack

An innovative platform for sending out newsletters.

Anchor

For Podcast hosting and distribution to a number of channels.

Afterlight

For quick editing of pictures and images before posting on social media.

Google Trends

To search for and monitor trending topics online.

Unfold

To create Instagram story templates and designs that are eye-catching

Grammarly

For editing and proofreading your written content online. It helps you to spot typos, poor sentence construction, etc.

Hubspot

For resources, guides, and analytics tools to boost your work and results.

Headliner

To create and edit Audiograms (audio on still images).

Pexels/ Unsplash

For stock free images for your design and content.

Animoto/ Adobe Spark

To create engaging video content from images and video clips.

Thank You For Reading Through The Early Years in Comms Career Guide.

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