

# An open letter to guide potential PR recruits in finding a job

 By [Jennifer Stein](#)

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The job market is an extremely difficult one and as we see more and more applicants come through the door there are a number of things that seem to be hindering the appointment of these applicants, especially in the PR industry.



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Dear PR job-seeker,

It's been an unsettling start to the year to realise that PR is no different to many other professions in that there is a huge dichotomy between the number of PR job applicants and actual positions. If the sheer influx of job applications that we've received in the last couple of weeks (across all levels of seniority) is any indication of the job market, opportunities are few and far between.

From an agency perspective, we're spoiled for choice but if you're one of many sending out your CV, what do you need to do to get noticed and be considered for an interview?

## Interns – cross the t's and dot the i's

In this instance, first impressions count. Make sure that the spelling on your CV and your introductory letter is perfect. Take the time to find out to whom your application should be addressed. There's a world of difference between the one addressed to me personally by name, or one that says "Hi there."

In our experience, the intern application requests that have resulted in interviews and positions are the ones that are clear, concise and which present a strong willingness to learn, participate and contribute.

## Immerse yourself in the media

Be a news junkie and read, read and read. Whether it's online or offline, general business, glossy magazines or trade titles, an understanding of the media landscape is key, as these are the people to whom you'll be pitching your stories and ideas.

A good understanding of the media is also essential for job interviews. Know a little about everything that's going on - read the news and have an understanding of current affairs and the items making the news in the wider world. During interviews, I always ask what newspapers people read, and what three things have struck them recently from the news agenda. You'd be surprised at some of the responses.

## **Be socially aware**

PR is all about reputation building and social media is integral to that. Like it or not, a personal social media account can reflect badly on you professionally, so be conscious of how you are perceived online.

Make sure your platforms or pages present you in a positive light. It's hard enough to get a job in the first place, so don't give an employer any reason to have doubts about you.

## **Let truth reign**

Don't lie on a CV or in an interview. You will be found out. Trust me on that.

Be transparent about your skills, strengths and weaknesses. No-one is perfect and no-one is a 100% all-rounder. If you aren't strong in a certain skill set, i.e. writing, be honest about that upfront but be prepared to put in the time and effort to learn.

## **Be prepared to pay your dues**

Don't ask for flexi-time or demand a salary increase at your first interview. You may have shone at your previous place of employment, but standards are different and to us, you are untried and untested. Prove yourself, and then we're open to negotiation.

## **ABOUT JENNIFER STEIN**

Jennifer Stein lives and breathes PR. With over 25 years in the industry she has extensive corporate and consumer PR experience across a number of sectors including automotive, IT, fast moving consumer goods, pharmaceutical, property, luxury brands and various services industries. Her areas of expertise include strategy, crisis communications, high level client service and counsel, project and budget management...

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