

# Maximise the effectiveness of your PR agency

A successful working relationship is built around trust, communication and mutual respect; in order for the relationship to flourish, both parties need to buy into each other's strategies. The relationship between a client and a PR agency is no different, but how does one ensure that both parties are able to deliver on what is expected?



## Vision

A clear vision guides the way forward for a successful partnership, creating clear direction and establishing realistic expectations for both groups. The vision should not only focus on business goals, but the relationship going forward. You as the client need to work closely with the agency to ensure the vision is one that works for both of you.

## Communication

Effective communication is the glue that binds any successful working relationship. In order to excel, you need to develop good lines of communication with your partners, where both parties feel comfortable with each other. How you choose to interact with your agency is key. Some people work better in person, others over the phone or via email; let your agency know what your preference is upfront.

## Embrace expertise

Both parties bring a certain amount of expertise to the table. In order to maximise the effectiveness of this, the client needs to embrace the knowledge that the agency brings to the business. By taking on an outside agency, you will be exposed to a number of new skills which can add considerable value to your company. Be open to new ideas and new technologies and think how best they can work for you.

## Extension of the business

To allow your agency to excel, you need to view them as an extension of your company. By doing this, it will be easier to develop a close working relationship which will allow the agency to offer a value-added service.

## Involve

It is vital to get your agency to learn the ins and outs of your company. Invite them to seminars and one-on-ones; allow them to come into your office; to talk to your staff on a monthly basis. A good PR agency relies on information and as a result, the more it gets, the better it will be able to perform its job.

## Mutually beneficial relationship/mutual understanding

A successful relationship relies upon effort from both sides; if only one side is making an effort, it will fail and the quality of

work will suffer. Mutual understanding and respect must be created upfront when the agency comes on board, so as to ensure that both parties set aside time for one another. You will not always be able to meet; if this is the case, let the agency know - communicate - explain that you will try to reschedule. A mutual beneficial relationship is all about creating a win-win scenario for both parties.

## **Working procedures**

Often as a client you have strict deadlines to work to which take preference over your time with your agency. It is important to remember that PR agencies also have deadlines. To prevent problems from arising, it is important to have procedures in place that can deal with potential issues. Things will not always run smoothly, but if there are procedures in place, most potential disasters can be averted.

Relationships often fail due to a lack of effort and understanding from both parties. By taking on board these seven steps, you should be able to alleviate many of these potential issues.

If an agency is not performing, communicate with it. By being open and upfront, you will be able to maximise its effectiveness, leading to a mutually beneficial relationship where both sides win.

## **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

Patrick Gordon is an account executive at DUO Marketing + Communications in Cape Town ([www.duomarketing.co.za](http://www.duomarketing.co.za)). He specialises in IT, ICT and general technology-based writing. Contact Patrick on tel +27 (0)21 683 8223 or email [patrick@duomarketing.co.za](mailto:patrick@duomarketing.co.za).

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>