

long lasting reputation include truth, honesty, transparency, humility, accountability and consistency. These tools are as important as any tool or skill you will gain in our profession and also help you in life.

Michael T. Strecker, director of public relations, Tulane University, New Orleans: I would advise future PR leaders to maintain a healthy sense of humor as they pursue their careers. And, they should develop interests outside of work. A career in Public Relations can become all-consuming if you let it. Be devoted to your work but not obsessed by it. Also, always spell everyone's name correctly, especially your CEO's and your own.

Colleen Coplick, president, Type A Public Relations, Vancouver: New grads need to seriously be okay putting in their dues, not just say they are. Just because you graduated at the top of your class does not entitle you to an \$80,000 salary, corner office and company car right out of the gate. Everyone you see in a position you lust after did grunt work for longer than they thought they should – but they're where they are because they earned it. These positions weren't just handed to them – they won't be handed to you, either!

Chris Hammond, vice president for communications and development, Wells Fargo, San Francisco: You're only young once and you're whole career is ahead of you.

For some, there's nothing wrong with taking timeout to travel internationally or taking a vacation after school. That first job is out there and keeping your saw sharp helps put yourself in a position to succeed. Another internship under your belt or an admin job may lead to grander possibilities instead of playing a waiting game by lounging on your mom's couch waiting for your old neighborhood friends to call. The amenities maybe good, but mom's couch can lead to a road to nowhere.

Darren Paul, managing partner, Night Agency LLC, New York: Make sure you find a way to stand out. Employers/ HR folks are inundated with resumes, cover letters and the like. One MUST stand out. When the time comes to make a decision for who to hire, how is someone going to remember to select you? That question must be answered. Simply doing the fundamentals will not cut

in. Especially considering the industry we're talking about – PR folks live and die based on their ability to get their message heard. Also, be persistent.

There is nothing to lose, you don't have the job yet. Don't be annoying and rude – but make sure your being heard. It will show your hunger, and hunger is good for someone just starting out.

Rod Meade Sperry, media director, Wisdom Publications, Somerville, MA:

Don't forget that your youth is an asset. More often than not, you'll be more naturally media and Web savvy, more like the demographic an employer might covet than anyone already stationed in-house. And don't be ashamed of who you are. One day recently, a would-be printer came with a pitch to our production manager and me. We were in sneaks, shorts, and tattoos, while he was sweating it out in a three-piece suit. Someday, we'll be dinosaurs, sure. But who'd have ever thought people like us might be making important decisions?

Clint Weiler, director of publicity, Music Video Distributors and Eclectic DVD Distribution, Oaks, PA: First of all, choose an area of interest. For example, if you love entertainment and music, be familiar with the latest and most popular magazines, Web sites, blogs, etc. – and pay close attention to their specific styles of writing, and to what is being covered and where. Also, staying on top of current trends and technology is very important. Since you will be younger than the people you work with, it's a prime opportunity to prove that you are in touch with the latest and most popular technologies with teenagers and early twenty-somethings – a very important market. You may be expected to be the lifeline for this market, so prepare yourself to "wow" your superiors with your knowledge of it.

Ned Barnett, president, Barnett Marketing Communications, Las Vegas: If you want a job in PR, look like you're already doing something to further your career in PR. And if you want your four years to pay off, don't settle for a non-PR job, thinking you'll get back to it later. You won't. Every quarter, there are new PR graduates entering the job market, and the farther you get from your own graduation, the less attractive you'll look compared to the latest crop of new graduates. PRN



Colleen Coplick



Ned Barnett



Chris Hammond



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