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STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

COMMITTEE CHAIR, 2017 CHAIR

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Denis Wolcott, APR

Dear Member,

Change has become the new normal for public relations and communications professionals, and developments continue to emerge. Millennials have surpassed baby boomers as the largest segment in the workforce. Big data offers insights that enable customization and pose new cyber security and privacy issues. Mobile technology is transforming how businesses communicate. Diversity remains a challenge and a top priority. The lines are blurring among the disciplines of public relations, marketing, IT and customer service, and the need increases to create more collaborative teams and hybrid professionals.

PRSA has continued to evolve and respond to these issues in support of our members, partners and colleagues. We also have contributed to the development of business leaders through our MBA program, added a new Associate membership level, increased sponsorship and attendance at regional conferences dedicated to lifelong learning, and seen one of the most successful International Conferences in recent years. Our Code of Ethics remains the standard for performance, and we have added a collegiate credential.

Grounded in these accomplishments, we build the PRSA 2017–2019 Strategic Plan, “Framework for the Future,” on a strong foundation, and focus on a more strategic future. This plan brings vision, intention and qualitative and quantitative measures to track our progress.

PRSA has become more complex and diverse in recent years. While the Society must become nimbler, we also are cognizant that we must help prepare our members to meet tomorrow’s challenges as leaders at every level. The role of the communications professional will continue to evolve, and we will anticipate future trends, and support our members at every stage of their career. We have not lost the importance of organizational excellence in this process; staff and leadership will ensure PRSA continues to perform the highest levels of service, implementation and financial stability.

The path ahead is bright and exciting. We believe a “Framework for the Future” will continue to build upon the bedrock that has made PRSA so valuable to so many.



THE ADAPTIVE PROFESSIONAL

There has never been a more exciting time to be a communications professional. There are more tools and technologies available to assist us with our jobs, new ways to measure what we do and a constant evolution of business models and expectations from our clients and organizations.

Whatever you call it — public relations, influencer communications or strategic communications, executives are realizing public relations is a leading force in building and maintaining powerful brands. They are starting to understand that it takes skill and creativity to position leaders and product enhancements

to media and key stakeholders. They appreciate that in order to truly claim leadership in a category, it is critical that key influencers, like the media, validate those credentials.

Based on competitive benchmarking and membership data, PRSA continues to refine its understanding of how the industry is evolving by thoroughly examining the influences impacting the industry landscape along with the day-to-day opportunities and challenges now facing PR professionals.

Branding is just one of the many responsibilities that strategic communicators now oversee. The communications industry is becoming more multifaceted, complex and exciting as most professionals adapt and drive their organizations forward through innovations in technology, media organizations and better analytics.

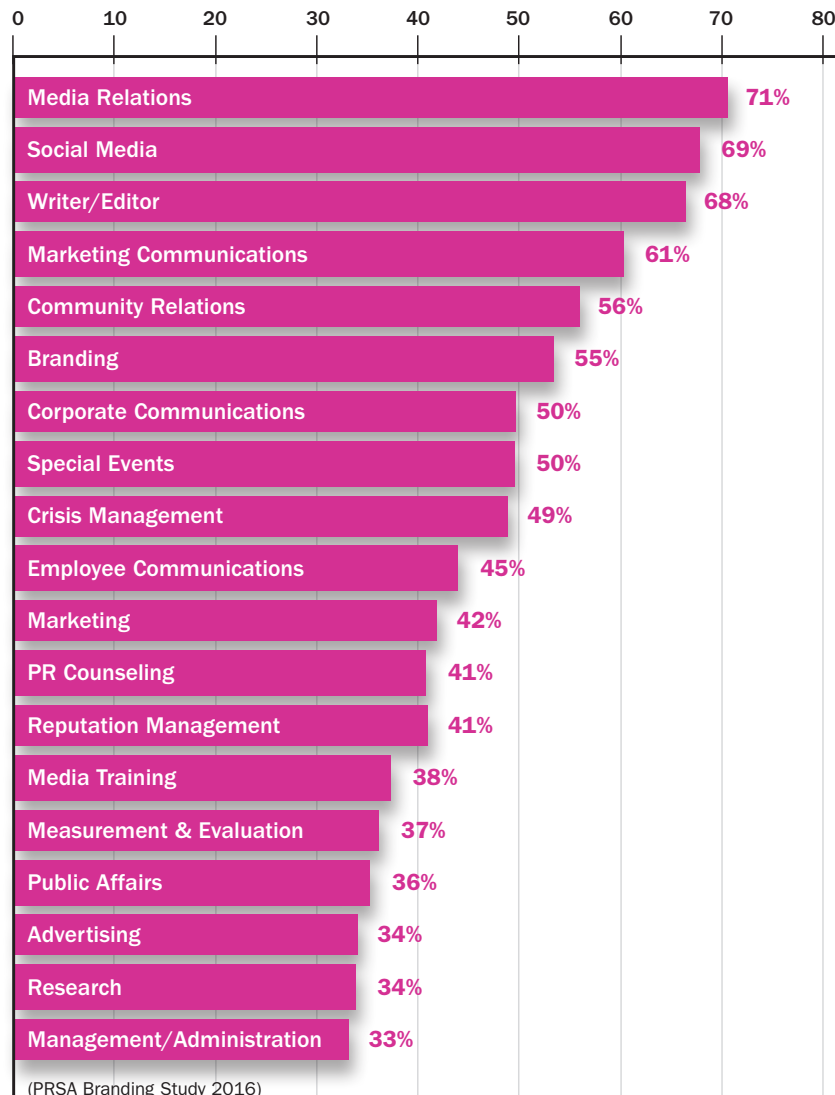
Professionals who can master new skills and adapt to the changing environment have a tremendous opportunity to reinvent themselves and thrive. One area where communications professionals continue to gain prominence is in the marketing communications discipline.

How have responsibilities changed compared to five years ago?



THE ADAPTIVE PROFESSIONAL

Job roles are continuing to evolve, making it harder to define public relations and differentiate between PR and marketing. This new breed of communicator is constantly adapting to meet new challenges and strategic opportunities.



According to the USC Annenberg 2016 Global Communications Report, the global PR agency business sector is expected to grow from \$14 billion to nearly \$20 billion in 2020. Hiring to meet those demands may pose a challenge. Tomorrow's communications professional must possess traditional skills such as writing, strategic planning and relationship building, while also being well-versed in areas such as technology, content development, social media and paid advertising.

How important will the following areas of staff skills and experience be to your department/agency to achieve its goal over the next five years?

- > Written Communications
- > Oral Communications
- > Strategic Planning
- > Social Media
- > Multimedia Content Development
- > Media Relations
- > Business Literacy
- > Analytics
- > Search Engine Optimization
- > Research
- > International Experience
- > Behavioral Science
- > Media Buying

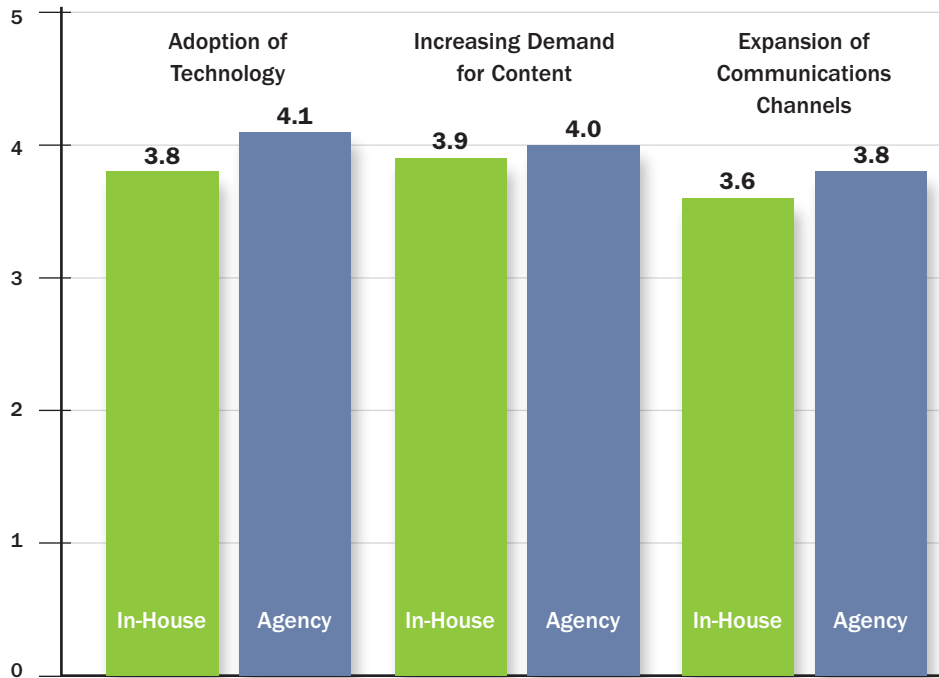
(Annenberg 2016 Global Communications Report)

To accommodate this growth, agency leaders anticipate increases in staffing from both inside and outside the communication field; more freelancers will be utilized to bring in expertise to accommodate these changes.

THE EVOLVING COMMUNICATIONS INDUSTRY

Most surveys that talk about the growth of the communications industry cite talent as one of the biggest challenges. This is particularly acute in light of the way agencies and businesses are constantly restructuring their departments to keep up with the evolving communications landscape.

According to the Annenberg study, the top three drivers of change on a scale of 1-5 are:



(Annenberg 2016 Global Communications Report)

As communications professionals continue to find innovative ways to create compelling content across new media platforms, they also will need to learn to better measure the effectiveness of those campaigns.

While earned media remains a mainstay of our business, both in-house professionals and agencies are seeing greater emphasis being placed on owned, shared and paid media. For our members to stay competitive, they will need to broaden and diversify their skills sets while maintaining their sector expertise.

Below are the top 10 Industry Growth Drivers identified in the Annenberg 2016 Global Communications Report.

INDUSTRY GROWTH DRIVERS

- > Content Creation
- > Brand Reputation
- > Social Media
- > Internal Communications
- > Community Relations
- > Media Relations
- > Measurement and Evaluation
- > Executive Communications
- > Crisis Communications
- > Issues Management

THE EVOLVING COMMUNICATIONS INDUSTRY

When PRSA asked professionals to describe the public relations/communications field, here were the top words that came to mind:

Creative
Professional **Complex**
Storyteller
Connected **Courageous**
Challenging **Innovative**
Energetic **Stressful**
Important **Smart**
Strategic **Exhausting**

Based on the data gleaned from the myriad of resources internally and externally, the leadership team identified key result areas that will give PRSA the focus, direction and opportunity to thrive with a Framework for the Future. Below is how PRSA's 2017–2019 Strategic Plan, "Framework for the Future," is focused on creating a more dynamic infrastructure so that the Society can better position members for success by:

- > Expanding membership in a community of trusted confidants and mentors.
- > Providing enriching professional growth opportunities.
- > Elevating knowledge through thought leadership.

AN OVERVIEW

As the world's largest professional organization focused on developing today's communications professional, combined with our student organization, PRSSA, the Society has a tremendous opportunity to support communicators throughout their entire career. To take advantage of our leadership position, we implemented a branding study, reviewed membership surveys, reviewed third-party research to assess the competitive landscape, and evaluated our current resources to gain a clear picture of the universe in which PRSA competes.

This process led us to create a sharper focus on professional growth opportunities. This three-year plan is crafted to meet the demands of our many Chapters, Districts and Sections by ensuring our members are better connected, more confident and competitive.

PRSA is poised to help the communications industry proactively address the challenge of finding talent by offering new classes in data and analytics, management, consultative selling and sharing leading-edge techniques that members are using to develop world-class content, manage issues and drive business growth.

To better position PRSA as a leading learning organization, the leadership team set out to define actionable goals that refined our organization's vision and mission.

Vision: To create an exceptional member experience that educates, inspires, guides and galvanizes a diverse community of ethical, strategic communications professionals.

Mission: PRSA makes communications professionals smarter, better prepared and more connected through all stages of their career.

As the career opportunities for our membership continue to grow, we are focused on attracting members across a wider range of industry sectors and geography. From the recent graduates in their first jobs to seasoned professionals and everyone in between, all are looking for information and ways to remain competitive and successful in their field. That is why PRSA provides lifelong learning opportunities and is placing greater emphasis on offering members a better understanding of the career landscape and the skills professionals need to develop throughout each stage of their career.

EXPANDING OUR MEMBERSHIP COMMUNITY

Being part of a large community of trusted advisers and mentors, staying up-to-date and learning are important components of the member experience and critical to the long-term success of PRSA and its members.



To attract professionals with diverse backgrounds and experiences, we will establish partnerships with multi-disciplinary organizations to provide “cross training” among organizations. PRSA will continue to look for ways to expand into more industry sectors through our Professional Interest Sections.

A key focus area over the next three years will be to help PRSSA members enter into the workplace through our New Professionals Section. To ensure that our programming is accurate and actionable, the Society will work with the Institute for Public Relations to examine gaps in expectations and skills for new professionals, while also informing the industry at large on how to support its up-and-coming talent base.

MEMBERSHIP is the lifeblood of the Society, and as such, our ability to attract, retain and grow our members is in direct correlation with our real and perceived value as well as received benefits. Our members, from the newest student to our seasoned mentors and everyone in between, all thirst for ways to remain competitive and successful in their field. PRSA provides these communications professionals with the tools, resources, networking connections and leadership skills to cultivate a continual environment of success.

PRIMARY TARGETS

- > Leverage the PRSSA pipeline by converting greater percentages of rising professionals to professional membership.
- > Focus on innovative recruitment and retention tools to attract and retain members.
- > Create a package of deliverables for Chapters, Districts and Sections that will help attract and retain target members.
- > Define, develop and implement a member segmentation strategy and an engagement index.

ENHANCING PROFESSIONAL GROWTH

Engage and connect members with cutting-edge resources to enable greater career discovery and exploration.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT is a core strength of PRSA and the reason why many people join the organization. We are diversifying our content to include training focused on best practices in PR, marketing, digital communications, online marketing and advertising. There is tremendous value in access to the content being produced and delivered at all levels of the Society including Chapters, Districts and Sections. We provide high-quality programming that can be tapped nationally, regionally and through affinity communities, where industry-specific content is offered. This wisdom can be shared more globally among members and prospective members.

PRIMARY TARGETS

- > Partner with Chapters, Districts and Sections to expand current professional development programming by creating more buzz-worthy content and broadening its access and distribution.
- > Implement a common satisfaction index for all local, regional and national programs.
- > Develop a consistent process for vetting and retiring presenters and content — regardless of delivery format (i.e., webinar, International Conference, District/Section conferences, Chapter programs); deploy a set of training and promotional resources to Chapters, Districts and Sections for use in producing their own programming and promoting others’.
- > Establish partnerships with multi-disciplinary organizations in an effort to provide cross-training opportunities for PRSA members.

ELEVATING KNOWLEDGE THROUGH THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

Serve as the go-to resource for ethics, career information, innovative ideas and tools for success in the communications industry.

Effective **THOUGHT LEADERSHIP** differentiates PRSA from competing associations and information providers. It also equips communications professionals with intellectually stimulating and professionally rewarding insights and observations. PRSA strives to be a valuable partner in helping members understand the skills they need to lead tomorrow.

The key to this effort is fresh, innovative perspectives on issues relating to the public relations profession and professional, as well as business and society overall. This focus will require going beyond the mere curation of information produced by others to actually producing proprietary research, analysis and insights. In this way, PRSA and our members will be established as thought leaders.

Ethics will continue to remain a priority for the organization, and we will look to partner with organizations to demonstrate how ethical standards can advance business. The PRSA Board of Ethics and Professional Standards (BEPS) will continue to evolve the PRSA Code of Ethics to cover new technologies and uphold the core values of the ethical practice of public relations including advocacy, honesty, loyalty, professional development and objectivity.

PRIMARY TARGETS

- > Innovative studies examining noteworthy issues driving businesses, our members and their various constituents.
- > Thought leadership that highlights leading thinkers and best practices in this new era of communications.
- > Expanded emphasis on ethics, including a partnership with the Ethisphere Institute and heightened visibility for the Board of Ethics and Professional Standards and its efforts.

WHAT THE NEXT GENERATION PRSA MEANS FOR YOU

- > Inspiring case studies highlighting best and next practices.
- > A community of professionals at all levels who can provide mentoring to develop leadership skills.
- > Leading-edge resources for career discovery and exploration.
- > Networking with peers across career stages, sectors and geographies.
- > A variety of engaging conferences.
- > Free webinars on a wider range of subject matter.
- > An advocate for driving the profession forward.
- > Thought-provoking classes and certificate-based programs.
- > Accreditation programs to enhance professional credibility.

FUTURE

We pledge to achieve the goals set out in this plan by committing to the values and work-related behaviors that reflect our desired cultural mission and vision.

RESPECT FOR THE INDIVIDUAL

No one is inherently more important than anyone else.

COURAGE

To speak your mind openly, candidly and respectfully.

HONESTY/INTEGRITY

Integrity is defined as “how you behave when no one will ever know.”

SERVANT’S HEART

The sincere desire to serve others, both inside and outside the organization.

INNOVATION/CREATIVITY/RISK-TAKING

Uncoupling ourselves from legacy thinking and fear of change.

COMMITMENT TO PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL GROWTH

Both the attitude and the aptitude to learn and grow.

ACHIEVEMENT

We set and achieve worthy goals.



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Framework for the Future

STRATEGIC PLAN