

A Public Relations Society of Kenya Publication



THE NEW GAMECHANGERS

KENYAN WOMEN MAKING THEIR MARK IN PR



PUBLIC RELATIONS SOCIETY
OF KENYA



CUSTOMER SERVICE COMMUNICATION SKILLS

5TH – 9TH JUNE, 2023.
NAKURU (KENYA)

EARLY CAREER
(0 TO 5 YEARS)

50 CPD
POINTS

MEMBER – 80,000.00
NON MEMBER – 85,000.00



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Telling Stories, Creating Impact

We embarked on a mission in March. A mission to tell stories of phenomenal women who are trailblazing in the field of public relations. 38 women, one platform, giving each one of them a voice to tell their story in their own words.

This campaign was themed ***Celebrating Women Who Tell Our Stories*** and it was an honor for us to showcase these dynamic and diverse women whose impact and contributions to the society and public relation profession could not be ignored. As we integrate and make gender equality and equity active conversations in our spaces, the scale and scope of issues such as pay disparity, unequal employment opportunities, career progression, and human rights issues such access to quality healthcare cannot be ignored.

I would like to thank our partner the US Embassy in Kenya, for working with us on this project. A special thank you to the US Ambassador to Kenya, Ambassador Meg Whitman, for using our platform to share her story.

Happy Reading!

A handwritten signature in white ink that reads "Arik Karani".

Arik Karani

President, Public Relations Society Of Kenya

“

**I believe that the more women we
have in leadership positions, the
better off we'll be as a society.**

**Ambassador Meg Whitman
United States Ambassador to Kenya**

Public Relations Society of Kenya

DOROTHY OOKO

Head of Communications and Public Affairs for Africa,
Google.



Dorothy Ooko is the Head of Communications and Public Affairs for Africa at Google, a qualified mindfulness facilitator, and producer of the No Head Podcast about living life in the present moment while telling African stories.

Q1

What excites you about the Public Relations industry?

PR is about telling stories that promote a positive image of an organisation, build trust and credibility, and create a positive social impact. It's also about managing crises and negative publicity when they arise. There are many reasons I'm passionate about PR. It is fast-paced and ever-changing, where you are constantly learning new things. You get to work with different people from all walks of life, and you get to see the impact of the stories you tell on the world. PR also requires your creativity as you get to use your imagination to come up with new ideas and campaigns. No two days are alike in PR. You might be working on planning a launch event one day and the next day you're managing a crisis, and or a corporate social responsibility campaign. This keeps the work interesting and challenging. Finally, PR is about building relationships with people - your stakeholders who are internal and external - and you're always looking at collaborating with everyone.

Q2

What skills have you acquired over the years and how have these skills propelled your Public Relations journey?

I am a learner by nature. This is partly because before I joined PR I was a lecturer at the University. Here are some of the skills that I have acquired over the years and that have propelled my PR and communications journey:

Critical thinking skills: being able to think critically about information I receive and the decisions I make and of course being able to evaluate the credibility of sources, and to make sound judgement calls.

Creativity: In order to come up with new ideas and campaigns, one needs to think creatively and come up with creative solutions to problems, and to develop creative content.

Problem-solving skills: solving problems quickly and efficiently which means being able to identify problems and develop solutions that are both effective and feasible.

Leadership skills: As a team leader, I need to be able to lead and motivate my team. I have learnt to set clear goals and expectations, and to provide support and guidance when needed.

Collaboration skills: A big part of our work includes being able to collaborate with other cross-functional colleagues, clients/partners and the media. A PR professional must be able to work together with others to achieve common goals, and to communicate effectively with all stakeholders.

Q3

Who are some of the historical women who have inspired you over the years? How have they inspired you?

It would have to be Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, the first elected female head of state in Africa. In this in a world where women are often underrepresented in senior political positions, she had a vision of how Liberia could be and was unwavering in her quest to lead Liberia. Sirleaf's presidency was marked by the end of the Second Liberian Civil War and the rebuilding of Liberia. She also worked to improve the Liberian economy and to fight corruption. Sirleaf was re-elected to a second term in the 2011 elections. She stepped down as President of Liberia in January 2018.

The other woman would be Professor Wangari Maathai, the Kenyan environmental and political activist. She was the first African woman to win the Nobel Peace Prize, which she was awarded in 2004 for her work in promoting sustainable development, democracy, and peace. Prof Wangari Maathai's legacy for me as a PR professional underpins the importance of having a narrative that resonates with the people. It wasn't always like that when she started the environmental movement, the Green Belt Movement in 1977. She wanted to combat deforestation and soil erosion and through the movement Prof also worked to promote women's rights and education. Although she was often harassed and arrested for her activism, Prof persevered and was eventually successful in getting the Kenyan government to ban the use of toxic pesticides.

Q4

What's the best advice you can give young and upcoming professionals in the industry?

Believe in yourself! Be prepared to work hard and put in the long hours required to excel. I was in academia before I moved to corporate communications. There were some colleagues who doubted that this transition was possible. My recruiter told me when we met for the first time -- "I can teach you PR in six months, but I cannot teach anyone how to speak French in six months." What sets you apart from others in the industry? What's your superpower? Is it videography, editing, event management, digital marketing or anything else? Let that be what gives you an edge over the others.... Twenty years later and here I am... And still passionate about my work. If you are passionate about your work, it will show in your writing, your communication, and your overall attitude. So be passionate about what you're doing!

Networking is essential for PR professionals so it's important to meet people in the field, attend industry events, and join online communities. The more people



you know; the more opportunities you will have. While on networking, be someone who keeps their word, who can be trusted. I learnt that early when I started that if you keep your word, people will trust you and this trust is necessary in public relations. Also, PR professionals need to be able to write well and communicate effectively so it is important to develop your writing and communication skills.

Q5

What would you like to see in the PR profession in the next 5 years?

I would like to make everyone understand how relevant PR is to everyday life. These past elections I spent time analyzing the narratives of the candidates. Few were aware of the importance of their narratives and messaging and how that landed with the people whose votes they were seeking. Your narrative provides an experience people can understand and share. This is what we do for our organizations as PR professionals and what we need for the profession to grow in government, in the counties, and in Africa. How are we communicating? What's the narrative? One trend that is shaping public relations is data. We can be able to track the impact of our stories, track the analytics on social media, collect and analyze the data and then convince the stakeholders of the power of the work we do.

Q6

What are some of the challenges that women face in the PR journey and how can they be solved?

As in most areas, women are often underrepresented in senior leadership positions in PR. This is due to a number of factors, including the fact that women are often paid less than men, and are less likely to be

promoted. Women in PR and media also face sexism and discrimination as can be seen on social media. This can make it difficult for women to succeed in the field. A study conducted by the World Wide Web Foundation revealed that more than one in every five women in Kenya have experienced cyberbullying. Such study results justify that the internet is rife with harassment with more women bearing the brunt as compared to men. Another research conducted by the Association of Media Women in Kenya (AMWIK) and Article 19 Eastern Africa, reveals that common attacks targeting women journalists were cyber stalking, sexual harassment, surveillance and unauthorized use and manipulation of personal information, including images and videos.

PARTING SHOT

“Belief in yourself is more important than endless worries of what others think of you,” Dreams in a Time of War, Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o’s memoir.

ARNOLDA SHIUNDU

Sustainability Lead, Diageo Africa.

Arnolda Shiundu is
positively influencing
the affairs of the world.



Q1

What excites you about the public relations industry?

I am excited at how storytelling has evolved over the years, and how digital media has transformed how we do PR today. These two developments present exciting opportunities to tell compelling stories and to connect with audiences across multiple platforms. Technology has truly made the world smaller which is quite exciting.

Q2

What skills have you acquired over the years and how have these skills propelled your public relations journey?

Building Relationships. I have opened doors for my clients with just one phone call. I once was asked for a meeting with a Head of State, and I delivered. With just one phone call. My former boss Okoth Obado knows this all too well. He had a habit of throwing me in the deep end time and time again. Relationships have opened doors and got me in rooms i never imagined i would set foot in. They have also got me in some of the best events including box seats to watch a certain premier league football club in London...VIP style. I have worked with some amazing clients over the years.

Q3

Who are some of the historical women who have inspired you over the years? How have they inspired you?

I talk openly about the book that changed my life, 'Lean In: Women, Work and the Will to Lead. Cheryl talks about how women can and should take charge of their own careers and power through at a time when gender bias is more alive and well than most of us may want to admit. She explains how searching for a mentor has become the professional equivalent of waiting for Prince Charming. We all grew up on the fairy tale "Sleeping Beauty," which instructs young women that if they just wait for their prince to arrive, they will be kissed and whisked away on a white horse to live happily ever after. Now young women are told that if they can just find the right mentor, they will be pushed up the ladder and whisked away to the corner office to live happily ever after. Once again, we



are teaching women to be too dependent on others." Many things stuck with me from this amazing book, but this one stands out "I hope you find true meaning, contentment, and passion in your life. I hope you navigate the difficult times and come out with greater strength and resolve. I hope you find whatever balance you seek with your eyes wide open. And I hope that you - yes, you - have the ambition to lean in to your career and run the world. Because the world needs you to change it."

Q4

What's the best advice you can give young and upcoming women in the industry?

My advice to both women and men who are joining the industry is to take the time and to learn and hone your craft! This together with being disciplined will take you

far in this profession.

Q5

What would you like to see in the PR profession in the next 5 years?

In the next 5 year I would like to see public relations having a seat at the table and joining conversations from the start as opposed to coming in at the tail end when it's too late. It is my hope that all organizations will realize the importance of public relations and will get an opportunity to listen to the wise counsel from PR practitioners. This can only happen if PR reports directly to the CEO.

Q6

What are some of the challenges that women face in the PR journey and how can they be solved?

The biggest challenge is that when some women are given a seat at the table, they remain quiet. It is important for us to realize that when we get a seat at the table we need to talk. Talk loudly and proudly and bring more women with you to the table!

Parting shot

When you get to the top don't forget to send the elevator back down to bring more people up.



WHAT DATA INFORMS YOU?



DATA IS EVERYWHERE

At KNBS, we collaborate with you to design, collect, compile, analyze, publish and disseminate official statistics for public use.

Infrastructure, Insurance, PWDs, Education, Construction, Gender, Health, GBV, Agriculture, Nutrition, Infrastructure, e.t.c.

TALK TO US TODAY

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Quality public relations practitioners are critical for any country, but particularly in Kenya where the industry is still relatively new. As we continue to grow and develop as a nation, it is essential that we have skilled professionals who can effectively communicate our progress, challenges, and opportunities to both local and international audiences.

Gina Din, founder of Gina Din Group.

Public Relations Society of Kenya

VICTORIA MIGUDA

Former Communications Manager, META



Victoria is passionate about bridging the gap between brand and consumers through strategic communications and advocacy.

Q1

What excites you about the Public Relations industry?

Handling negative or unexpected events and communicating effectively with stakeholders and being able to monitor and shape public perception through proactive and reactive communication efforts have enabled me to love and be great at crisis management. The practice of Public Relations has not only helped me to grow my media networks, but these relationships have evolved into friendships, helping me be part of a treasured community.

I am part of the Africa Communication team at Meta who were involved in 'Creators of Tomorrow', a new global initiative that first kicked off in Europe, Middle East, and Africa that recognized young talents from across the world who are driving a new wave of creative material on the internet. The campaign highlighted 10 Sub-Saharan African innovators. Out of the 10 from the continent, 3 were from East Africa.

Q2

What skills have you acquired over the years and how have these skills propelled your Public Relations journey?

Save for having an undergraduate degree in Communication & Media Relations with a major in Public Relations, I also have a post-graduate degree in Global Marketing Management. However, these qualifications did not prepare me enough for the on-hands experience that I acquired over the years such as crisis and brand management through developing and maintaining brand standards and protecting brand reputation; content creation and influencer relations by building relationships with key influencers to amplify brand messaging and reach new audiences; analyzing data to measure the impact and effectiveness of communication efforts and make data-driven decisions; collaboration through building and maintaining effective partnerships with other departments to support communication efforts; media relations by building and maintaining relationships with journalists and media outlets; leadership through mentoring and leading teams, setting goals and objectives, and guiding the development and execution of communication strategies; adaptability by continuously evolving and adapting communication strategies in response to changing business conditions, market trends, and technology advancements; and creative thinking through the use of creative problem-solving and out-of-the-box thinking to overcome communication challenges and drive results.

Q3

Who are some of the historical women who have inspired you over the years? How have they inspired you?

Without a doubt it would be Melinda French Gates, Lupita Nyong'o and Winnie Madikizela-Mandela. These women, among many others, have inspired me and generations with their courage, determination, and unwavering commitment to creating a more just and equal world through their activism, leadership, and perseverance.

As a philanthropist and activist, Melinda French Gates has worked tirelessly to promote health and education initiatives in developing countries and has been a strong advocate for women's rights and gender equality. She has also been a vocal advocate for the use of technology and innovation to address global health and development challenges. Through her work with BMGF, she has helped to provide access to essential medicines and vaccines, improve maternal and child health, and increase access to education and financial services for women and girls. She has also been a strong voice in the fight against global poverty and inequality and uses her platform to bring attention to the importance of investing in health and development to create a more equitable world.

Lupita Nyong'o, a Kenyan actress, inspires the world with her talent and activism. I love that she uses her platform to advocate for women's rights and to challenge beauty standards in Hollywood and across the world. With her courage and determination, she has shown that anything is possible with hard work and perseverance.

Winnie Madikizela-Mandela inspired me with her strength, resilience, and unwavering commitment to fighting for equality and justice.

Q4

What's the best advice you can give young and upcoming women in the industry?

Network and build relationships: Network with people in your industry and build strong, professional relationships. Attend events, join organizations, and reach out to mentors. A lot of times if not most times, my career has grown on the shoulders of my networks, and I am forever indebted and grateful to my networks.

Collaborate and support other women: Support and empower other women in the industry we need each other because expectations for women in any career path are always higher, all the more so, when weighing between career, possibly marriage, motherhood, and even caregiving, we are most of the times the ones to make the tough decisions. Collaborate on projects and lift each other up. Don't be afraid to take risks: Take

calculated risks and step outside of your comfort zone. This can lead to new opportunities and growth.

Q5

What would you like to see in the PR profession in the next 5 years?

The PR industry may evolve in several ways, and it is difficult to predict the exact state of the profession in the next 5 years. However, there are a few trends and changes that are likely to shape its future that I would like to see: PR professionals will be expected to use data to measure the impact of their campaigns & to demonstrate the value they bring to the organization. I would like to see increased emphasis on data and metrics in PR. I would like to see the increased utilization of social media and digital PR, with professionals leveraging these channels to reach and engage with audiences. I would like to see PR integrated with content marketing, influencer marketing, and advertising marketing. As the workspace becomes more complex, I would like to see more PR professionals equipped to handle crisis situations effectively, both online and offline in their crisis management.

Q6

What are some of the challenges that women face in the PR journey and how can they be solved?

One of the challenges I faced as a woman in PR was work-life balance. There was a time that I had caregiving responsibilities and was laid off because I could not be physically present in the office, although I worked virtually during that time. I think that this is a challenge that most women face - the demanding nature of PR work and long hours particularly for those with caregiving responsibilities.

Women sometimes experience gender bias, discrimination, and harassment, which creates a hostile work environment and impedes their progress. I was once laid off for being pregnant and having a baby. The discrimination and harassment started as soon as I indicated that I was pregnant. To address some of these challenges, organizations can offer flexible work arrangements, such as remote and hybrid schedules, to accommodate women's caregiving responsibilities. Organizations can also establish and strictly adhere to, and implement policies to prevent and address gender bias, discrimination, and harassment in the workplace.

Parting shot

I am proud of my achievements, relationships built, and I have faith in my abilities and past experiences to guide me going forward. I remain grateful for opportunities, growth, and experiences.



MEDINA IBRAHIM

Manager, Corporate Communications,
Kenya National Bureau of Statistics.

Medina is a Creative Content Strategist. When she is not tending to plants or discovering new places, she crafts win-win situations for effective organizational engagements.



Q1

What excites you about the Public Relations industry?

As someone who is big on good relations, strategy and creativity, PR allows me to be many things rolled into one - a writer, art director, editor, graphic artist, photographer, and content coordinator.

The dynamic nature of public relations fits well with my diverse talents without the need to sacrifice one over the other. What excites me is the immense potential of public relations within the sphere of corporate shared initiatives. Societal challenges ranging from climate change, entrepreneurship, public health as well as reaching out to populations in the margins of society can be surmounted through effective public relations.

Q2

What skills have you acquired over the years and how have these skills propelled your Public Relations journey?

I studied Graphic Design in the university, we had to draw and illustrate promotional items such as posters, brochures and calendars among others by hand. In addition, the black and white photography assignments entailed many hours in the photo studio and darkroom to process the films and photos. Before discovering the Public Relations profession through my mentor, the late Dr. Peter Oriare Mbeke (May he RIP), I was at pains to decide which direction to specialize in as I loved art, design, writing as well as engagements for social change at the grassroots.

At Strategic Public Relations Limited, I was introduced to the diversity of PR through the high-level events the company held, editorial media monitoring, corporate social responsibility activities as well as corporate branding processes. The skills learnt was the foundation for my success in coordinating the corporate rebranding of the National Authority for the Campaign Against Alcohol and Drug Abuse (NACADA). Other interesting projects I oversaw were the production of a children's booklet and institutional newsletter including an e-newsletter version to inform staff and stakeholders about the organization and resource mobilization for projects. During the COVID-19 pandemic, a collaborative initiative birthed a three-month media-based public advocacy campaign targeting children in primary and secondary schools on life skills. My aspiration for the future is to leverage PR for social good.

Q3

Who are some of the historical women who have inspired you over the years? How have they inspired you?

Ms. Gina Din Kariuki is legendary. Her life, work, and contribution to the Public Relations profession in Kenya epitomizes everything I aspire to achieve in my lifetime.

Q4

What's the best advice you can give young and upcoming women in the industry?

As women, our biggest enemy is internal. The self-doubt, the perfectionism, the second-guessing. The list is endless. My advice is, when faced with a work-related challenge, reach out to your seniors in the profession for assistance. The other monster we deal with on a day to day basis is not being taken seriously enough. The perception that PR is about appearing good in public, covering up for the bosses when things go south has refused to go away. Nothing is further from the truth, and it is your responsibility to demonstrate the value that PR brings to the table through your work. That is the only way you can build trust wherever you go. Never think that because you are pretty, in high heels and can talk your way out of any situation, it is enough. Fight for your space through exemplary work and people will be looking for you; and no, a woman's worst enemy is NOT another woman.

Q5

What would you like to see in the PR profession in the next 5 years?

I would like to see the recognition of the public relations profession as a strategic function in all organizations. At the local level, I would like to see the entrenchment of the profession through the IPRAC Bill, coupled with a solid regulatory framework to weed out quacks in the industry.

I would also like to see a robust advocacy targeting decision-makers in organizations for proper placement of PR within organizational contexts and an operationalized County Public Relations Society chapters as part of decentralizing the mandate of PRSK. This would ensure that the public relations function is adequately resourced to fully optimize its mandate. Finally, a streamlined curriculum for continuous professional development for practitioners at all levels would be important in the future.



Q6

What are some of the challenges that women face in the PR journey and how can they be solved?

The perception that PR is about events, looking good in heels and being talkative; and that women fit that bill perfectly. To address this misconception, women practitioners should build their capacities in negotiating for space and power in the C-Suite. Women practitioners are hardworking and deliver; however, they should not be shy to be their own biggest advocates and celebrate every win with aplomb. They should not mirror men but should use their innate intuition to advance in the profession. Women should take every available course as they find their niche in the profession; network and to build their social net worth.

Parting Shot

PR is about mutually beneficial relationships and relationships. Take time and effort to build your social capital.





As we celebrate International Women's Day 2023, the theme 'DigitALL: Innovation and Technology for Gender Equality' is an opportunity to recognize the power of technology in supporting gender equality. From inspiring female role models to highlighting issues like GBV, Endometriosis, and Education; technological advances can help drive progress towards a more equitable future.

Meet the ICEA LION Digital Champions:



Caroline Maina
Head of Business Applications

Meet Caroline Maina, Head of Business Applications at ICEA LION Group, she has spearheaded digital transformation projects to improve customer engagement, increase revenue, reduce operating expenses and promotes gender equality in technology through empowering women and creating new opportunities. One of her key achievements in spearheading and coordinating the in-house development of the ICEA LION Life Management Solution.

Learn more about ICEA LION's Life insurance solutions by visiting icealion.co.ke



Susan Mwai
Head of Operations, ICEA LION Asset Management

Meet Susan Mwai, Head of Operations at ICEA LION Asset Management Limited, who has played a key role in developing and promoting DigiTrust, a digital Money Market Fund platform that promotes financial education, inclusion, and gender equality in Kenya.

Setup and invest in a Money Market Fund online via invest.icealion.com



Whitney Nasanga
Digital Marketing Officer

Meet Whitney, ICEA LION's Digital Marketing Officer driving revenue growth, increasing digital engagement through martech and her media buying expertise. One of her key achievements is being the digital lead in ICEA LION's website revamp. She inspires women in the industry with her commitment to innovation and technology, and gender equality.

Learn more about how our solutions can protect and create your wealth by visiting icealion.co.ke



Aisha Lugogo
Senior Software Engineer

Meet Aisha, our experienced IT specialist who has streamlined workflows, and saved costs through process automation and system development. One of her key achievements is being part of the team that implemented our Partner's Portal.

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LILIAN BONARERI

Head of Corporate Communication and Resource
Mobilization, County Government of Kisii.

Bonareri is a corporate communication and PR enthusiast leveraging the power of storytelling to spur development and change lives.



Q1

What excites you about the Public Relations industry?

How every day is different in the PR industry is my most fascinating point. You never know what you are waking up to. Each day comes with its own style; be it the arising crisis communication, urgent press releases, impromptu high-level meetings and on the rather unfriendly days, the bash from the boss for one thing gone wrong.

My best part of being in the PR industry, though, is storytelling. I love telling stories; and it's really inspiring to listen to people's views and perspectives, interrogate their thinking and most importantly appreciate the diversity of thought and experience to come up with an objective story. As a PR practitioner, I also get to transform my imaginations into exciting and impactful programs, and leverage on the power of storytelling to drive social and economic development in my community.

Q2

What skills have you acquired over the years and how have these skills propelled your Public Relations journey?

The most important skill I have learnt over the years as a PR practitioner is emotional intelligence. I am more self-aware and able to leverage my strengths while working on my weaknesses. I am also able to hold myself self-accountable when I make mistakes.

Additionally, I have learnt to be intentional and self-motivated in working on my goals consistently. I have grown into a better team player and leader, leading by example, and identifying opportunities in challenges. My people skills have also greatly improved. I communicate my point of view better and relate and interact with others effectively. This has seen tremendous growth in my career in terms of position and the tasks I am able to handle. I have also spent the past 10 years in the PR industry perfecting my written communication. This has given me a good standing with my bosses, who now trust me with high-level and sensitive communications. Courtesy of the experience I gained over the years; I now take less time to deliver on assignments.

Q3

Who are some of the historical women who have inspired you over the years? How have they inspired you?

Phoebe Asiyo's story, as told in her memoir, *It Is Possible*, is one of my greatest inspirations. Her reflections on a lifelong political journey tell so much about what it takes for a woman to be successful in Kenya's male-dominated political world. Phoebe's story

is not just about breaking through the glass ceiling. It is predominantly about setting individual standards and being intentional and consistent about achieving them. As a woman PR practitioner, I often face backlash from the most unexpected community in society, defined as the learned, over how involving my career is. Not because I am unable to handle the demands that my job throws at me, but because as a woman society expects me to stay at home and raise children. I am not expected to travel often for official duties, stay late at work to beat deadlines, or worse still hold higher positions over my male counterparts. This expectation that a woman should stay back and make the home is a very widespread practice all over the world. It is a tradition that has held back so many women from pursuing their dreams and contributing to human progress. It is a gender-discriminatory demand that we all should. Drawing from Phoebe's story and how she surmounted sociocultural restrictions to achieve her dreams, I have managed to rise above societal limitations, stereotypes, and discrimination to pursue my dreams.

Q4

What's the best advice you can give young and upcoming women in the industry?

As women, we often fall into the male-prejudice trap and end up shying off from showcasing our strengths and talents. Under the guise of working behind the curtains, we let other people take all the credit for the good work we do. What this simply means to us is an eternal condemnation to lower-entry levels, with the number of women dropping at every succeeding level.

Many of the challenges I faced during the early years of my career were around discovering what I wanted to do and how I energize. I struggled with anxiety disorders among my peers because I am the type who energizes away from the public glare. I was always scared of communicating my point of view, even when I was sure of what I wanted to say. I'd later grow my confidence and my work began to be visible. I also developed a clear personal development plan, narrowing down to my strengths and cutting myself a niche. Finally, men have traditionally held positions of power. Personnel policies and work structures tend to reflect the life experience of men and are often in conflict with the life experience of women. This is the elephant we have been fighting, and you will be required to join in.

Q5

What would you like to see in the PR profession in the next 5 years?

From a public sector perspective, I would like to see governments and organizations incorporate public relations into their core mandate, as a critical management



function. This comes with the continuously blurring line between public relations and marketing, and the power of PR in spurring development. Unlike the traditional meaning of public relations, there has been a shift of the end goal of PR from basic branding and reputation building to customer-focused impacts.

As a storytelling enthusiast, and more importantly having experienced the power of storytelling in steering development, I envision a future of the public relations industry where the profession would take center stage in driving development. Already, some economic development organizations have embraced the role of PR in development and are leveraging storytelling to promote opportunities, drive investment, and share successes. Finally, I would love to see more women in the PR industry at the C-suite level.

Q6

What are some of the challenges that women face in the PR journey and how can they be solved?

Just like in other professions, the greatest challenge I have faced as a woman in my PR journey is the shyness from taking credit where it is due. I have also seen my female peers credit the team for accomplishments they broke their backs to achieve. Women also tend to shy away from negotiating for what they deserve. This is normally attributed to the general fear of the unknown and the repercussions likely to arise from such asks. The root cause is gender discrimination and stereotyping, especially as you climb up the career ladder. To solve the challenges that women in PR are facing, the men and women in leadership positions will need to step up and embrace gender equity and provide a level field for growth for both male and female employees. Additionally, there is need to champion establishment of the right support structures, through policies, for women to thrive in the PR industry.

Parting Shot

Amid the complexities surrounding the PR industry, there are women who have thrived. Be intentional with your goals, be visible and amplify your work and talents and cut yourself a niche.



NAKHULO KHAIMIA

Marketing and Communication Manager,
Samsung Electronics - East African Markets.

Nakhulo is a vibrant brand storyteller who doesn't shy away from turning things into beautiful stories, be it an object or a human. She believes that everyone has a story, and we can showcase our stories to the universe and in return inspire each other in one way or another.





Q1

What excites you about the Public Relations industry?

The Public Relations industry has been evolving over the years, there is always something new to learn. Gone are days when people used to think that PR is just about painting a beautiful picture at a surface level and hiding the negatives in the back end. Various tools of communication have emerged thanks to technology hence making work easier for the PR professionals, one can measure the results based on what people view and think about the product or service. One can easily get genuine feedback using digital tools over and above what research companies do.

Q2

What skills have you acquired over the years and how have these skills propelled your Public Relations journey?

I have overtime acquired digital and social media skills that have helped me in my day-to-day role. Over and above that, as a brand story teller what stands out is the interpersonal skills and presentation skills that play a key role on my day to day activities when it comes to marketing and communication.

Q3

Who are some of the historical women who have inspired you over the years? How have they inspired you?

One historical woman that has inspired me over the years is Queen Elizabeth II. She became a queen at a very young age and had to overcome lots of obstacles both at professional and personal levels, to become England's longest reigning monarch.

Key take out: no matter what goes on in your life, keep doing what you are supposed to and avoid sideshows. The

communication industry is full of sideshows but once one focuses on the goal they will be able to achieve a lot.

Q4

What's the best advice you can give young and upcoming women in the industry?

The one and only advice that I will give to young and upcoming women is to trust your capabilities and work towards improving them. Learning never ends, observe, read, watch and listen, all answers are there. We are in

this together.

Q5

What would you like to see in the PR profession in the next 5 years?

A better accommodative society with inclusion of the private sector on their day to day activities. There is so much potential in the private sector especially when it comes to 360 communications, we can learn one or two things from each other by sharing best practices especially from multinational organizations.

Q6

What are some of the challenges that women face in the PR journey and how can they be solved?

Challenges will always be there it doesn't matter what industry, at the end of the day it depends with you as an individual on how you can turn around the challenges to make you better in your career. I can't single out one.

Parting Shot

The world is a playing field, it is upon you to decide whether you want to be a referee, a player, a coach, or the cheering squad.





REPUTATION MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES FOR LEADERSHIP

7th – 9th June, 2023
Naivasha (Kenya)

Course Content Highlights

- Reputation management in the modern world
- Reputation, authenticity and ethics
- Creating a reputation strategy
- Communication strategies for reputation management
- Developing, protecting and measuring reputation
- Withstanding reputational challenges
- Strategic issues management



HAPPY INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

FAKES
COST MORE
FAKES ARE EXPENSIVE



Say no to counterfeit cosmetics. Counterfeit cosmetics and other beauty products are gradually killing our beauty. Cheap is expensive and very harmful, go for genuine and authentic cosmetic and glow without limits. that promote genuine and authentic for healthy living.



**anti
counterfeit
authority**
Upholding Authenticity

ACA HEADQUARTERS, NAIROBI
Anti-counterfeit authority (ACA),
National Water Plaza,
3rd floor Dunga Road Junction Industrial Area,
Po box, 47771-00100(GPO) Nairobi Kenya.
Email: info@aca.go.ke
Phone: +254 20-2280000, Fax: +254 20-5222 5124/31
Mobile: +254 717 430 640

MOMBASA
Mombasa Trade Centre 5th Floor, Nkrumah Road
Tel: 041- 2220709

KISUMU
Alpha House, 4th Floor, Oginga Odinga Street
Tel: 0208000876

ELDORET
Kiptagich Building, 3rd Floor, Uganda Road
Tel: 0208000878

Public Relations Society of Kenya

PATRICIA ONDENG'

Ag. Chief Executive Officer,
the Kenyatta International Convention Centre (KICC).



Patricia is the definition of growth and confidence. She brings on the table a wealth of experience in leading organizations through periods of change and development.

Q1

What excites you about the Public Relations industry?

The growth of the Public Relations Society of Kenya excites me the most. There has been membership mobilization and now the Society is vibrant like never witnessed since its formation. I pride myself in being part of this growth as I have always ensured that members of the communication sector join the society. I have also ensured that I mobilize resources to support critical programs of the Society.

Q2

What skills have you acquired over the years and how have these skills propelled your public relations journey?

Investing in upgrading my education has propelled me in my public relations journey. I hold a Master of Arts in Communication (Corporate & Development Communication) from Daystar University, and a Bachelor's in Business and Office Management from Jomo Kenyatta University. Skills I learnt in the classroom and in boardrooms have enabled me to effectively oversee operations in communications and marketing departments and in leading organizations. These skills have enabled me to ensure visibility and brand integrity.

Q3

Who are some of the historical women who have inspired you over the years? How have they inspired you?

I get inspiration from Kenya's Chief Justice Martha Karambu Koome through her journey to the topmost judicial position. Another woman who inspires me is the late Prof. Wangari Maathai. She was a pioneer in championing for the environment and for shining the spotlight on global warming. Other women are the late Dr. Rehab Nyagah, Ambassador Rose Boit, Wambui Otieno, Martha Karua, Ann Waiguru, my late grandmother, and my late mum.

Q4

What's the best advice you can give young and upcoming women in the industry?

Let's believe in our dreams as women. We must present ourselves as equal to the tasks that men are doing, and I am glad that the society has embraced equity and is assisting women to occupy top leadership positions. Let us learn to celebrate each other's achievements and to pull each other up.

Finally, let us believe in ourselves and fight for our space. I am an example of a leader who has broken the ceiling and risen from a management position to a Chief Executive Officer. I want to tell the young women that everything is possible. In fact, the current government gives a lot of attention to youth and women, so let us take advantage of that and position ourselves with the right skills.

Q5

What would you like to see in the PR profession in the next 5 years?

I would like to see the IPRAC Bill come to pass. Secondly, I call upon the Society to be aggressive in bidding to host world PR events in Kenya.

Q6

What are some of the challenges that women face in the PR journey and how can they be solved?

The main challenge the profession faces is the misconception on what the industry entails and its strategic positioning in the leadership positions. Many people do not understand the role of PR in strategically driving strategic direction of the country and organizations. Another big challenge is work-life balance. The industry can be very demanding and engaging to the extent that work might overpower family time. Women must be very intentional in balancing these challenges.

Parting shot

Let us live the PR dream! We drive the message, we influence narratives, so let us take positions in strategic leadership places.

Public Relations Society of Kenya

CAROLYNE NEKESA

Head of Marketing, Minet Kenya.



Nekesa is a Brand Midwife, passionate about creating connection between brands and the customers or the public. When not midwifing brands, she engages adolescents on life skills and empowers them to create positive outcome for their future.

Q1

What excites you about the Public Relations industry?

The power public relations has on influence – that excites me! Also, internal or employee relations as others call it excites me because I always believe in developing brand ambassadors. If employees appreciate positive corporate relations, you can be sure they will extend the same to customers and other stakeholders. This is important because the Company delivers its mandate through people, and it is through people that the Company can influence desired outcome of its target audience. Have a clean house, then go out and call other people to come into your clean house. All other good strategies a company wants to deliver to customers, they should do that to staff first.

Q2

What skills have you acquired over the years and how have these skills propelled your Public Relations journey?

First, training. I have had the privilege of studying different aspects of information and communication management and this has shaped my career in the field of Marcom. I studied information sciences for my undergraduate taking up the option of media and publishing studies, this helped me understand how information is collected, processed, and disseminated. In fact, the skills come in handy whenever I am writing and editing as I know how to present content for its intended meaning and it has also helped me understand how to handle media, a big part of my responsibility. I then did my master's in communication particularly corporate communication, and this shaped my skills in PR, what has been my bread and butter over the years. My diploma in Marketing through CIM shaped my marketing skills and enabled me combine messaging to drive demand.

As the world evolved to position brands online, I had to do a professional diploma in digital marketing from the digital marketing institute to gain skills in communicating on the online space. The training and on-job experience I have gained over the years has helped me not just to look at PR in seclusion but the whole spectrum of managing information to create a desired action. This has also helped me fit a role that requires both marketing and communication skills.

Q3

Who are some of the historical women who have inspired you over the years? How have they inspired you?

Perhaps the biggest influence of my life was my grandmother, the late Grace Wandabwa and then my own mum, Margaret. Coming from an era where

women were expected to stay at home and take care of the family, I have grown up watching the two toil and juggle different activities to provide for large families and still be in control of the home. They have also invested in property and business enough to leave some inheritance for their children. This has sent one big message to me, as a woman, I have to provide for myself and my children. Every time I sat with either of them, they never missed a chance to give advice on increasing income and investing. My mum, now retired, was a nurse during the day and a tailor at night and the industrious nature of these two women has always challenged my capacity.

Career wise, Gina Din influenced my crossing over to PR, especially how she handled MPESA entry into Kenya. I admired how she made it look like a career that will make you meet people of influence and I really wanted to be her. Debra Mallowah and her growth from Marketing to Vice President of one of the biggest corporations just shows how much potential my line of work has.

Another lady that has inspired me is Catherine Ndereba. Watching her on the track fired something in me, I think it was the determination and winning. Although I cannot run to save my life, I admired her grit on the track and achievements. There are many more women that I admire if I had the space.

Q4

What's the best advice you can give young and upcoming women in the industry?

There is no wrong answer or idea, don't keep quiet. Say it loudly, especially if deep inside you, you know it will work. Share the idea, allow criticism not because it's attacking you, but its building into your idea. You may not always be right, but you cannot always be wrong.

Also remember, you may put in a lot of effort in a project, unfortunately its only results that are recognized. So, take your time to define the results you want to see before you start working on it. PR can be confusing to many people in organizations. Sometimes PR is looked at as customer service or host/hostess role. Women in PR especially have been labelled as flower girls. Do not accept this definition. Boldly articulate the role to your colleagues and/or clients then go ahead to deliver spectacularly.

Finally, expand your knowledge by reading, studying and seeking mentorship from those ahead of you. When you fail, learn quickly, and move on to the next assignment. I actually admire what young and upcoming women are up to. They have defined content marketing in amazing ways. They are creative and bold, my advice is use this creativity for good, not just to draw attention to yourself. Identify a need your customer or company has and use content to support that need in those upcoming creative ways.



Q5

What would you like to see in the PR profession in the next 5 years?

I would like to see PR focus more on the customer rather than just public education and brand awareness. PR should start considering how to tell stories that best resonate with their target audience and responds to their needs. Something like PR for good, so that it's not just about 'look at us and the good things we are doing' but more like 'we want to help you achieve what you want to achieve'. Therefore, focus should be in collaboration with audience, changing experiences, building communities by solving their problems and demonstrating care. I also hope to see PR increasingly creating metrics that demonstrate ROI, especially for corporate organizations. Defining how the PR activity has created demand or retained customers and clearly demonstrate this using defined and accepted metrics. I would also like to see PR take its rightful place as a brand advisor on environmental factors that could affect the company, risk factors, and way forward to maintain the ship afloat.

Q6

What are some of the challenges that women face in the PR journey and how can they be solved?

The PR industry is made of more women than men. Unfortunately, the double burden of responsibility for women, expects women to excel at work and at home. Considering the long hours that some PR

activities put us through such as networking events after office hours or out of town PR events, PR can easily put a strain on the work-life balance for women. I have tried to balance that by intentionally dedicating time to spend

with my family including aligning my leave with school holidays to create that balance. If I have to work long hours, I ensure my weekends are dedicated to quality time with family.

Another challenge women in PR face, is getting their talent/expertise undervalued/underestimated. My solution always is to deliver beyond expectation and boldly take the credit. If I plan to do something, I try and find ways of doing better than the plan, it may not always work but either deliver as expected or beyond expectation, and when someone recognizes your results, acknowledge loudly. I have created smaller circles of women in my career where I bounce off challenges and they have been my springboard, offered advice, encouraged me when I'm down and celebrated me when I have achieved something. This has helped me face challenges boldly.

Parting Shot

Anything can be achieved if you put passion on it. Passion has always been the missing ingredient and applying it can turn a small idea into a revolution. Be passionate and experience growth.



PUBLIC RELATIONS SOCIETY
OF KENYA

ADVANCED MEDIA RELATIONS SKILLS

12TH – 13TH JUNE, 2023
NAIROBI (KENYA)

ADVANCED CAREER
(11 TO 20 YEARS)

30 CPD
POINTS

MEMBER - 65,000.00

NON MEMBER - 70,000.00

Course Content Highlights

- Developing media relations skills and interview preparation
- Preparing for media interviews (print and broadcast)
- Preparing and supporting your spokesperson before and during media interviews
- Building authority in media relations
- Ethics in media relations
- Communicating with impact and authority



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Public Relations Society of Kenya



@prskkenya



www.prsk.co.ke

SALLY KAHIU

Communications & Sustainability Manager, Haco Industries.



Sally lives for stories! When she is not creating them, she is reading them and discovering them in all forms including in arts and other cultural expressions. She is also an MC and enjoys driving progressive conversations especially in advancing women and girls' empowerment.

Q1

What excites you about the Public Relations industry?

There's so much space for creativity. When dealing especially with Policy issues there's the guaranteed element of surprise that keeps me on my toes and brings new learning every day. Research is also an aspect of PR that I love so much!

Q2

What skills have you acquired over the years and how have these skills propelled your public relations journey?

The ability to creatively develop different approaches to telling the same story to different stakeholders and still achieve the desired impact, has honed by skill as a storyteller and has enhanced my ability to be creative and innovative in dynamic circumstances. This has also sharpened my writing and critical thinking skills.

Q3

Who are some of the historical women who have inspired you over the years? How have they inspired you?

Grace Ogot is one of my favorites. She is a world-renowned Author whose writing propelled her to national leadership position and global recognition. She used her writing to speak about women's inequality and lack of participation especially in the political arena. She was a founding member of Writers' Association of Kenya.

The Second is Funmilayo Kuti - A brilliant African historical figure that used her position to educate underprivileged women and organize women groups to amplify women's rights issues.

The Third is Ida B. Wells - not only did she survive an impossible world as a skilled writer and journalist, she stood out to tell important stories to catalyze freedom, human rights and equality. These women were brilliant writers who changed the world through their stories and conviction.

Q4

What's the best advice you can give young and upcoming women in the industry?

There are lots of latent African stories to be told. And in an era where our interaction with technology grows and evolves every day, we have opportunities to tell those stories widely, to make their impact last, to build, to develop and to advance with our words and actions. Storytellers have always had a place in all Eras of human history - Get ready to take your place!

Q5

What would you like to see in the PR profession in the next 5 years?

I would like to see more emphasis on the role of public relations in building a safer and better planet for future generations. We need to be intentional in supporting and aligning our skills with stakeholders who aim to do better for the world in terms of freedom and equality.

We also need to see more companies and organizations giving credence to the Chief Communications Officer role. This will ensure that the organization and PR practitioners both benefit from the value of their skills. This also means having the CCOs in critical leadership and Board positions.

Q6

What are some of the challenges that women face in the PR journey and how can they be solved?

Unfortunately, a lot of women in the industry still face discrimination that has them being undervalued and underestimated. Many women in the PR industry still go through moments where people speak over them in meetings, minimize their contributions and talk down at them. This is especially so in organizations or companies that do not have an understanding of Strategic Communications and the role of PR in their sustainability. Sexual Harassment is still a raging issue in many workplaces and due to its nature, it makes it hard to prosecute meaning, many cases go unheard and no action is taken.

Parting Shot

People entrust us to tell their stories, to carry forward their legacies and to articulate their vision. There is no greater bestowment of leadership than this. PR is undoubtedly about Leadership.

NOELLA MUTANDA

Head of Corporate Communications, Insurance Regulatory Authority.

Noella is Bold, a critical thinker, solution finder, and doer and lover of life (not necessarily in that order)! She is a strategy enthusiast who prides herself in building brands and telling corporate stories. In another life, she would be a back-up singer or housewife! When not traveling or tending to her garden, she mentors high school girls and sings at church.]



Q1

What excites you about the Public Relations industry?

I am excited at the continuous evolution of PR practice and practitioners. PR has firmly found its place at the high-stake strategy table. Political campaigns, for instance, are now largely hinged on PR tactics to win over the masses and votes.

I am excited about the growth of internal communication/employee relations. PR practitioners are now increasingly being sought to offer advice and recommend suitable interventions to help build leadership credibility, team cohesiveness, collaboration, and employee engagement. Stakeholder engagement/community relations and corporate social responsibility are crucial PR tactics. The dynamic nature of business operations and the need to continuously review stakeholder needs, interests and concerns keeps me on toes. I have developed a stakeholder engagement strategy and identified and implemented flagship CSR projects. To enhance my media relations, I have established periodic engagements and capacity building sessions for factual reporting.

Q2

What skills have you acquired over the years and how have these skills propelled your public relations journey?

I have acquired several skills over the years that have propelled my public relations journey. I will mention a few.

Leadership and Governance: I have held communications and public relations' leadership roles at national, organizational and departmental levels. I currently serve as the National Secretary of the Public Relations Society of Kenya (PRSK) and previously as a Member of a Ministerial Task Force on Improvement of Government Information and Public Communications.

Strategy and critical thinking: Having attended the government's senior management and leadership courses, I have knowledge and skills in policy development, implementation, and strategic planning. I draw my critical thinking skills from my Fellowship program offered by The Fletcher School Leadership Program for Financial Inclusion. As a strategy enthusiast, I have established and maintained Quality Management Systems (QMS) and Risk Management strategies. I am also a business process-reengineering champion at my workplace.

Strategic Corporate Communications: I have gained experience in developing and implementing corporate communication strategies. I enjoy developing, implementation and measuring communication strategies that speak to the needs of various stakeholders across multiple channels. I love to package compelling success

stories and concepts into news, web and Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials. I am also well versed in executive communications. This includes message development for high-stake, high-profile executive presentations to executive boards and government officials.

Q3

Who are some of the historical women who have inspired you over the years? How have they inspired you?

Prof. Wangari Maathai (deceased), Hilary Clinton and Mother Teresa of Calcutta (deceased) are some of the women who inspire me. The common denominator in all these wonderful ladies is the indelible mark each of them left in their spaces. The 3 were bold. They were doers and solution finders. They dared to take on new ways and despite the societal stereotypes. They pioneered and opened ways for many other women to dare and dream. They established institutions that have outlived them and continue to positively impact on the society.

Prof. Wangari was the 1st female professor in Kenya and African female recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize. She spoke against environmental degradation practices and established the Green Belt Movement to advocate for safe environmental practices. We are now striving to practice what she talked about then!

Hilary Clinton dared to run for presidency in America. While she may not have won, the message that her candidacy gave to ladies is profound. She attempted to take on the highest office, probably in the world, and made a good show of herself. Her actions have inspired many women to dare to take on high political offices.

Mother Teresa founded the Order of the Missionaries of Charity in India. She dedicated her life to helping the poor. I have engaged with the Sisters of Charity in Kenya and their work continues to make lives better. What started off in India has spread wing to make the world a better place.

Q4

What's the best advice you can give young and upcoming women in the industry?

You can do it. If you put your mind and heart to it, you can do it. You can go as far as your eyes and mind can see. Identify your strengths and reinforce these. Identify your areas of improvement and minimize these. Continuously seek to better yourself and remain relevant in your space. Strive to stay up to date with the latest practices, trends and technologies as this will set your bar above the rest.

Networking is essential in our industry. Attend as many



events, join professional organizations, and connect with other counterparts in the industry to build relationships and expand your network. Who knows, your professional future might be in your colleague's hands or contact list. Embody confidence and professionalism in everything you do and always strive to deliver the best possible results for your clients. Talk less and listen more. In your own ways, learn and practice giving back to the society.

Q5

What would you like to see in the PR profession in the next 5 years?

I envision an industry that is more technology-driven, data-focused, where PR professionals will use data and analytics to tell captivating stories and measure the impact of their campaigns and make data-driven decisions. I foresee a regulated industry, that will coexist seamlessly with other industries in developing communication models that lead to more business growth and visibility.

I wish for an industry that is socially conscious, authentic and embraces diversity to gain inclusion. In addition, I am hopeful that in the next 5 years, there will be enhanced appreciation and understanding on the role of PR for business. I am hopeful that in the Kenyan space, the Institute of Public Relations and Communication Management (IPRAC) Bill will have been enacted into law!

Q6

What are some of the challenges that women face in the PR journey and how can they be solved?

The challenges are many. The first one is the lack of representation in the industry, leadership positions in the PR industry, which has led to a lack of diversity in decision making and a lack of sufficient mentorship opportunities for women. While women are the majority in the practice, the most senior jobs are mostly held by men.

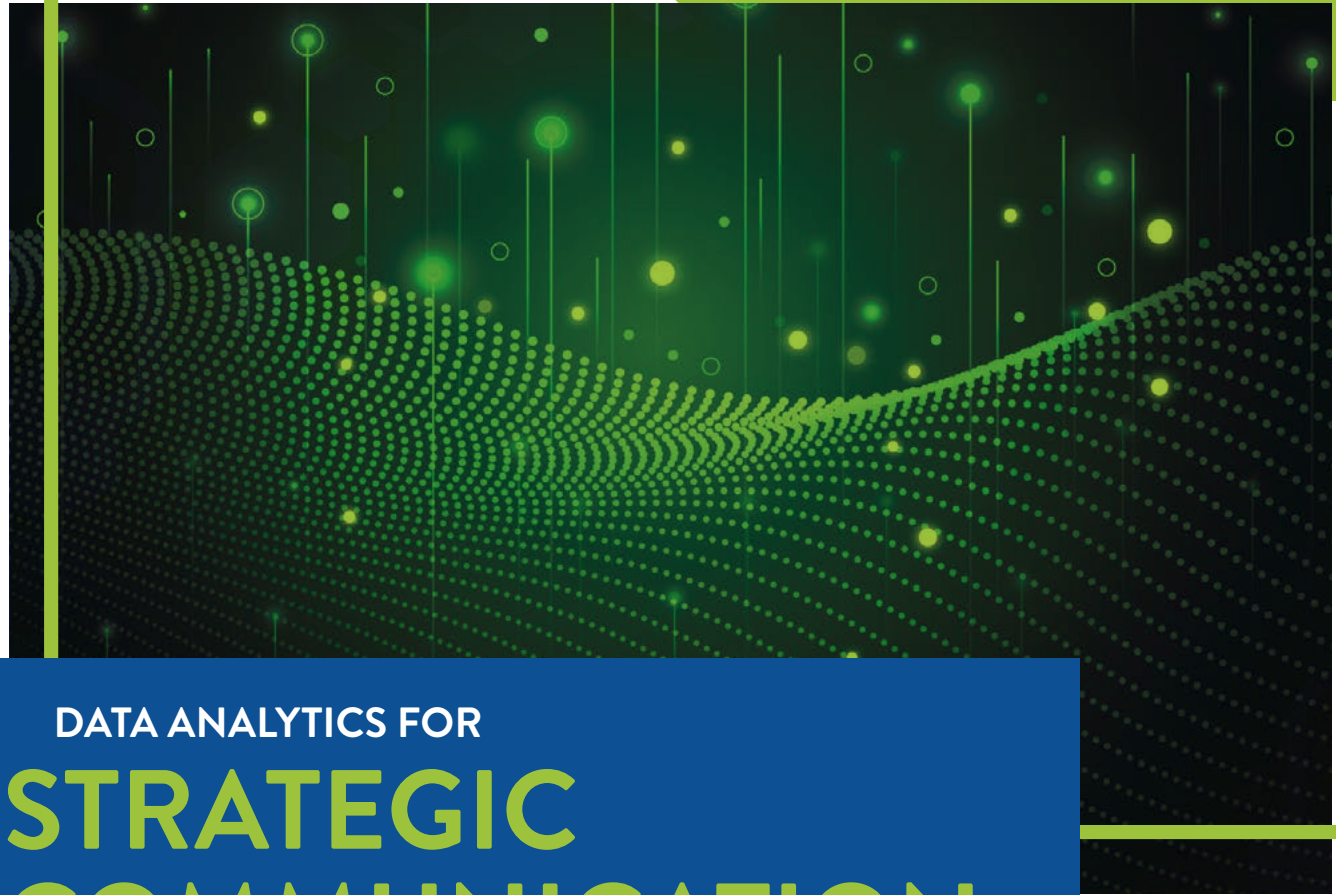
Another challenge is the nature of PR work that goes deep into the night which becomes a challenge for working mothers who have to be out of their homes at night. This is made worse by the societal stereotypes. Women face gender bias and discrimination in the workplace, adversely affecting their opportunities for career advancement and recognition.

One of the quick wins we can do to fix this problem is to streamline diversity and inclusion in the workplace to offer equal opportunities to women as well. Organizations should pilot and implement flexible work arrangements and equal pay for equal work. Finally, women in the PR space should increase mentorship, sponsorship, and professional development opportunities for more women in the industry.

Parting Shot

Noella was here!





DATA ANALYTICS FOR
**STRATEGIC
COMMUNICATION**

15th – 16th June, 2023,
Nairobi (Kenya)

Mid Career (6 to 10 Years)
Advanced Career (11 to 20 Years)

20 CPD
POINTS

MEMBER – 15,000.00
NON MEMBER – 25,000.00



Public Relations Society of Kenya

LAURYN NAIROTI

Communication Officer, County Government of Isiolo.



Lauryn is passionate about communication and the change it brings to organizations and the Society. She goes by the mantra, purpose to see what has never been seen, be lost but Climb.



Q1

What excites you about the Public Relations industry?

The thing that excites me about the Public Relations Industry is that it gives one an opportunity to interact with different organizations and audiences through strategic Communication. PR is ever changing but always exciting!

Q2

What skills have you acquired over the years and how have these skills propelled your public relations journey?

One of the biggest skills that I have acquired over the years that has propelled my public relations journey is writing. In writing, I am free to influence organizations, connect with audiences, and build brands. Writing gives one an opportunity to develop narratives that can change lives.

Q3

Who are some of the historical women who have inspired you over the years? How have they inspired you?

I am my own inspiration. I Learn new things every day and this has made me perceive things in different ways. Sometimes we need to look deep within to get that inspiration to keep going. The journey gets tough often, but if you can look inside and find that spark, you will always keep going.

Q4

What's the best advice you can give young and upcoming women in the industry?

My advice would be simple, always have a goal and know what you want to achieve out of it. If you have this, you will navigate life in PR with ease.

Q5

What would you like to see in the PR profession in the next 5 years?

Even though we are seeing women rise to leadership positions, in the next coming years I would love to see more women occupy senior and leadership positions in organizations, politics and all spheres of life.

Q6

What are some of the challenges that women face in the PR journey and how can they be solved?

Women face a lot of gender bias and stereotyping. I believe that women should be given an opportunity to express their worth without being intimidated or harassed.

Parting Shot

When you know better, you do better - by Oprah Winfrey.





BANK

As a woman in business,
**let us fire up
your biashara**

WhatsApp **0711 087 087**
or Call **0711 087 000**

FAN YOUR
flme

FEMALE LED & MADE ENTERPRISE

LINDAH MBAISI

Public Relations and Communication Lead,
Cereal Growers Association

Lindah is a public relations and communication specialist currently leading communication at the Cereal Growers Association (CGA), a farmer membership organization with over 200,000 farmers promoting collective action for the sustained improvement of their enterprises. She enjoys documenting impact and success stories of rural farming communities.



Q1

What excites you about the Public Relations industry?

I love that the PR industry is ever-changing. Its evolution continues to provide an opportunity to stay up to date, refine communication strategies, and make informed decisions that align with audience expectations and organizational goals. In this digital era, the challenge of measuring the impact and effectiveness of communication strategies is a thing of the past. It has become easy to evaluate performance through research and data-driven PR metrics. Employers now understand the strategic role of PR in an organization.

Additionally, working with influencers has complemented media relations efforts to reach untapped audiences. At the Cereal Growers Association (CGA), we have enhanced employee advocacy by training over 70 county agribusiness coordinators on how to tell the CGA story and impact through social media. For the first time, we are leveraging employees' presence on social platforms to expand the association's networks for business development and partnerships.

Q2

What skills have you acquired over the years and how have these skills propelled your public relations journey?

Over the years, I have acquired hard skills from training in digital media, advocacy and policy papers writing, presentation, public speaking, and corporate governance. As a personal dedication to professional growth, the new skills acquired have prepared me for success. Among my peers, I have positioned myself as a mentor, collaborator, and expert in these areas where I get consulted. As part of the management team at CGA, I have acquired networking, leadership, critical thinking, people management, and listening skills. These skills have helped me to demonstrate professionalism, team value and develop a competitive edge at work.

I have also been able to take up tasks outside my job description and innovatively support other departments. I believe that learning new skills is critical in the fast-paced PR industry. Having worked in organizations that prefer lean PR teams, I am constantly acquiring skills from time to time to fit the job requirements and embrace the emerging trends in the industry.

Q3

Who are some of the historical women who have inspired you over the years? How have they inspired you?

I get my inspiration from my grandmother, Emily. I am glad to have been raised by a strong and hardworking woman who I mirror in so many ways. She is my cheerleader, source of wisdom, and support system. She has taught me to go after what I want, no matter what challenges stand in my way.

In the profession, Kentice Tikolo (OGW) inspires me. Her founder story, longevity in the industry (20+ years), and support for young and upcoming women in PR is worth emulating. Kentice inspired me to join The Comms Avenue Mentorship Program in 2022 to support junior PR and Communication professionals to overcome career obstacles. Watching her wear many professional hats and grow her strategic PR and Communication Management Company, Cause Impact, into the most sought-after agency fuels my resolve to achieve even more.

Gina Din and Yolanda Engell Andersen are some of the prominent women whose impeccable work has shaped the PR industry in Kenya and in whose footsteps, many have followed, including me.

Q4

What's the best advice you can give young and upcoming women in the industry?

One of the best pieces of advice that I can give to young and upcoming women in PR and Communication is to "Be bold enough to take risks and demonstrate a commitment to learning." The Public Relations industry is increasingly fast-paced and ever-changing. As an upcoming professional, risk-taking can change you fundamentally as it allows you to learn new skills.

Also, being committed and open-minded to learning helps you to grow as a person. Be part of resourceful industry networks as they provide access to unlimited information to thrive as a practitioner. Remember that learning is a lifelong process. I have been lucky to be in places and worthwhile networks that have allowed me to interact with amazing women in PR from Kenya and beyond. These great women have given me the best pieces of advice that I pass on to young and upcoming women in the industry.





Q5

What would you like to see in the PR profession in the next 5 years?

Two things; One, there is an urgent need to safeguard the profession and have a legal framework for self-regulation globally. Reports on mushrooming of quacks in the media industry in Kenya and their negative impact on information dissemination cannot go unnoticed. This, if not regulated, could get into the PR industry. The accreditation of PR practitioners and the observance of the highest standards of practice is something I am eager to see being implemented by PRSK through the IPRAC Bill. I believe that there are great lessons to pick from the Zambia Public Relations Association now Zambia Institute of Public Relations and Communication (ZIPRC), whose PR Bill has already been enacted into law.

Two, the role of PR in any organization is expansive and influential. Alongside regulation and accreditation, senior practitioners must bridge the gap between them and junior professionals through mentorship to enhance the quality and skillset of PR practitioners.

Q6

What are some of the challenges that women face in the PR journey and how can they be solved?

A 2019 Status of PR in Kenya report by PRSK and ATIFA shows that the PR industry in Kenya is dominated by women (64%) with most having a master's degree as their highest level of education. Despite

their dominance, level of education, skill, and experience, women in PR still face challenges that continue to stifle their growth. Pay gaps have been attributed to gender biases and other types of workplace discrimination but experience and skill. Women in PR continue to earn less compared to men in the industry despite holding the same positions, skills, and

experience. We need collective support from employers and the men in the industry. Employers need to have non-discriminative and transparent remuneration policies to reduce disparity. The support of men in PR is critical. They need to be allies and use their voices to advocate for equal pay for equal work done.

In 2023, despite the many achievements, very few women are considered for senior management positions as these continue to be a preserve of men. A ton of campaigns are calling for progression and the creation of an environment where everyone is treated equally but none seems to be addressing these workplace challenges faced by women. Employers should harmonize recruitment processes to ensure gender balance in the hiring and promotion of women to leadership roles. We must develop progression opportunities for women in PR to increase their representation in leadership and decision-making roles.

Parting Shot

In life, always leave the people you interact with and places you go to better than you found them. It doesn't matter how long or short your stay is. Leave a positive impact everywhere you go.



Public Relations Society of Kenya

MAUREEN KARUGU

Asst. Manager Corporate Affairs,
Nairobi City Water & Sewerage Company.



Maureen is a PR professional who loves to explore digital marketing tools and new ways to tell organizational stories. She loves to sing and loves her books (academic included) and was probably a lecturer in her former life.

Q1

What excites you about the Public Relations industry?

Public relations gives an organization a chance to tell its own story and relate with its stakeholders at a very personal level. The ever-changing social media landscape carries PR right along with it because these are the tools we use to tell those stories. Having worked in the Water sector for the last 7 years, we are still lagging in terms of uptake and use of digital marketing tools. I am particularly excited about Artificial Intelligence and how its disrupting the way we do business. Chat GPT is the current buzz, if you don't know that yet. Stop here and look that up!

Q2

What skills have you acquired over the years and how have these skills propelled your public relations journey?

Having a background in TV and news production shaped my work ethic and style which came in handy when I switched to Public Relations. Media is generally high pressure and fast moving 90% of the time, coming from that environment helped me meet and exceed deadlines while seamlessly executing high and mid-level events sometimes at very short notice.

Working in the water sector which is a largely an engineering (science) environment, budgets lean towards ensuring the core business of water production and supply runs and so therefore it follows that public relations/communication doesn't get the budget needed to realize objectives. So, over the years, I have learnt the art of persuasion and collaboration with various business process owners to get the work done and where we need to borrow from a certain vote, we do so.

Q3

Who are some of the historical women who have inspired you over the years? How have they inspired you?

Nobel Laureate Prof. Wangari Maathai said some words that I sadly came to find out after she had passed on; Prof Mathaai said (paraphrased) "I will be a hummingbird; I will do the best I can". We can't solve all the organizations problem or the country's for that matter, but am I doing the best I can with the resources I have? Hopefully when I move on from my current assignment, I will have inspired a few of those I leave behind to do their best always.

Q4

What's the best advice you can give young and upcoming women in the industry?

Do it Afraid!! I cannot count the number of times I have done assignments that I felt were out of my depth. Do it anyway, you have what it takes.

Q5

What would you like to see in the PR profession in the next 5 years?

I'd like to see the industry finally get regulated. I think that regulation is the one thing that will seal a lot of loop holes in the practice. It's been a long time coming.

Q6

What are some of the challenges that women face in the PR journey and how can they be solved?

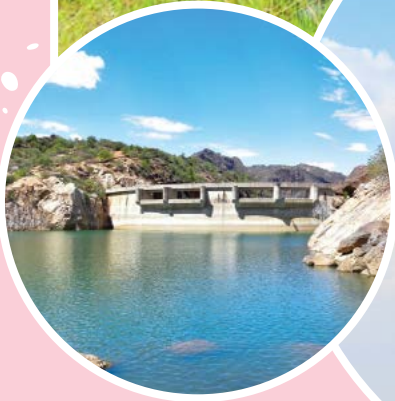
The playing field is not level for men and women due to societal roles and expectations in all professional fields not just PR. Nursing and adoptive mothers can have a smoother transition back to work if there was better uptake of the Health Act of 2017, where the employer is required to establish breastfeeding stations with necessary equipment and facilities and to grant all breastfeeding employees paid breaks, in addition to regular time-off for meals. When you think about it, the investment the company makes is minimal compared to the hours' employees dedicate to the business.

Parting Shot

Do the right thing even when it's unpopular, which is most times!

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KUI KINYANJUI

Communications and Policy Consultant

Kui is a transformational external affairs leader with high level global stakeholder experience. She works to ensure visibility and deliver meaningful impact in unique and innovative ways through communications, stakeholder engagements and sustainable impact.



Q1

What excites you about the Public Relations industry?

The world of business is evolving, and storytelling is adapting to meet an increasingly complex kaleidoscope of needs for companies. I believe that there are significant opportunities in this new landscape: where communications professionals can tell the stories of their organizations against the backdrop of significant social change. For me, PR is more than just media or internal relations, it is the ability to assure that organization's remain relevant as they build content for investors, stakeholders, and social influencers – all while promoting sustainable business practices.

Q2

What skills have you acquired over the years and how have these skills propelled your public relations journey?

When I started my career, I was primarily a print journalist focusing on the business agenda in Kenya. As a journalist, I was able to enhance my skills to adapt to tell stories through a variety of formats such as film, sound and digital - all while deepening my focus on the emerging African tech sector. I then joined the world of corporate communications, where I aimed to create impactful and measurable communications for a wide spectrum of audiences. I later evolved become a public policy leader tasked with guiding good governance practices while informing business decisions, including being responsible for commercial targets.

Currently, I am building capacity for content delivery in the start-up and sustainable business arenas, which form areas of personal interest and growth for me. My career has been founded in the belief that as long as I am willing to adapt and focus on being agile, there are no challenges that are insurmountable. I indulge my entrepreneurial spirit by ensuring that every opportunity is enabling growth for my aspirations.

Q3

Who are some of the historical women who have inspired you over the years? How have they inspired you?

I've tried to 'localize' this list as much as I can. Prof. Wangari Maathai exemplifies the undaunting spirit of an African woman. Mary Okello's chain of schools have created generations of future leaders and she also created opportunities for women to access funding by forming the only women's bank in Africa, to empower women who were previously underserved. Captain Irene Koki is able to harness the magic of flight and break barriers by being the first black female pilot in her class as she does so. I admire Serena William's pivot to become an impactful investing leader. Her investments primarily focus on

early-stage start-ups that enhance opportunities for underserved women. I am also inspired by Kenyan-born Vanessa Kingori, who is the first female publisher for British Vogue. Her impact in the world of publishing and journalism is incredibly inspiring.

The unifying theme for many of the women listed here is that they work to ensure that no one gets left behind by the progress they have created. Many of my heroines are people who are closer to home, the ones who drive true inspiration as they impact lives. I am blessed to know many women who do this every day.

Q4

What's the best advice you can give young and upcoming women in the industry?

I would highlight five key tips:

Be Agile. The world is changing at exponential speed. A year ago, Artificial Intelligence was a concept, today it's a megatrend. So professionals should learn to adapt to the shifts, be able to pivot and remain agile. Take charge of your growth. Many female professionals tend to let their careers happen to them, instead of being intentional about their growth. Being able to shape your career enables growth.

Learn Furiously and Continuously. Your learning cannot end when you've completed your degree. Taking an interest in new areas and specializations gives you access to new skills and potentially, new jobs as well.

Make Time for Life. Work is incredibly fulfilling, but many women tend to sink all their energies in their careers and neglect other areas. Being able to balance family, friends, rest and play is equally important.

Have a Board of Directors. All good companies have a board made up of people with various backgrounds and interests to provide oversight and governance. You can adopt a similar approach by having a circle of advisors who are able to guide and advise on your career growth.

Q5

What would you like to see in the PR profession in the next 5 years?

As companies and organizations operate in increasingly complex and multi-stakeholder environments, communications professionals are taking on a greater role in shaping company strategy and growth. This is informing how companies approach commercial ventures and investing, and be heavily influenced by social impact. Already, many companies are noting this value and are creating more space for dedicated external affairs representation in their C-suite.



In five years, it's my hope that more companies adopt this approach and integrate more functions such as communication, marketing, and research into the role. In Government, there has been increasingly rich use of communication skills during campaigns and electioneering periods. Today, there is growing appreciation that communications also have an expanded role in shaping how key stakeholders such as the public remain informed and updated on day-to-day government business. These roles should become more formalized in the next few years.

Q6

What are some of the challenges that women face in the PR journey and how can they be solved?

Trust is the currency in which we trade as PR professionals. Early on in my career, I learned that providing a true and accurate evaluation to my audiences was more important than telling the client what they wanted to hear. Over time, that builds trust. Another key learning was that for PR to be relevant and meaningful to the organization, the professionals' relationships across the organization need to be deep and cross-functional. PR needs to be representative of the entire company. This helps resolve another big challenge in our profession, which is how we remain relevant in the rapidly shifting business landscapes we navigate. Being able to effectively communicate the impact and power of the campaigns we create within the organizations where we work is directly proportional to our perceived value. So, we must "PR" ourselves to demonstrate the value that communications can bring to an organization.

Parting Shot

Every day you get to write the next chapter in your story. Make it count.



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Public Relations Society of Kenya

LYDIA ROSASI

Co-Founder

Ladies with Disability Development Forum



Lydia Rosasi is highly committed to assisting Kenyan youth and adults living with disabilities in Migory County, Kenya through her initiative, 'Ladies with Disability Development Forum.' Her mantra is, "Become so good that you cannot be ignored."

Q1

What excites you about the Public Relations industry?

The fact that it does not limit one to a particular area, from building relationships with the media, investors, government, community, customers, to create impact that upgrades organizations. This is exciting!

Q2

What skills have you acquired over the years and how have these skills propelled your public relations journey?

I have over time acquired public speaking skills as well as people skills. These have helped me create lasting relationships effortlessly. Relationships in this industry are important in executing assignments and in succeeding.

Q3

Who are some of the historical women who have inspired you over the years? How have they inspired you?

I am greatly inspired by Wangari Maathai. I am inspired by her humanitarian actions to fight the vicious cycle of environmental degradation and poverty in a way that seems ahead of its time in integrating sustainable development with women's rights. The risks of climate change are more evident and her works in environment conservation are validated.

Q4

What's the best advice you can give young and upcoming women in the industry?

This world is full of people who do their duty half-heartedly, grudgingly, and poorly. Don't be like them. Whatever is your duty, do it as fully and perfectly as your possibly can.

Additionally, the best advice I can give a female newcomer is to lean in. Lean in to conversations, projects, and anything you're a part of - don't let people and situations discourage you from speaking up. Your thoughts and opinions matter. You can achieve or learn anything you set your mind to, no matter the level.

In order to maintain a work-life balance, I use my planner to identify gaps in my schedule to practice self-care and take mental health breaks. Maintaining a work-life balance is incredibly important to my professional life. It's all about ensuring you have enough time during the day to get all your work done while being as productive as possible.

Q5

What would you like to see in the PR profession in the next 5 years?

One of the things that excites me about PR especially in the Kenyan space is the introduction of The Institute of Public Relations and Communication Management Bill. I would like to see it come into effect. I would also love to see the representation of people with disability in all of the functions as a way of enhancing inclusivity and diversity within the PR space.

Q6

What are some of the challenges that women face in the PR journey and how can they be solved?

One of the challenges is lack of confidence, inability to speak up and advocate for themselves. In an industry where the high level executives are mostly male dominated, women are often ignored, not taken seriously or just overlooked. Women in PR should be encouraged to have their voices heard and express their valuable ideas no matter who is in the room listening.

Parting Shot

Be the best you can be and cultivate positive and healthy relationships!



Public Relations Society of Kenya

ROSE THUO

Gender & Climate Champion (UN Climate Change network)

Africa Head of Communications and Marketing, WWF International



Rose is dedicated to making space for young gifted people of color, she lives and walks the talk. Her mission cumulated in the collaborative awards 'Top 100 Young Conservationists', G-Pange HIV prevention programme, and the SHUGA series among others.

Q1

What excites you about the Public Relations industry?

The Public Relations industry is dedicated to creating experiences that emotionally connect people with the brand creators. Our industry works to integrate innovation and technology into strategy communications approaches.

Q2

What skills have you acquired over the years and how have these skills propelled your public relations journey?

Through the years, I have acquired several skills through experimenting with digital channels, technology and collaborating with PR professionals in other industries. This has seen me succeed in several assignments I have undertaken. With time, and after both successful and failed experiences, I now know how and when to use various tools to augment communications plans strategically.

Q3

Who are some of the historical women who have inspired you over the years? How have they inspired you?

Rose Kimotho, my first employer and mentor inspired me tremendously. Once when I took three-night shifts at Kameme 101.1FM, she looked at me and said, "You are some kind of special, Rose. Let nothing change you but let it form you."

Betty Radier, also my line manager and colleague who saw my PR approach as unique, strategic and what the clients needed most, pushed me to excellence. She went on to make me regional PR Director.

Esther Mwhaki, a line manager, mentor and friend. Esther has continued to be an example of being positive feminine leadership energy.

Q4

What's the best advice you can give young and upcoming women in the industry?

My advice to those coming into the industry is: "You are what we've never dared give. You have within you all that you require to succeed. You may fail sometimes, and there is always a lesson in that. Believe in you and others. Collaborate. Triumph. Love what you do. Love who you are becoming".

Q5

What would you like to see in the PR profession in the next 5 years?

Now and in the next five years, I hope to hear of more people of color being celebrated for their outstanding work.

Q6

What are some of the challenges that women face in the PR journey and how can they be solved?

Women face the same challenges as men in this industry. The expectation of coming up with creative and concrete solutions to problems. Moreover, as a woman, it will be expected that you put in the same hours as the men. Being singularly true to yourself and good at your career will mean setting boundaries for yourself and others. Being a woman, gives you a uniqueness and power - use it wisely and gently.

Parting Shot

Looking back, I see the walls we brought down with our triumphs were only in our imaginations. There were no walls. There were no ceilings. In everything, believe.



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Public Relations Society of Kenya

WARUGURU KIAI

Board Director , The Youth Agenda



Waruguru Kiai is a women and youth worker who is passionate about leadership and good governance. She is also a writer who uses humor and satire to address societal issues.

Q1

What excites you about the Public Relations industry?

I have been involved in developing and implementing crisis management strategies for personalities and organizations in the online space and I will admit; the thrill never gets old. The ability to walk an individual/personality through a crisis, professionally, is a duty that exposes our humanity, empathy, and compassion.

Q2

What skills have you acquired over the years and how have these skills propelled your public relations journey?

As an eager learner, I must admit that my research, social media management and overall communication skills are in good health, making me a valuable asset in the field. I hope to contribute positively to the changing local and global working of the PR field in light of the technological disruptions at play.

Q3

Who are some of the historical women who have inspired you over the years? How have they inspired you?

Growing up, I admired Professor Wangari Maathai because of her authentic brand, black skin and wild hair. As a black girl, I sub consciously found myself seeking out women who talked and looked like me. In Wangari Maathai, I found my reflection. In the recent past, I have come to greatly Admire MTN Uganda CEO, Ms. Sylvia Mulinge. She is a collaborative and empathic leader who puts a face to the ever-changing journeys of women professionals across the world.

Q4

What's the best advice you can give young and upcoming women in the industry?

Allow me to borrow from one of Africa's renowned poets Ijeoma Umebinywo who wrote, and I quote "... Start now. Start where you are. Start with fear. Start with pain. Start with doubt. Start with hands shaking. Start with voice trembling but start. Start and don't stop. Start where you are, with what you have. Just Start".

Q5

What would you like to see in the PR profession in the next 5 years?

I would love to see the PR Profession adapt and offer disruptive perspectives to the ever-growing digital space. Our voices are needed to shape professional, beneficial and customer-oriented relationships in the face of digital disruptions taking place.

Q6

What are some of the challenges that women face in the PR journey and how can they be solved?

The stories of women serving in high-level decision-making positions are not being told. If we hope to motivate and encourage the younger generation of women interested or joining the PR field, we must motivate them by pointing out and highlighting trailblazers in the industry. Documenting success stories of seasoned female PR Professionals, will provide a much-needed inter-generational bridge, that will consequently ensure that women in PR, are both seen and heard, for years to come.

Parting Shot

Allow yourself to be curious about anything and everything. Step into the unknown; boldly, head high, one step at a time. Do not be afraid. After all, curiosity ONLY kills cats, and you are not a cat!

SYLVIA KUYATEI

Principal Corporate Communications, National Land Commission.

Sylvia is an accomplished communication professional with proven skills in public relations, media relations, marketing and events management.



Q1

What excites you about the Public Relations industry?

I am passionate about promoting an organization's public image while focusing on its communication both internally and externally. I am also keen on fostering an organization's goodwill with its stakeholders.

Q2

What skills have you acquired over the years and how have these skills propelled your public relations journey?

I graduated with B.A in Communication from Daystar University, I have worked extensively with few organizations as a key Communication person. All these have impacted my communication skills and expertise. I keep on learning and growing as time goes by.

Q3

Who are some of the historical women who have inspired you over the years? How have they inspired you?

Jen Psaki who previously served as White House Communications Director in Barack Obama's administration from 2015-2017 inspires me. I have followed her career and advancement and I think many women can learn a great deal from the strides she made. Her prior roles such as Communications Director for congressman Joseph Crowley were executed with great ease. I admire her work ethics and professionalism.

Q4

What's the best advice you can give young and upcoming women in the industry?

It's no longer enough for a public relations team to be focused solely on corporate communications or consumer communications. As you come into this space, prepare to keep up to date with the ever changing trends and the new technologies. Finally, poor internal communications is one of the leading causes of negative company press, you should have a pulse on everything that's going on including what's being said on mainstream media, gutter press and even social platforms such as Tiktok.

Q5

What would you like to see in the PR profession in the next 5 years?

The fact that communication is both a science and an art, I would love to see PR shifting from trying to reach an audience, to connecting people with distinct informative needs.

Q6

What are some of the challenges that women face in the PR journey and how can they be solved?

Women face gender inequality especially in job roles, promotions and in decision making at the management level. The playing ground is not level. However we have to ask the men in the PR industry to stand with us and help us to advocate for better treatment, equal wages and respect.

Parting Shot

"Publicity is absolutely critical. A good PR story is infinitely more effective than a front-page ad."- Richard Branson.



Public Relations Society of Kenya

JUDY SIRIMA

Assistant Director, Public Communications,
Ministry of Health, Pharmacy and Poisons Board.



Judy is an exceptional leader who uses her strategy and skills to communicate government policies and programs to the public. She designs and leads programs at all levels, and across all sectors.

Q1

What excites you about the Public Relations industry?

The thing that excites me about the public relations industry is the ability to make real impact. The ability to shape public opinion, influence behavior, and drive real change.

Q2

What skills have you acquired over the years and how have these skills propelled your public relations journey?

Over the years, I have developed strong writing and communication skills, media relations and strategic thinking. These have propelled my journey in PR in the government sector.

Q3

Who are some of the historical women who have inspired you over the years? How have they inspired you?

Wangari Maathai, Kenyan environmentalist and political activist, Graca Rachel women rights advocate, Malala Yousafzai a Pakistan education activist, and Oprah Winfrey an American media executive among others have inspired me over the years.

These women have inspired me to be passionate about what I do to promote public health. They have taught me that one person can make a difference in the society. They have inspired me to take action and get involved in public service.

Q4

What's the best advice you can give young and upcoming women in the industry?

Believe in yourself. Have confidence in your abilities and trust your instinct, network and build relationships, embrace failure, be resilient, mentor and be mentored, stay informed, keep learning, empower and support other women.

Q5

What would you like to see in the PR profession in the next 5 years?

I would like to see greater integration of technology with the increasing use of AI. This may include the use of chatbot and automated reporting. I also think it is important to increase focus on data-driven PR and evidence-based decision making. Greater use of visuals and interactive content to engage audience and to content with audience emotions through story telling is critical too.

Q6

What are some of the challenges that women face in the PR journey and how can they be solved?

Women go through a lot of challenges in the industry. Some of these are the lack of representation. We are underrepresented in leadership positions in the PR industry. We also have a challenge with work-life balance; gender based bias and discrimination including sexist comments; unequal opportunities; pay disparities; stereotypes that limit their opportunities for growth and success; limited access to mentorship and sponsorship opportunities among others.

I believe we can work towards increasing representation in leadership positions by encouraging women to pursue careers in PR and advocate for more inclusion in the workplace. We can also encourage mentorship and sponsorship programs to help women develop their careers; implement diversity and inclusion programs to address bias and discrimination; address pay disparities (implement policies to ensure women are paid well); promote work-life balance by implementing flexible work arrangements such as telecommuting and flexible schedules to help women balance career and life.

Parting Shot

The public relations industry presents both opportunities and challenges for women, but with right support and resources, women can thrive in their PR careers.

TERRYANNE CHEBET

Senior Correspondent and Business Development Lead Kenya,
CNBC Africa.



Terryanne is a storyteller and Africa drives her passion. From the newsroom, to brands, and to people, she passionately tells stories that showcase the diversity of Africa's Economy.

Q1

What excites you about the public relations industry?

The ability and responsibility that we have to inform, educate, and shape opinions. This excites me.

Q2

What skills have you acquired over the years and how have these skills propelled your public relations journey?

Over the years I have grown to be great at networking, listening and writing. I've understood that people first want to work with people they respect and like. I have learned to listen, in order to truly understand all the aspects of brands and people for me to truly execute a great PR strategy.

Q3

Who are some of the historical women who have inspired you over the years? How have they inspired you?

Oprah Winfrey is an inspiration to me. She charted her path and has never looked back; she delivers with skill and with an infectious passion. Maya Angelou also inspires me, her writing is impeccable and speaks to everyone no matter your gender, age, or history.

Q4

What's the best advice you can give young and upcoming women in the industry?

My advice for upcoming professionals is to learn all they can learn because fear is driven by lack of knowledge in the subject matter. Read every day, and keep tabs with global news and trends. Above all, keep the right company!

Q5

What would you like to see in the PR profession in the next 5 years?

I'd like to see bolder strategies, unique propositions that will make moves, and I also hope more governments will embrace PR.

Q6

What are some of the challenges that women face in the PR journey and how can they be solved?

The biggest challenge that women face may be within themselves. Many enter this craft thinking they can only rise to the level of a PR executives. Women need to look deep within and know that they can also be great managers and amazing Chief Executive Officers.

Parting Shot

Public Relations is more than we regularly do, even as PR practitioners. We should go beyond the extra mile and truly deliver world class communications and PR strategies for brands, people and governments.

ABOUT US

The Media Council of Kenya is an independent national institution established by the Media Council Kenya Act, No. 46 of 2013 for purposes of setting of media standards and ensuring compliance with those standards as envisaged by Article 34(5) on Freedom of the Media of the Constitution of Kenya.

The MCK is guided by the vision of a society where media freedom is respected, upheld, protected and maintained and where journalists, media practitioners and media houses are professional, responsible and adhere to media ethics.

OUR MANDATE

Broadly, the Council executes its (15) fifteen regulatory functions under the following areas:

AFRICA MEDIA ACADEMY

- Professional Development Courses
- Journalism Skills Development
- Workshops, Seminars and Bootcamps
- Setting Training Standards and Curriculum Development
- College Inspection and Course Accreditation

ACCREDITATION

- Promoting and enhancing Ethical and Professional Standards amongst Journalists and Media
- Registration of Journalists, Media Practitioners and Media Enterprises
- Compile and maintain a register of accredited Journalists, Media Practitioners, Media Enterprises and Sector Stakeholders

Accreditation Hotline: 0110131447

Journalists Verification Toll Free Number: 40314

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ADVISORY

- Public Sector Media Policies
- Public Sector Media Monitoring
- Public Sector Communication Policies
- Access to Information

ADJUDICATION

Through the Complaints Commission the Council offers: Dispute Resolution, Adjudication, Mediation and Appeals

ADVOCACY

- Ensure Media Freedom, Plurality and Independence
- Media Safety and Protection
- Media Literacy and Access to Information
- Media Ethics and Sustainability

Journalists Safety Hotline: 0702 222 111

ANALYSIS

- Media content analyses
- Media research and status of media surveys
- Media ethics incident reports
- Media research reports



PUBLIC RELATIONS SOCIETY
OF KENYA

CORPORATE SOCIAL INVESTMENT 101



26TH – 28TH JUNE, 2023
NAIROBI, KENYA

EARLY CAREER (0 TO 5 YEARS)
30 CPD POINTS
MEMBER – 35,000.00
NON MEMBER – 45,000.00

Course Content Highlights

- Introduction and an overview of CSI
- CSI principles and essentials and current trends
- Importance of CSI to organizations and stakeholders in the modern day
- Different approaches to CSI
- Integrating CSI into business operations and benefits of embedding CSI into organization culture
- Presenting a business plan for CSI initiatives
- Success stories of successful organizations that have adopted CSI



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Public Relations Society of Kenya



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Public Relations Society of Kenya

TABITHA MUTE MI

Manager, Corporate Communication,
Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission.



Tabitha Mutemi is a corporate communications, media and electoral democracy practitioner with over 20 years of hands-on experience. She is the Chairperson, Association of Professional Broadcasters - APB and is also one of the nine Members of the Media Council of Kenya.

Q1

What excites you about the Public Relations industry?

I am excited about public relations because it is a fast growing profession and we are now seeing more practitioners getting to the c-suite and going further to lead c-suites.

Q2

What skills have you acquired over the years and how have these skills propelled your public relations journey?

I have honed my skills in managing expectations, stakeholder management, corporate events planning and brand management. I have become an excellent organizer, planner, more detailed and accurate in managing brands and relationships. These have been keen in my career.

Q3

Who are some of the historical women who have inspired you over the years? How have they inspired you?

The Late Wangari Maathai inspires me. She is the 1st African woman nobel peace prize winner and the 1st female Professor and Scholar from East and Central Africa to earn a doctorate. She played an active role in Kenya's democratic struggle.

I am also inspired by the Late Miriam Makeba fondly known as Mama Africa. She was a great song writer and performer. She campaigned against apartheid and white minority rule in South Africa. The Late Sita Bella Cameroon's and Africa's 1st female filmmaker inspires me too. These women were passionate, industrious, resilient, and knowledgeable.

Q4

What's the best advice you can give young and upcoming women in the industry?

Be on the driver's seat and have a proactive public relations plan to help leverage opportunities, manage crisis, and monitor progress.

Q5

What would you like to see in the PR profession in the next 5 years?

I would like to see the use of more advanced PR tools to assist quantify business impacts. We also need to deliberately diversify outreach and connect with new platforms and content mediums. It is now important to utilize digital public relations as part of bigger integrated marketing and brand management.

Q6

What are some of the challenges that women face in the PR journey and how can they be solved?

Women face many challenges such as managing expectations, sexual harassment, maintaining work-life balance and attaining gender equality at the work place. We can work to eradicate these by developing and implementing positive intervention policies and by building and maintaining a supportive corporate culture that embraces diversity.

Parting Shot

PR is about creating and packaging the right content for the right people and sending it through the right channel to create strong brands, manage reputations, and build relationships.

NOW
AVAILABLE



Your CELEBRATION
AWAITS...

EXPERIENCE
A SPARKLING NEW TASTE

KSHS.
1700

EXCESSIVE ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION IS HARMFUL TO YOUR HEALTH.
NOT FOR SALE TO PERSONS UNDER THE AGE OF 18 YEARS.

Public Relations Society of Kenya

MERCY NDIRANGU

Country Manager, Planate Group.



Mercy is the Country Manager for Planate Management Group. She is passionate about building bridges between organizations and the publics through effective communication.

Q1

What excites you about the public relations industry?

The PR industry is dynamic and fast-paced in nature. As a PR professional, I'm constantly adapting to changes in technology, media trends, and consumer behavior, thus making me flexible, creative, and innovative.

Another exciting aspect of the PR industry is the opportunity to work on various projects and campaigns across different industries and sectors. I have built diverse skill sets and worked with multiple clients and stakeholders. The impact of PR can also be enriching. Effective PR campaigns can help to shape public opinion, influence policy decisions, and promote important causes and messages.

I have been involved in campaigns that have made a difference in the community of people living with disabilities in Kenya and East Africa. The PR industry is constantly evolving and growing. With the rise of social media, digital marketing, and data analytics, technology has allowed us to access new tools and technologies that can help us be more effective in our work.

Q2

What skills have you acquired over the years and how have these skills propelled your public relations journey?

Communication: Effective communication is the foundation of the PR industry; as a PR professional, I write clearly, speak persuasively, and listen actively. Good communication skills are essential for building relationships with clients, stakeholders, and the media.

Creativity: PR campaigns require a great deal of creativity; as a PR professional, creativity has enabled me to develop engaging and impactful messages that resonate with the target audiences. The ability to think outside the box and develop innovative ideas is valuable in the PR industry.

Strategic thinking: I have been able to develop and implement strategic plans that align with the overall goals of my clients.

Relationship-building: PR is about building relationships with clients, the media, and other stakeholders. Over time I have established trust and credibility with my contacts and developed lasting relationships that will benefit my clients.

Adaptability: The PR industry is constantly evolving, and I have been able to adapt to changes in technology, media trends, and consumer behaviour.

Problem-solving: In PR, unexpected challenges and crises can arise anytime. I have been able to employ

problem-solving techniques on my feet and have come up with practical solutions to problems that my clients face.

Q3

Who are some of the historical women who have inspired you over the years? How have they inspired you?

Bessie Coleman has inspired me a great deal. She was the first African American woman to earn a pilot's license. She used her fame and influence to promote racial equality and encourage young women to pursue their dreams. Her tenacity and perseverance in facing discrimination inspires me and shows me that I can use the challenges I face to promote important causes and messages for the betterment of humanity.

Q4

What's the best advice you can give young and upcoming women in the industry?

Be confident and assertive: PR is a fast-paced and competitive industry, and it's essential to have confidence in your abilities and ideas. Speak up, share your opinions with your colleagues and clients, and be bold and take charge of projects.

Build strong relationships: PR is all about relationships, so invest time building and maintaining strong connections with journalists, clients, and other stakeholders. Be proactive about networking and seek mentorship opportunities to learn from more experienced professionals in the industry.

Develop a diverse skill set: PR is a multifaceted field that requires a range of skills, including writing, media relations, digital marketing, data analysis, and crisis management. Seek opportunities to develop these skills through internships, continuing education, and on-the-job experience.

Stay up to date on industry trends: The PR industry is constantly evolving, so it's essential to stay informed about the latest trends and technologies. Read industry publications, attend conferences and webinars, and participate in online forums and social media groups to keep up to date.

Embrace new challenges: PR can be challenging and sometimes unpredictable, but it's also gratifying. Be bold and take on new projects or try new approaches, even if they feel outside your comfort zone. Be adaptable and willing to learn from your successes and failures.





Q5

What would you like to see in the PR profession in the next 5 years?

Emphasis on data-driven PR: The PR profession will increasingly rely on data and analytics to measure the impact and effectiveness of campaigns. This will require PR professionals to have a solid understanding of data analytics and be able to extract insights from data to guide their strategies.

Integration of AI and automation: This could range from using chatbots to interact with journalists and customers to using AI to analyze media coverage and social media sentiment.

Focus on diversity and inclusion: This will include promoting diverse representation within agencies, advocating for more diverse voices in media coverage, and developing culturally sensitive and inclusive campaigns.

Greater collaboration with other departments: The partnership will require PR professionals to have a broader understanding of business strategy and work closely with other teams to develop cohesive campaigns that support organizational goals.

Q6

What are some of the challenges that women face in the PR journey and how can they be solved?

Some of the challenges that women face are gender bias, unequal pay and lack of female representation. Women

are underrepresented in leadership positions in the PR industry, leading to a lack of mentorship and role models. Women also face the challenge of work-life balance. We are often expected to balance work and family responsibilities, which can be challenging in a demanding and fast-paced industry like PR.

To address these challenges, I personally have devised several strategies such as providing networking and branding mentorship programs to provide guidance, support, and advocacy to young and upcoming women. I advice women to be their number one advocates. It is okay to be bold, to speak up, and to support oneself in the workplace.

I would like to see management teams and institutions promoting diversity and inclusion. This can be done through Offering flexible work arrangements. Organizations should also encourage mentorship and sponsorship for parents to encourage girls to pursue careers in STEM fields, including PR. This will help to increase the representation of women in these industries. The governments on the other hand should implement policies to promote equality. Provide funding for education and training programs.

Parting Shot

African women in PR, let's Keep being resilient, tenacious, and unwavering; continue navigating this industry's challenges. Let us elevate and embrace our voice and unique perspective.



Public Relations Society of Kenya

CATHERINE BUTAKI

Deputy Director Public Affairs and Communications,
Kenya Rural Roads Authority.

Catherine is a dynamic, passionate and versatile Communications and Public Relations specialist with extensive experience in the Public Sector, in different ministries and departments.



Q1

What excites you about the Public Relations industry?

What excites me in public relations from the onset, is good customer service. This is depicted by turning a complainant and critic to a convert and champion of your cause. I am excited about customer service and offering solutions that make it easy for those seeking services to be satisfied.

I am also excited about social corporate responsibility and community transformation and impact. The happy faces you see when you have provided school furniture, participated in a golf tournament or marathon to aid forest conservation, dam rehabilitation, or facilitate heart corrective surgery to the needy.

Stakeholder engagement also excites me. When one comes to a point of agreement and consensus to give room for the development agenda to be implanted in a community, is a win- win situation.

Event management is fulfilling too. The set-up, set down and ensuring that a function goes according to script. The layout, service providers, (sound, décor, food, tents and chairs) all aligned to make a memorable event. More so, when it is a presidential function, and you have to ensure the security and protocol officers know you are the contact person for the organization. Otherwise, it becomes very difficult to ensure all things work out well. Presidential functions are unique and stretching. I must say all things PR excite me. It is the wearing of different hats, playing different roles, achieving different deliverables and results.

Q2

What skills have you acquired over the years and how have these skills propelled your public relations journey?

I have an undergraduate degree in communications, postgraduate diploma in communications and an Executive Masters degree in Diplomacy and Foreign Policy. These qualifications have ushered me through different doors through my career journey.

In addition to these, I have added on skills in public speaking, customer care, report writing and photography, which have enabled me to perfect my written and oral communication and document events for posterity. From time to time, I take on the role of a moderator or Master of Ceremony for events at my current work place.

The Kenya School of Government has played a big role in enabling me acquire leadership skills, through their two signature programs, Senior Leadership Development Program, and Senior Management Course. These two

programs have allowed me raise to senior positions in the public sector. The public sector communication units are very diverse and dynamic. So, I have had the privilege of working at NACADA as a program officer – communications, at the Pan African News Agency (PANA) desk which was then based at the Ministry of Information Headquarters, as a Public Relations Officer and Personal Assistant to a Permanent Secretary at the then Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. Each of these roles brought new opportunities and challenges, and I had to adjust and adapt to each. The common denominator was knowledge of public relations accompanied by people skills.

I must add, in every phase there was a mentor whom I would ask questions or who would urge me on to move, progress, acquire skills, and learn all I could at every stage. I have also taken coaching classes, and I must mention a specific one called The ASCEND leadership program, offered by an organization called Talent Gurus which is a HR consultancy firm. This helped me crystalize a lot of things in terms of doing a SWOT analysis, so I could channel my energies to what is important for now, and in the future.

Q3

Who are some of the historical women who have inspired you over the years? How have they inspired you?

Prof. Olive Mugenda – Former Vice Chancellor Kenyatta university. This is a woman who has held many positions in the public sector and played key roles in decision making. Having listened to her story and how she rose to be all that she is today, the underlying factors were consistency, resilience, collaborations, networking, hard work and being bold and courageous. As a result, I too have embraced these values in my day to day assignments as I serve the members of the public.

Gina Din Kariuki. A Public Relations guru in Kenya. As I began my career, she was a household name in the PR space. She pioneered a lot of things especially setting up a communications agency, when many did not even know what that was. She is a trailblazer for the woman in PR and has made it possible for us to dream and know our dreams are valid, and we too can achieve our goals.

Q4

What's the best advice you can give young and upcoming women in the industry?

As a young person getting into the public relations career, I would advise one to be flexible, adaptable, and teachable. Also, keep time for your appointments and assignments always! Lateness is considered impolite and the tired excuse of I am held in a traffic jam, is unacceptable.



Coming into the job market with a rigid mind-set will cost you time and opportunities. Many employers want people who can take instructions, do the assignment with minimal supervision, and deliver. In fact, most job adverts have these exact same words. So, I would advise come in with an attitude of growth to learn all you can with the opportunities offered. They could be simple tasks such as sitting at a customer care desk to direct visitors where to go or responding to emails on behalf of the Public relations office, or doing press briefs and documentation. Do it with excellence and whole heartedly. In addition, be a reader. Read and explore all you can in the industry and work place you find yourself in. If it is the medical field read journals, learn the medical jargon and attend meetings, forums where these professionals are found. This is what enabled me move the corporate ladder with ease. Knowledge changes things, and the lack of it, as the good book says, you will perish.

I had a job where I took photos of those who were seeking Press cards from the Ministry of Information, it was routine, not inspiring at all and very mundane. But I showed up every day on time and did it. One day a senior officer was looking for my supervisor who was running late. I got invited to a meeting where I was the most junior officer, but because I was available and willing to learn, I was co-opted into a committee where my skills of minute taking were developed. Everyone assumes that because you have studied Public Relations you are definitely a word smith. This assignment eventually earned me an international trip which I had not requested for, but found me. Those habits developed early in my career have paid off and enabled me to sit at the table of decision making, where I currently work.

Q5

What would you like to see in the PR profession in the next 5 years?

Public Relations is very dynamic. What I envision is to have every top level leader both in public and private sector engage these professionals as a requirement and not when necessary. It should be embedded in policy documents and other Human Resource instruments, that a PR person must be part of top leadership or in management. This will ensure that you are at the decision making table from the start, and not called upon to craft messages for the media in times of a crisis or asked respond to matters which you have no knowledge off.

I would also like to see more PR professionals take up CEO roles in different organizations. Organizations will immensely benefit from the onset, because they receive a two in one package, so to speak. An individual who can engage with stakeholders, and at the same time comfortable with written words and is knowledgeable of the company's practices, mandate and role.



Q6

What are some of the challenges that women face in the PR journey and how can they be solved?

There is a book that I read recently and revolutionized my thoughts, habits and practice. "How women rise": Break the 12 habits holding you back; written by Sally Helgesen and Marshall Goldsmith. This book is a must read for any women in the corporate and professional space, because it describes our fears, and gives a solution to changing the narrative in the work space. Gleaning from this book helped to engage in this interview. So, some of the challenges that women face in PR is being seen as a person whose role is to greet, meet and offer refreshments at functions. This makes one not to be invited to serious conversations, but relegated to the back. As a woman, be visible and knowledgeable and engage in meaningful conversations at events.

Another challenge could be the working hours, they may not fall in the usual 8:00am – 5:00pm because of the type of assignments. So, one has to be adaptable and flexible and strike a balance of how much time you spend at work, and the other aspects of your life. From the start, be deliberate.

Parting Shot

Finally, I would like to quote one of my mentors who has inspired me. Be at the right time, at the right place with the right people doing the right thing. I am a person of faith so of course this resonates very well with my decision making. I keep checking each time I make a career move, and ask, is it the right time, do I have skills and competence to move. Is the organization the right one for me, are the people I am working helping me grow and explore my talents and gifts or they are stifling my potential and I am stagnating. Finally, am I doing my assignments with excellence, honesty, integrity, and consistency? This is the summary of what drives my career path in public relations.

International Women's Day



Celebrating Women in STEM

At KBL, we go beyond industry standards to make inclusion and diversity a business priority. Our aim is to continuously create an inclusive, collaborative culture, challenging all biases and stereotypes to fully reflect the diversity of the communities we serve and celebrating the uniqueness everyone brings.

We acknowledge women's contribution to the success of our business and are committed to taking concrete action to help move the needle forward on women's representation in **STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics)** related fields.

We have set up a distinct Inclusion and Diversity Framework which focuses on the entire value chain.

This framework is driven through Policies, programs and support structures that ensure we build, grow and retain our talent base and support the women within our entire value chain.

We want our employee base to fully reflect the diversity of the communities we serve because we are committed to celebrate the uniqueness that everyone brings.

KBL have an apprentice program for women in **STEM** to shift the gender representation within this sector.

Our aim is to absorb 10 of the trainees every year.

Here is what a few women in STEM at KBL had to share:



Dorothy Wanjiku Njoroge
Shift Brewer

“ I always knew I wanted to be part of STEM because through that, I will be part of the change and revolution in tomorrow's world. It was only possible through the opportunities provided by EABL, as they have taken women in STEM to heart. I started as a graduate trainee now, I am a team leader, in charge of overseeing the brewing processes. ”



Merlyne Florah
Technical Operator

“ EABL provides so many opportunities for women especially in STEM because when we started off, we were only 10 women at the site and now it is full of women! I embrace STEM by sharing engineering knowledge I get from here on my LinkedIn to create awareness on STEM. I encourage everyone to embrace STEM. ”



Norah Njeru Mwende
Brew House Operator

“ I always have the customer in mind when thinking of what innovations are needed to ensure that we meet their needs and deliver exceptional quality and safe products. I am happy to have been a part of the team that delivered the first White cap crisp! ”

Public Relations Society of Kenya

PATRICIA NDEDE

Chief Executive Officer, Simori Communications



Patricia is a strategic leader and the Chief Executive Officer of Simori Communications. She is fondly referred to as “Miss Fix It.”

Q1

What excites you about the Public Relations industry?

The fact that it is a playing field that practitioners can practice and exhibit their innermost talent in communication, persuasion and put their inner talent into play. Most times this is a skill that is God given and cannot be unlearned.

Q2

What skills have you acquired over the years and how have these skills propelled your public relations journey?

I have learnt the art of crisis management. I tend to thrive in crisis and be calm even in adversity. The Public Relations journey has been an enjoyable one for me because I have met many personalities, many who compliment my personality and I appreciate those who are also different in their own way. Learning to tolerate others and listening to their side of story has given reason to strike a balance in building empathy and at the same time managing the expectations.

Q3

Who are some of the historical women who have inspired you over the years? How have they inspired you?

Margaret Thatcher: She had a fabulous work-life Balance. She was the iron lady in the British Government and was still able to play wife and a mother at home. She garnered the title "Iron Lady" for her strong opinions, strict policy, and firm leadership.

Madonna: Madonna is also a woman who surprisingly inspires me. She is an ambassador of feminism, freedom and most importantly, equality. The world is now grappling with the idea of striking a balance with equality within various disciplines. She maintains that "I am because we are. We all bleed the same color. We all want to love and be loved. Same color. Be loved."

Harriet Tubman: Harriet Tubman was an American abolitionist and social activist who was born into slavery. Tubman escaped slavery and subsequently made 13 missions to rescue approximately 70 enslaved people, including family and friends, using the network of antislavery activists and safe houses known as the underground railroad. What a courageous woman!

Q4

What's the best advice you can give young and upcoming women in the industry?

I have several but I will keep them short. First, sometimes what you don't want is what you need. Second, tomorrow is never promised. Do the best you can right now with what you have. This is priceless and can never be bought. Third, do not let the fear of the unknown bring you down. Do you, and don't ever let anyone dictate what your ideal scenario should be. You are in charge of your own happiness. Focus and make it happen for you. Lastly, embrace consistency in your delivery and character. This goes hand in hand with reliability.

Q5

What would you like to see in the PR profession in the next 5 years?

I would like to see more women in PR taking up leadership roles in the corporate world and beyond. I also want to see PR practitioners on the high management table as decision makers.

Q6

What are some of the challenges that women face in the PR journey and how can they be solved?

We still live in a patriarchal society and most times women have to work three times as hard as their male counterparts to get recognized within their respective jurisdictions. Women have to put their best feet forward and continue in their conquest of shattering the glass ceiling. With time, a level playing ground will be achieved.

Parting shot

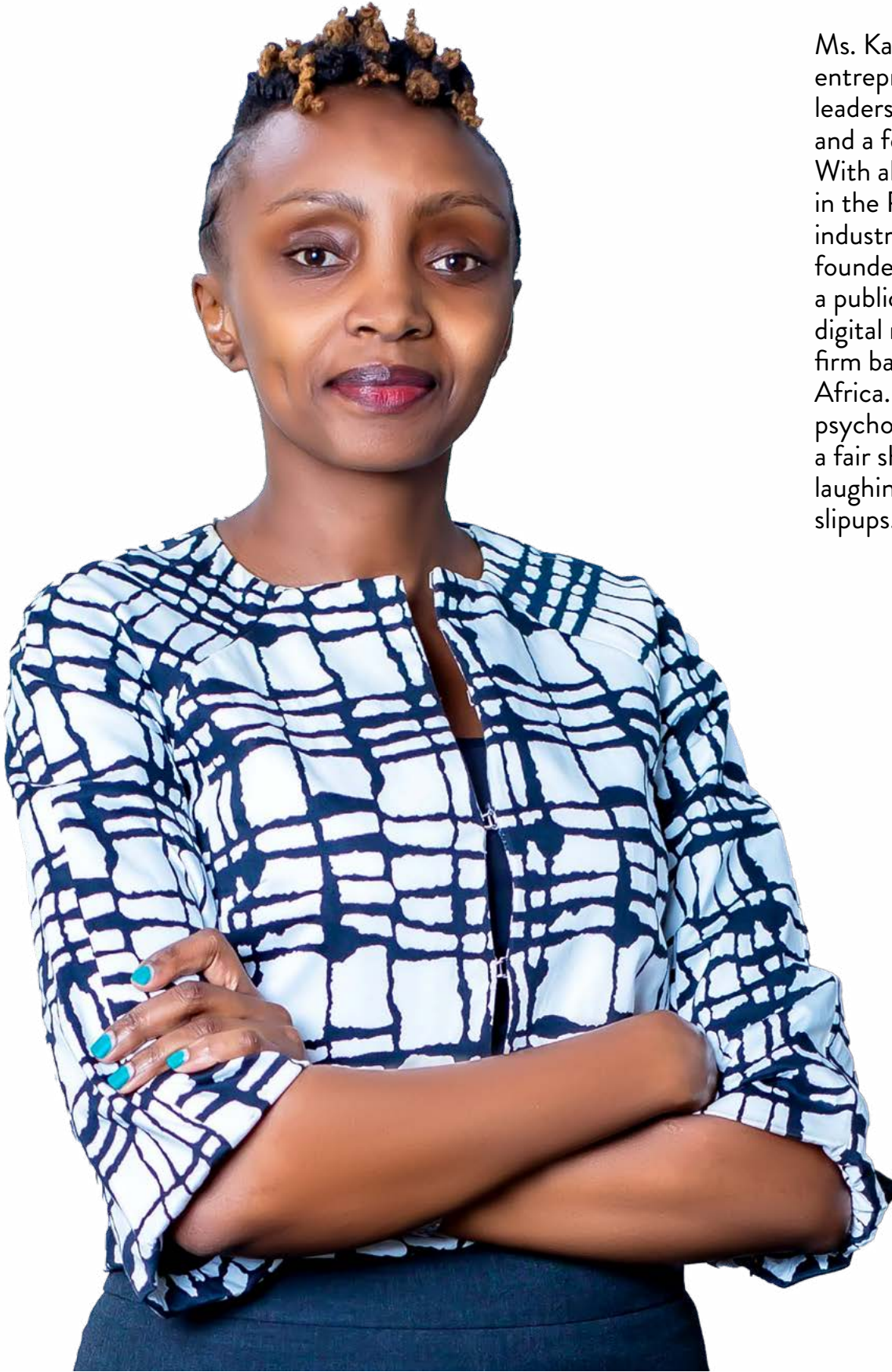
Do you. The world will adjust!



Public Relations Society of Kenya

WINFRED KAGWE

Lead Communications Consultant, Communicis Limited.



Ms. Kagwe is an entrepreneur, a thought leadership strategist, and a former journalist. With almost 15 years in the PR and Media industry, she is the founder of Communicis, a public relations and digital media advisory firm based in East Africa. Also, an aspiring psychologist, she spends a fair share of her time laughing at her own slipups.

Q1

What excites you about the Public Relations industry?

Its ever-changing nature. We work in fast-paced environments and as practitioners, we are expected to have a high level of knowledge and possibly answers to almost every question about life, industry, new technologies, and people. The fact that I can never know everything, reading, researching, learning, and trying to adapt to changes fast keeps me going. This is something I enjoy. I would be bored if I had to do routine tasks every day. There is not a boring day in PR.

Q2

What skills have you acquired over the years and how have these skills propelled your public relations journey?

The undervalued skill that I have been acquiring throughout my career is learning to manage expectations. Candidness, especially with clients, colleagues, and business partners, adds value to working relationships and helps minimize conflicts that may arise from mismatched goals. PR to me is not about promising instant oceans in the desert to clients, but about making the best of what they have as we build more. Of course, candid discussions are only effective if you are working with people who are receptive to honesty. For those who are not, well, I am still learning the skill of working with them.

Another skill learnt along the way is how to build invaluable relationships with peers, friends, and colleagues and maintaining the same while still remaining true to myself and my values. Sometimes, one may feel influenced to try and play the field like another person, follow other people's career paths, or conform to unrealistic expectations, which can set you up for major disappointment and actually derail your journey.

Q3

Who are some of the historical women who have inspired you over the years? How have they inspired you?

Historical? The woman who has inspired me the most is not exactly historical. Mercy Randa, the Founder and Managing Partner, P&L Consulting. We worked together for over half a decade and through a firm hand, she guided me from instances of self-doubt and challenged me to be poised, articulate, and nurture my leadership skills. Working in a woman-led firm had a major contribution to my own journey in terms of offering direction and also positioning me to make the way for other women. She also inspired me to hold high values of honesty, patience, and diligence and to have fun at work.

Q4

What is the best advice you can give young and upcoming women in the industry?

Practice your writing skills. You must read widely, listen intently and be able to write clearly for the purpose at hand. Be good to yourself. By this I mean take care of your mental health. It can be a taxing journey and highly stressful journey, and sometimes you may just not be fit for a particular organization. Do not force yourself to stay in a workplace you know is not working or tolerate any form of harassment. In the same way, do not be in hurry to take up any opportunity that comes across without first evaluating in detail what it means to you, whether it aligns with your values and the impact you would want to see. If it does not fit right, you can wait. There will be many opportunities.

Q5

What would you like to see in the PR profession in the next 5 years?

More young women running PR firms and communications departments of course! I know someone may say we have enough, but I believe can still use more. This can help to build a network of peer mentorships where young PR practitioners share knowledge among themselves and those behind them for the growth of the industry. I'm also hoping that the professionals, especially those of us in agencies can look at our clients more from an ecosystem perspective. If we look at businesses and organizations we represent as a unified unit to change the world, our PR advisory can contribute more towards solving some of the most pressing problems of our times.

Q6

What are some of the challenges that women face in the PR journey and how can they be solved?

I think the most pressing challenge is low self-efficacy. Young women practitioners, probably influenced by their unique experiences during the early stages of their careers, tend to question their own capabilities. So instead of going for what they know they can achieve, they allow themselves to be boxed into certain roles even when they know they have the potential to do more. Because there is no shortage of women excelling in PR, what we need more of is mentorship and coaching programs to support the upcoming practitioners to first of all not feel alone in the journey, and then to guide them to grow in the profession.



Parting shot

Surround yourself with people who build your confidence, show you new opportunities, and want to see you achieve your maximum potential. Also, live within your means, save, and invest your money.



Public Relations Society of Kenya

GRACE WAFUBWA

Communications Officer,
Kenya Broadcasting Corporation (Kisumu)



Wafubwa is a result-oriented communicator with over sixteen years of experience in media industry. She loves working with the youth and is passionate about empowering young people in the society. Besides that, she loves travelling, making new friends, socializing, and hiking.

Q1

What excites you about the Public Relations industry?

The public relations industry has propelled me to be an agent of change in the community. Through corporate social responsibility programmes, I have been able to mobilize and empower community through tree planting, medical camps, cleaning campaigns and visiting children's and elderly homes. I have been able to touch lives and assist the needy in the society and that makes me whole.

Q2

What skills have you acquired over the years and how have these skills propelled your public relations journey?

I have cultivated resilience as part of my communication journey. We face quite a number of challenges from our workplaces to personal lives. Once you are committed to your job, definitely the obstacles won't be an excuse not to achieve what you have set. Believe in yourself then the world will believe in you.

Q3

Who are some of the historical women who have inspired you over the years? How have they inspired you?

I draw my aspiration from Julie Gichuru, a media mogul in the industry. She has risen above all to become a success story paving the way for women who believe in themselves. She has set a high bar on women communicators on the need to venture into your dreams and passion as long as you are focused on your goals.

Q4

What's the best advice you can give young and upcoming women in the industry?

The industry is fast paced, and the dynamics are changing every fortnight. You need to find a niche on what you can do and capitalize on it. Be a go getter and update yourself with the latest technological trends. Make sure to surround yourself with people who can grow you in your profession.

Q5

What would you like to see in the PR profession in the next 5 years?

I am happy that most organizations have embraced and formed the public relations department unlike some years back when the profession was still young. My plea to communicators is to make the profession more vibrant in every space we have.

Q6

What are some of the challenges that women face in the PR journey and how can they be solved?

Women in the industry encounter a lot of challenges ranging from sexual harassment, poor pay, cyber bullying, body shaming, and gender inequality. All this can be solved if women are empowered to deal with the challenges as they rise.

Parting shot

In everything you do, give it your best.

KAA CHONJO
BE ALERT

Tips to Protect Your Money

Keep your money safe across banking platforms, including ATMs, cards, mobile and Internet banking channels.



Ignore Fraudulent Calls Your bank or financial service provider will never call, text or email to ask for your Password or PIN. Never share these personal details with anyone.



Avoid Links Never click or tap on suspicious links sent through emails or text messages. Fraudsters use such links to steal Passwords.



Never Save Passwords Avoid saving passwords on computer or mobile browsers. All Passwords and PIN details should always be memorised.



Set Card Limit Limit the amount of cash that can be transacted through your card to minimise losses in case of unauthorised access.



Avoid Help at ATM Area Never ask anyone for assistance while using an ATM machine. Only seek assistance from your bank via contact details provided at the ATM area.



Save Wisely All your cash should not be saved in one account. Transfer excess cash from your bank or mobile account to a savings or fixed deposit account, which can earn you interest.



Report ID or Passport Loss Inform your bank or financial service provider in case you lose your ID Card or Passport to prevent fraudsters from impersonating you and using the documents access your account(s).



Beware of Fake Websites Always confirm that the site you are using to access banking services is genuine. Fraudulent websites do not have a padlock icon and HTTPS extension in the URL/Web address on the top left end of the screen.



Avoid Banking with Public Wi-Fi Hotspot Accessing your bank account from a cyber cafe or through a public Wi-Fi hotspot exposes your passwords to fraudsters.



Check Account Balance Monitor your credit card and bank statements regularly and report any suspicious transactions to your bank.



Update Your Antivirus Software Regularly update your computer's firewall or antivirus software. Remember to always log-off from a site after completing a transaction.



Activate Transaction Notifications Activate email or SMS notifications to detect fraudulent transactions. Notify your bank or financial service provider about notifications on transactions you are not aware about.



Set Transaction Limits For online and card transactions, set limits on transactions amounts based on your projected spend for the day/month.



Keep your card safe at all times The details on the face of your card can be used for online transactions even in the absence of the card.

Contact your bank for more information on card, mobile and online safety Follow us on Twitter @KenyaBankers #KaaChonjo

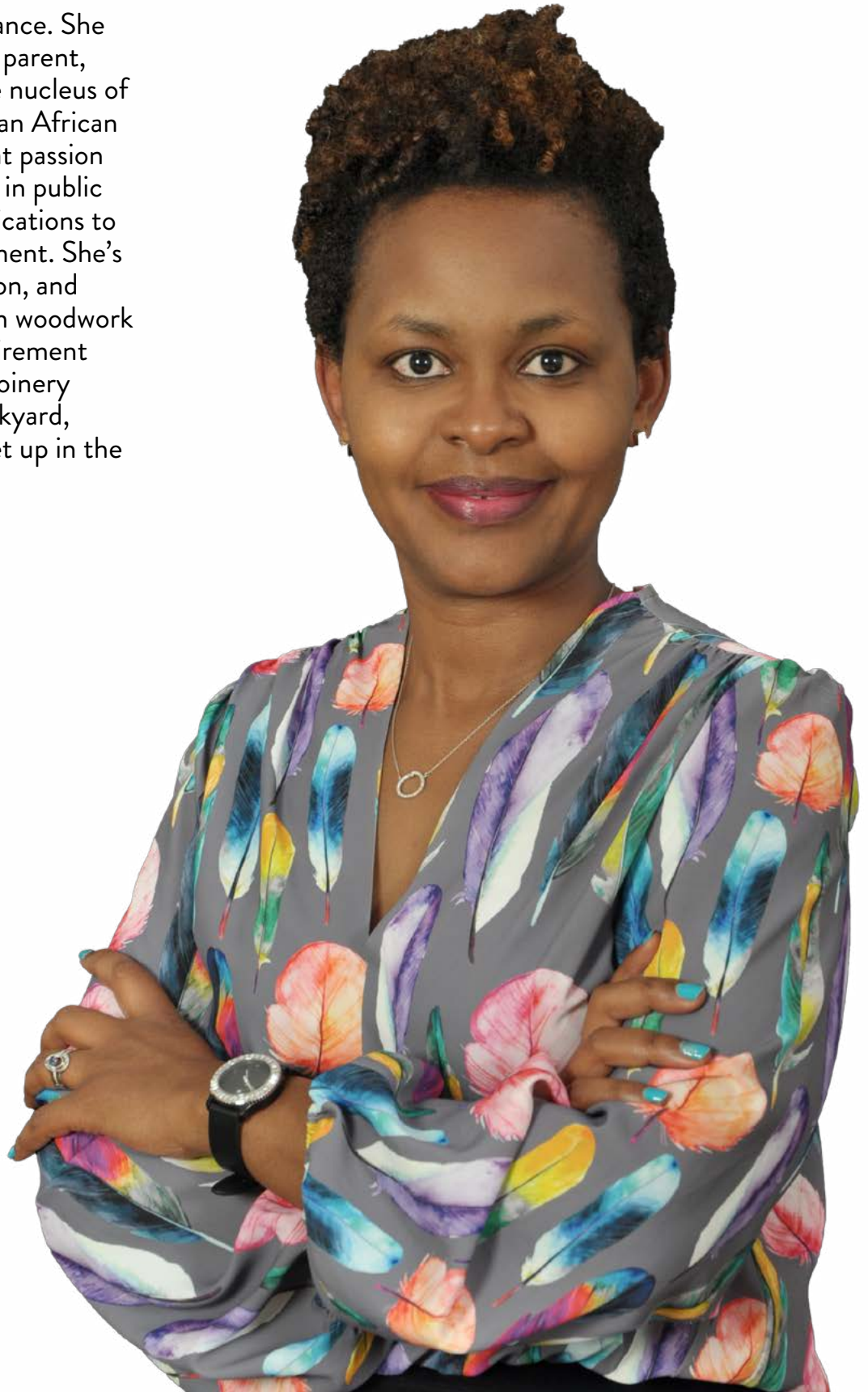


Public Relations Society of Kenya

MUMBI KEEGA

Public Affairs Leader - Africa, Dow.

Mumbi is big on balance. She is the quintessential parent, and her family is the nucleus of her universe. She is an African optimist, with a great passion to using her abilities in public affairs and communications to transform the continent. She's imaginative, hands-on, and pursuing new skills in woodwork and joinery. Her retirement will be spent in her joinery workshop in her backyard, which she aims to set up in the medium term.



Q1

What excites you about the Public Relations industry?

Deep down, I'm a devout optimist and champion of the opportunity and renaissance agenda in Africa. It also helps that I have had a front-row seat on a global platform that enables interaction with people, governments, and businesses. These realities have grown my belief in the Public Affairs and Communications role in constructing a positive narrative for Africa.

I'm excited by the fact that we have an opportunity to build a PR profession that can help propel Africa by seizing emerging contemporary opportunities such as the sustainability of our economy and enterprises, digitization, media content, inclusiveness, and diversity, among others.

Q2

What skills have you acquired over the years and how have these skills propelled your public relations journey?

While I'm trained in sociology, public administration, and communications, I have worn many hats in my career and perfected different skillsets from reputation management, media buying, media relations, content, and events et al.

Importantly, no formal class trained me in stakeholder management, asking the right questions, or applying the right answers to solve issues. Those were learnt through experience and blossomed me into what the public affairs leader I am today.

My public affairs journey, which involves stakeholder engagement with the goal of influencing stakeholders has shaped the realisation of how much can be done in Africa when the right dialogues are catalysed. How do we grow African enterprises? How do we enable the youth to thrive in Africa? How do we spur manufacturing as the trigger of industrialisation? What is the future of sustainability in Africa?

I sit in three bodies in East African region that have a big connection to my passions to grow Africa and the sustainability agenda. I'm the Vice Chair of Industrialisation and Trade Sector Board at KEPSA, Chair at the Manufacturing Taskforce, American Chamber of Commerce – Kenya (AMCHAM-K) and recently joined the Advisory Board of the Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI).

I have continually invested in myself to understand these dialogues including at Yale School of Management, Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership and INSEAD Executive Education.

Q3

Who are some of the historical women who have inspired you over the years? How have they inspired you?

My mum is my biggest motivation because of the family-oriented mind-set I have. She taught me everything I know about family orientation. I'm also motivated by a long line of successful women who, having put in a lot of effort to get where they are, carry out their responsibilities with clarity, humility, and competence.

Sahle-Work Zewde, the president of Ethiopia, inspires me with her charisma, modesty, consistency, and considerable authority. The former Speaker of the Ugandan Parliament and current Deputy Prime Minister of Uganda Rebecca Kadaga is a powerful and charismatic leader with a talent for winning everyone over. The former US First Lady Michelle Obama, in my opinion, is the perfect example of how women can empower, inspire, and serve as steppingstones for other people in the community to make history.

Q4

What's the best advice you can give young and upcoming women in the industry?

We must acknowledge that the profession is misunderstood and work to dispel the myth that the craft is a means of cleansing society's vices. The sector must ensure that the upcoming generation of female practitioners is educated on and given the necessary skills to advice on matters pertaining to business, society, the economy, and social issues. When there is a chance to mediate and have an impact on social concerns, they should be trained to be true to the requirements of society.

Q5

What would you like to see in the PR profession in the next 5 years?

In the immediate term, the quick win would be to further integrate media and digital assets into PR and storytelling as the fastest, most effective way to change how the world views Africa. We can elevate our practice if we use our roles better to position and dissect Africa's issues, competencies, competitive advantages, talent, among others to influence the world of economies.

Mid-term, I'd want to see the industry make an investment in a stronger mentoring program, whereby seasoned individuals train young professionals in a structured manner. The system must have faith in the pioneers. The industry and the schools of practice must collaborate.



At the close of the five years, I hope to see more African C-suites emphasizing value and action. What will we be doing to address the difficult issues surrounding social injustice, inequalities, and sustainability, for instance? I would like to see more government and business partnerships where neither party speaks to the other, but we are collaborating at the table.

Q6

What are some of the challenges that women face in the PR journey and how can they be solved?

Many obstacles exist for women in the field. In the first place, organizations may not be fully supporting young women who want to become mothers. Women should be allowed to fully experience motherhood, without risks of job loss and limiting career progression. The industry must be inclusive of women who want to socially progress.

Second, I observe with concern that female talent finds it more difficult than male talent to make their careers outside of their home country-Kenya. There are many socio-cultural mobility barriers that make it difficult for women to leave their families and children. I don't have an answer, but it might include robust HR support for women who need to make their careers abroad.

Lastly, women and girls still face workplace inclusion challenges. There is need to institutionalize workplace environment policies that prohibit unethical practices especially sexual harassment.

Parting Shot

We are in a great position to make ourselves count. The practice is changing dramatically as a result of the use of digital technology, innovation, diversity, and solving pertinent challenges. We only need to position ourselves better. With Africa as the world's last frontier for industrialization and growth, we must participate in this important quest. Everyone must understand that their participation to be part of table is key. This must be beyond our individual and company ambitions but about the continent and world.



Public Relations Society of Kenya

LILIAN KIMETO

Deputy Director Communications, ICT Authority.



Lilian is a development communication, digital communication, media studies, public policy and communication expert. When she is not cheering Kenyan athletes, mentoring young communication practitioners in East Africa or planting medicinal trees in the North Rift of Kenya, she helps the Government of Kenya to showcase its impact to the citizens of Kenya most of whom are taxpayers.

Q1

What excites you about the Public Relations industry?

My passion is to see Public Relations integrated into public policy planning and thereafter its delivery. This is because I see a disconnect between the citizen, the community and public policy. For example, the need to take into account citizen's voices when designing policies on cyber threat intelligence. I am so excited about cyber security because Kenyan citizens are now accessing government services online hence the need to educate them on how to keep themselves and others safe online. It is for this reason that I have crafted an online safety campaign entitled 'Usalama Mtandao'.

I am also using my skills in public relations to help Kenyan citizens understand the services the Government of Kenya has availed online and how they can access these services. For example, I have organized a digital skills training for citizens in Kenyan markets so that they can use the free Public Wifi offered by the Government of Kenya, through the ICT Authority to carry out e-Commerce. I help rural Kenyan women in the North Rift Kenya to access the Hustler Fund on their "Mulika Mwizi" phones (which are not smart).

Q2

What skills have you acquired over the years and how have these skills propelled your public relations journey?

I hold an MA in Media Studies and I have acquired digital communication skills while at the ICT Authority where I have worked for five years. I use my persuasive skills to link citizens, policy makers and implementers. I have also learnt how to execute strategic communication around an issue, and this includes crisis communication. During the Covid-19 pandemic, I designed messages on cyber hygiene to support the use of ICT for Government of Kenya business continuity. This became very useful for many civil servants, including senior ones who would be caught on Video dressed in pajamas or looking into unsafe WiFi's.

Q3

Who are some of the historical women who have inspired you over the years? How have they inspired you?

My Grandmother Kobilu is my greatest Inspiration. She was widowed at a very young age and her arm amputated after an illness but that did not stop her from tilling land to fend for her family. She also invested in land for her family and left a huge property that her children now enjoy.

From far lands another lady who inspires me is Condoleezza Rice, former US Secretary of State. The

Girl from Alabama is humble and intelligent and has a deep appreciation of public Policy. She came to Kenya in 2007/08 when our country went down with Post Election Violence and was instrumental in crafting the back to peace process.

Kinjeketile Ngwale, the only Woman Freedom fighter of Mijikenda inspires me so much and I learn from her lessons of resilience, patience, confidence and impact.

Q4

What's the best advice you can give young and upcoming women in the industry?

As women, we are very quick to doubt our capability of a task, role, or job. However, the reality is if you put your mind to it, you can achieve anything you want. I started my career by pursuing my interests, which were in events, media, corporate communications and basically helping people around the office. Looking at me now, I cannot believe how far I have come. I am now managing a national brand, the ICT Authority which is in charge of delivering fiber countrywide. The ICT Authority is delivering for the Government of Kenya, digital infrastructure, digital services, digital innovation, and digital skills.

Q5

What would you like to see in the PR profession in the next 5 years?

I want to see the Public Relations profession grow in Kenya, East Africa, Africa, and the world through first defining what it is. Many PR practitioners do not understand what exactly their trade is. We have confusion between what public relations is, what communication is and perhaps how different it is from corporate affairs. My suggestion is for academia to review the curriculum, define the trade and train practitioners using that so that there is a standardized public relations approach. Secondly is the legal framework and public relations so that it is a defined field and practitioners are licensed after training and certification. This will professionalize PR in Kenya and that automatically means that PR will sit on the C-Suite table and become a part of decision making and so part of an organization's performance goals.

In government, my desire is that the Public Commission of Kenya defines the career growth for PR practitioners and have PR at the Director level just the way we have economists and lawyers.



Q6

What are some of the challenges that women face in the PR journey and how can they be solved?

The greatest challenge women face in their PR journey in Kenya is largely the unstructured sector. This makes women who have graduated from colleges and universities to be reduced to event planners and to compete for spaces with untrained individuals.

I have a mentorship forum that I run from my Office where I handhold young PR students and practitioners to help them understand how to navigate the dynamics of the marketplace. I allow them to come into contact with challenges like office politics and lack of funds. Nobody held my hand, therefore I didn't know what was coming and how to navigate rough paths.

My advice to women currently facing the same situation is to identify a mentor and be willing to be mentored. Also go out of your way to learn from your environment and form a support group of likeminded. For management teams, they ought to factor in mentorship into all PR Campaigns so that the youth can benefit. For institutions, parents, and the government, my advice would be to fight for the respect and value for public relations.

Parting shot

May my quiet actions shout, stand tall, and impact the Youth who are our greatest treasure.





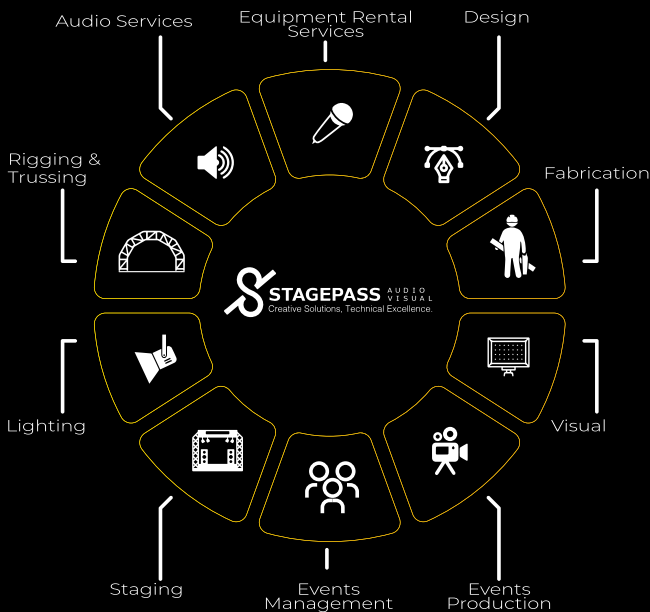
STAGEPASS AUDIO VISUAL

Creative Solutions, Technical Excellence.

Who are we?

Stagepass AV is an integrated technical, consulting, planning, design and implementation provider for professional events based in Nairobi and operating within East Africa. We specialize in rentable of audio-visual technology including Sound, Screens and Lighting for events. In addition, we also do the traditional aspects of events e.g. events logistics and venue bookings.

Our Services



Contact us:

info@stagepass.co.ke

Jacaranda Close, off Ridgeways Road.

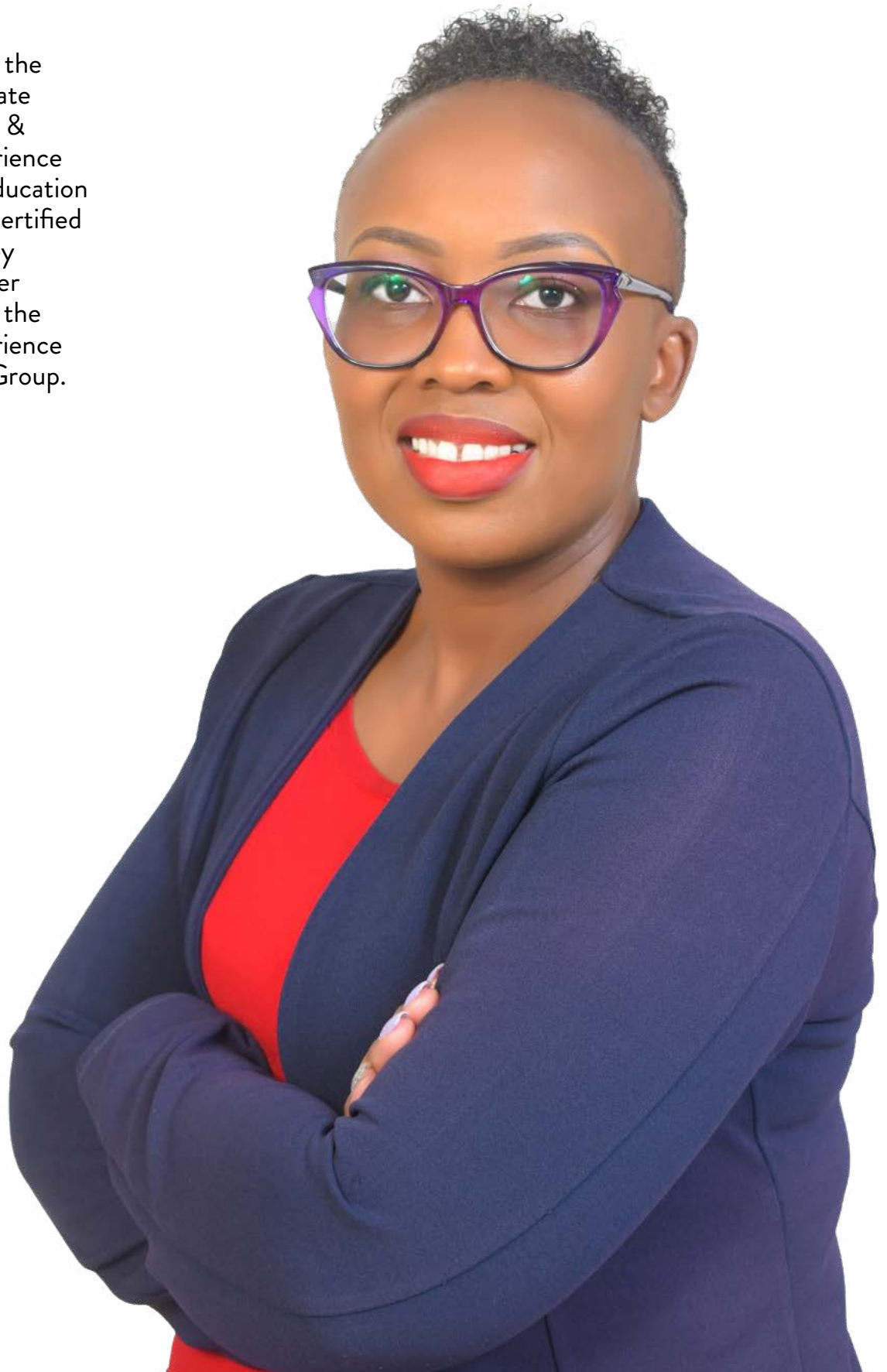


Public Relations Society of Kenya

WAVI MUNGALA

Head of Corporate Communication & Customer Experience ,HELB

Wavi Mungala is the Head of Corporate Communication & Customer Experience at the Higher Education Loans Board, a certified customer journey architect, founder and convener of the Customer Experience Possibilitarians Group.



Q1

What excites you about the Public Relations industry?

PR is a strategic communication process aimed at building mutually beneficial relationships between organizations and their publics. This requires a lot of flexibility and creativity because everyday brings a different set of issues that need to be managed and sometimes with very little lead time especially when dealing with a crisis.

As a trained hotelier, I am passionate about running events that provide a good delegate/stakeholder experience. This means I think through and carefully plan the pre, during and post event management to ensure I execute events that deliver on quality, are within the set budget and have tangible return on investment.

PR work can be challenging but if you apply yourself, it can also be rewarding. Notably, this calls for a broad mindset that is open to possibilities and collaboration, ultimately providing for unique learning experiences

Q2

What skills have you acquired over the years and how have these skills propelled your Public Relations journey?

I consider myself a Possibilitarian, someone with the ability not only to think outside the box, but to blow the box up if that's what it takes to achieve the goal. Some of the skills I have acquired over the last 2 decades that have worked for me in my PR Journey;

The ability to drive change: Being able to conceptualize, strategize and then execute is very important. My capacity to consistently get things done enables me to drive change.

The ability to build relationships: In PR, you do not have the luxury of working alone. Collaboration with both internal and external stakeholders aimed at a position of shared clarity goes a long way.

The ability to think critically: solving problems and managing crisis requires refining your root cause analysis skills so that you not only address the issues at hand but also put in mitigation measures to avoid recurrence as much as possible.

The ability to communicate clearly: Winning in PR requires the ability to clearly articulate the issue at hand in a manner that the respective stakeholders can understand and appreciate. This is equally important in developing and inspiring your people as a team leader.

Q3

Who are some of the historical women who have inspired you over the years? How have they inspired you?

Indra Nooyi, Former Chairman and CEO of PepsiCo from 2006 to 2019. She redefined what it means to be an exceptional leader as an immigrant and the first woman of colour to run a Fortune 50 company. I particularly admired her efforts to change how sports marketing recognized women as athletes, coaches and fans. That there was more to be done than just “pink it and shrink it.” Indra transformed PepsiCo with a unique vision, an indefatigable pursuit of excellence and a deep sense of purpose.

Q4

What's the best advice you can give young and upcoming professionals in the industry?

Aim to be a V-shaped professional rather than a T-shaped professional. A T-shaped professional is someone who has a depth of expertise in one particular field (represented by the vertical line of the “T”) but also has a broad range of skills and knowledge in other areas (represented by the horizontal line). In other words, T-shaped professionals are generalists who have a specialization in one specific area but also have a well-rounded understanding of other disciplines.

V-shaped professionals, on the other hand, are specialists who have a deep understanding of a particular field or discipline and have expertise in multiple related areas (represented by the two lines of the “V”). They are typically recognized as experts in their field and have honed their skills over many years of experience and education. The advantage of being a V-shaped professional is that you have a strong reputation as an expert in your field, and you are highly sought after for your specific skills and knowledge. You also have the ability to deep dive into complex projects and find innovative solutions to difficult problems. Additionally, your expertise can often lead to higher salaries and more opportunities for advancement.

Q5

What would you like to see in the PR profession in the next 5 years?

Iam baffled at how easily PR Practitioners default to vanity metrics like advertising value equivalent [AVE] or impressions on digital channels to show that they have worked. If PR is to be taken seriously, then we as practitioners need to up our game with better measurement of PR outtakes, outcomes and business

impact. And this means we need to embrace and understand new media, leverage on robust data analytics and trend analysis to add depth to the narratives we are pitching. The point here is that unless we can demonstrate tangible value to the work we do and in the organizations we support, then PR will keep getting a bad rap.

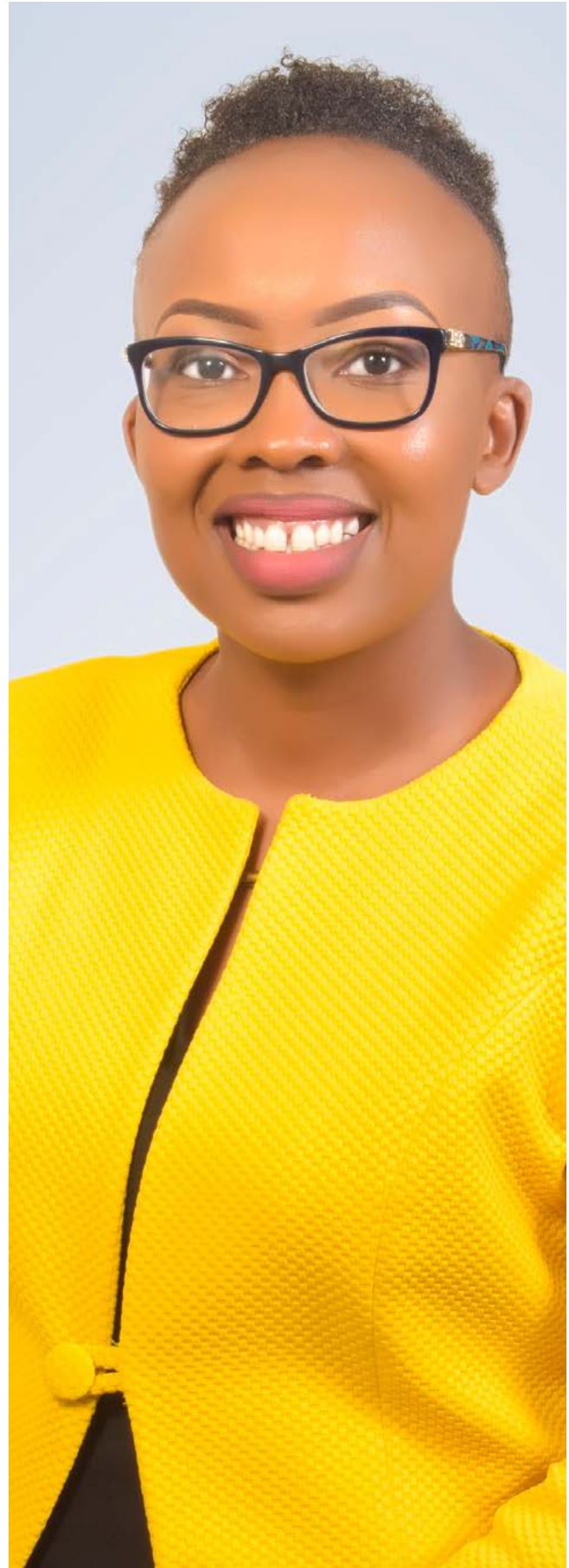
Q6

What are some of the challenges that women face in the PR journey and how can they be solved?

Women in PR are generally prone to sexism and will struggle to fight false narratives around being “flower girls,” many times having to work twice or even thrice as hard as their male counterparts in PR to prove that they can handle the job at a senior and strategic level. What has worked for me is maintaining firm boundaries while remaining laser focused on growing my skill set and demonstrating tangible value. This means leveraging on my transferable skills as a trained hotelier having started my career in the Hospitality Industry, transitioned to the Banking Sector, and now working in the Public Sector.

Parting shot

“Whenever you want to achieve something, keep your eyes open, concentrate and make sure you know exactly what it is you want. No one can hit their target with their eyes closed.” 📌 Paulo Coelho



JUDY MUNYINYI

Secretary of Information in the Ministry of Information,
Communication and the Digital Economy.



Judy Munyinyi is an all round communicator. Perpetual learner. Lover of life and people.
Currently in governance but who knows where the road will lead next?

Q1

What excites you about the public relations industry?

Contrary to the glamour people see out here, communication can be difficult, sometimes thankless, work. What makes it worthwhile is seeing the result of different efforts come together to create something special.

In a national crisis three years ago, for instance, broadcasters said they wanted to cover national events live, as opposed to being provided with a 3rd party video feed that they had no control over.

We facilitated them to cover a State Funeral as a singular production unit against every advice in government at the time. It paid off beautifully!

The result was that the entire country got to participate in the laying to rest of President Daniel Moi in a way that had never happened before; through a live, multi-camera, multi-location production carried simultaneously by all broadcasting houses.

A very stressful time resulted in an amazing collaboration between media houses and government that has continued to date.

That is the power of communication: That you can change things by listening, understanding, providing solutions that work for all involved.

Q2

What skills have you acquired over the years and how have these skills propelled your public relations journey?

I was always an avid reader, a good writer and a confident speaker.

My degree in Communication sharpened these skills substantially but stepping into a newsroom honed them to a fine point.

When you work in a newsroom you learn that work is continuous; it never stops.

Journalists work very long hours, to tight deadlines, sometimes with limited resources. You learn to be tough, yet flexible, responsive, resourceful, and agile.

Very importantly, you learn to work in teams and, in my case, to lead teams.

To get the sort of product you want, be it a printed product, a TV news bulletin, or a PR campaign, you need to be strategic, creative and use the strengths of each team member to benefit the product.

These skills and networks, acquired over many years, and

across all versions of mass media, are what I am leveraging today in the practice of Government Communication.

Q3

Who are some of the historical women who have inspired you over the years? How have they inspired you?

My inspirational women are not historical in that sense of the word.

One is the late Wangari Maathai who I had the pleasure of interviewing several times.

Her off-the-record advice to me was, “Nobody has the blueprint of life.”

In essence she was saying, live your life without worrying that you are messing up or that other people know how to do life better than you do. It is all just trial and error.

Rose Kimotho who started the first fully vernacular radio station in Kenya is another I look up to: When I was starting on my first Master’s degree and wasn’t sure whether I had chosen the right field (Diplomacy), she told me: “Start. If you don’t like it, stop.”

My mind was blown. Stop? After you have put in time and money?

But it makes sense, doesn’t it? Just stop if it is not working for you.

The third, of course, is my mother; she was a true visionary. Mum went into banking when most of her peers were pigeonholed into secretarial work. A reserved woman who minded her own business, she modelled how to live real life to me. I draw on her wisdom to this day.

Q4

What’s the best advice you can give young and upcoming women in the industry?

Your work will speak for you so put in the work!

Open yourself to learning and challenge yourself to become better than yesterday’s version of you. It will pay off.

Your networks will open doors for you. Invest in them.

People take this to mean that you should only interact with the rich and powerful. No. It means, be where people are. Go to the office function, the business luncheon, join the industry association. Talk to the person sitting next to you. Boom. Network.

Be a little bolder and don’t be afraid to fail.

Our culture tends to punish failure which is why we have so few risk-takers. Take the risk anyway.



Q5

What would you like to see in the PR profession in the next 5 years?

I would like to see more emphasis on data-driven insights. With the growing importance of analytics and data in all industries, public relations professionals are expected to be more data-driven and strategic in their approach. We can expect to see PR professionals using data to gain insights into audience behaviour, develop more targeted campaigns, and measure the effectiveness of their efforts.

Overall, the next five years are likely to see continued evolution and innovation in the public relations profession, as PR professionals adapt to changing technologies, shifting audience behaviour, and evolving social trends. The more organizations embrace and appreciate PR, the more the value of the profession.

Q6

What are some of the challenges that women face in the PR journey and how can they be solved?

The challenges are not just in PR but in the career journey in general. In spite of all the strides we have made in the journey to gender equity, women still suffer for being female. They endure sexual harassment in the office, they are often paid less than men for the same work, some have even lost jobs because they got pregnant!

There also remains an unwillingness to accept that a woman has the capacity to produce results that are as good as any man's. Often, any good work that a woman does is either minimized or credited to a man helping her behind the scenes.

These attitudes need to be consistently challenged and the misogyny stopped.

Parting shot

Be true to yourself, with yourself, about yourself.

You are so much more than your job or your achievements.

At the end of the day you are a human being, with a soul that needs peace and a spirit that needs growth. Take care of that because it matters.

Be authentic. Connect with other authentic people and support one another.



MERCY RANDA

Founder, Managing Partner, P&L Consulting.



Ms. Randa is the Founder and Managing Partner of the multi-award-winning C-suite Advisory and Business Communication firm, P&L Consulting. When I am not working, I get lost in all kinds of new knowledge literature from magazines to podcasts, usually with a glass of wine in hand. I also enjoy cooking and hosting at home.

Q1

What excites you about the Public Relations industry?

I have witnessed a significant evolution in the PR industry over the last 17 years. From a time when we relied on manual measurement of newspaper clippings to determine the PR value of a story to a time when everyone is a real-time publisher and the truth is increasingly elastic. These new challenges obviously make our profession extremely exciting because you cannot gainsay the appreciation for strategic communication guidance, and this cuts across all engagements. The stakes are even higher when it comes to business communication because even the slightest miscalculation can deliver an incredibly costly gut punch. This makes our area of practice fulfilling career-wise because it is these kinds of challenges that grow one and fast. Being entrusted by clients to help them navigate sensitive communication dilemmas doesn't leave you much room to doubt yourself. This perspective of PR makes it very exciting.

Q2

What skills have you acquired over the years and how have these skills propelled your Public Relations journey?

"I handle a lot of high-stake communication assignments and, being in the middle of it requires a certain level of compartmentalization. One has to learn to remove themselves from the situation without losing touch with it, allowing one to provide sound counsel. I always try to entertain two opposing thoughts in my mind at the same time so that my advice and actions are not biased. Some key skills that I have acquired over time include:

a. Good listening – the way you come across as a listener can either endear trust or break it. Good listeners in our field do not listen to respond. We have to be comfortable in not knowing what we want to say next and also train ourselves to be nuanced in our response or follow-up question. This is not an easy skill to master.

b. Reading widely – Working in PR means that you will be working with stakeholders from diverse fields. From finance to medicines to the military. Being able to hold conversations with insights will compel you to read widely. You also have to be fluent in current affairs. I am currently studying for my Investor Relations Society (UK) membership exams."

Q3

Who are some of the historical women who have inspired you over the years? How have they inspired you?

My career has been shaped by 4 women. When I made the switch from business journalism to PR in 2007, I had no idea what PR entailed. I could write and tell stories but there's more to PR than that. Ms. Julie Otieno, then my senior at Ogilvy PR, took me under her wing and with a lot of patience, trained me. I credit my PR foundation to her. One of the assignments that fell on my laps in my early practice years was a divestiture by a PE firm in two of their investments in Rwanda and Uganda. I was an eager 23-year-old with little understanding and with the task to bring the news to market. This is when we only had a handful of PE firms in the region. I would join the transaction calls and take lots of notes, then set up bilateral calls with Ms. Wanjiku Mugane, who held my hands through it. I learned a lot technically but I also took with me the lesson on handholding. If there's a woman with a strong can-do aura, Ms. Betty Maina is at the top of that list for me. I consulted for KAM briefly right after I left Ogilvy PR and had the opportunity to work with Ms. Maina, who was then the CEO. She always saw a silver lining in every bad situation and never allowed a misstep to take away from her focus. I have trained myself this way since. Finally, Ms. Natalie Maule who was my boss at Africa Practice. Natalie taught me the value of keeping your word to both colleagues and clients. PR is a business of trust and confidence.

Q4

What's the best advice you can give young and upcoming professionals in the industry?

Do not get comfortable. Do not stop learning. Do not sell yourself short. You are the next best practitioner. Keep your eyes on the ball.

Q5

What would you like to see in the PR profession in the next 5 years?

The field is already deepening and widening. You can see this with firms starting to carve out specialized practice areas and there is deliberate investment being channeled into growing these niche practices. We will see the fruits of this investment within the next 5 years



Q6

What are some of the challenges that women face in the PR journey and how can they be solved?

Women in PR face many challenges, and the main one that comes to mind immediately is slow career progression. In many cases, this is at no fault of their own. The industry had grown in a way that created a boys' club at the top. I always applaud how Gina Din trail blazed the space for us and for this, we send the ladder back and pull up the women.

Parting shot

The lessons from these 4 women are what have allowed me to build P&L Consulting into a multi-award-winning firm, now in its 10th year. We are the overall winners of the 2022 PRSK Award for Excellence.

GLORIA LIHEMO

Social & Behaviour Change Specialist, UNICEF.

Gloria works on social impact projects aimed at improving the wellbeing of vulnerable communities across the globe. She combines her love for travel and flair for writing to document and curate unique travel experiences to lesser-known destinations around the world.



Q1

What excites you about the Public Relations industry?

Communications can be a powerful tool to give voice to those who do not traditionally participate in public dialogue and spaces. The PR field has become more dynamic in the last couple of decades because of the evolution of digital technology. The digital space has created a platform for two-way communications where people can hold their leaders accountable and demand for their rights to be upheld. As PR practitioners we have an important role to play in creating an enabling environment for this to happen. Conversely, communications is also a double-edged sword, it can be easily abused to perpetuate misinformation and propaganda. This keeps us on our toes as practitioners, it means that we have to continuously innovate in how we communicate to be able to cut through the noise, as there is too much competition for people's attention.

Q2

What skills have you acquired over the years and how have these skills propelled your Public Relations journey?

My most career-defining moment was stepping out of my comfort zone and resigning from what was presumably a good job with the UN in Kenya to pursue a masters in a completely different field and in a language that I did not speak. Taking this calculated risk opened a world of opportunities for me including launching my international career. I have learned the importance of taking risks by overcoming a status quo mentality and having the courage to move on from positions where I felt my growth was stifled. Constantly re-inventing myself through professional courses, networking, and mentorship opportunities helped me in becoming all-rounded and increased my chances of fitting into diverse communications roles (advocacy, outreach, community engagement and social change.) Lastly, having a network of like-minded mentors and allies (peers as well as people in leadership) to whom I can turn for counsel, has been crucial in keeping me grounded and focused as well as providing me with a safe space where I can discuss challenging issues.

Q3

Who are some of the historical women who have inspired you over the years? How have they inspired you?

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie the Nigerian writer and globally recognized as one of the most influential novelists of our generation. Through her talented storytelling, she has used her platform to put a human face on important issues such as the fragility of African politics, the nuances of race and identity, and has

strived to promote gender equality through what some might consider to be very controversial feminist views. I am especially awed by her ability to shine a spotlight on very challenging life events through ordinary stories and often using powerful female characters. In my work in the humanitarian and development sector I have had the privilege of meeting women who have overcome exceptional circumstances including; women who had survived gruesome gender-based violence and kidnappings, in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, mothers who diligently brought their chronically malnourished infants to nutrition treatment centers and seen the children recover and flourish in places like Chad. Adolescent girls who have undergone harmful cultural practices like being isolated in cow sheds or makeshift huts, while they were menstruating, then rising to become champions of change by advocating for abolishment of these traditions in Nepal. I am constantly inspired by the perseverance and tenacity of these women and the resilience through which they navigate these situations.

Q4

What's the best advice you can give young and upcoming professionals in the industry?

Commit to life-long learning, read about the latest trends and insights in your industry, immerse yourself in understanding the key aspects of your organization which will enrich your market value and better position you for promotions. Treat every situation as a learning opportunity, you can learn just as much from a bad boss as you can from a good one. Invest in establishing a good network within the industry and in other sectors as well. Do not be afraid to be assertive and speak up, one of the challenges we have in the workplace as women is a desire to be liked, this is something we need to learn to overcome.

Q5

What would you like to see in the PR profession in the next 5 years?

Research has shown that the direct impact of one-way, top-down communication on stakeholder engagement – whether it is promoting consumer products or behaviours like improving vaccination – is very small. We need to put more emphasis on two-way engagement by understanding who our audiences are, what their legitimate concerns are, and how we use communications to co-create solutions with them rather than for them. As practitioners we should focus less on telling people what to do and put more emphasis on developing transparent and inclusive communications initiatives that engage our audiences in a meaningful way. This will go a long way in building and maintaining credibility and trust in the PR sector.



Q6

What are some of the challenges that women face in the PR journey and how can they be solved?

The challenges women in PR face are indicative of the systemic challenges women face in the workplace in general. As women we often undersell and undervalue ourselves. Research shows that men apply for jobs when they meet 60% of the job requirements compared to women who only apply if they meet 100% of the requirements. As women we need to be stronger allies of each other by:

- i) Encouraging each other to be confident in ourselves and our capabilities
- ii) Celebrating other women's accomplishments,
- iii) Mentoring and sponsoring young, up-and-coming professionals and
- iv) Providing genuine and constructive feedback to our female counterparts.

Parting shot

Set big goals! "The size of your dreams must always exceed your current capacity to achieve them. If your dreams do not scare you, they are not big enough."
Ellen Sirleaf Johnson





OUR'S TASTES BETTER, FRESH TILL THE LAST DROP.



CRAFT YOUR ADVENTURE