

imPRessions

October 2011

A monthly MSU PRSSA newsletter

In this issue...

pg 1: President's Letter
pg 2: When I Grow Up...
pg 3: There's always a green lining
pg 4: What is Public Relations?
pg 4: Making yourself a competitive career fair candidate
pg 5: Hub Con: beneficial experience for anyone
pg 5: My summer at the Blues
pg. 6: Member of the Month

Important Upcoming Dates...

October 21-Firm Tours
October 21-MSU Homecoming Parade
October 25- General Meeting
October 28- CMPRSA Luncheon
November 3- Professional Development

President's Letter

Hi everyone!

Take a second after reading this letter to look to the right and left of you. While you may not realize it, by showing up to these meetings you are already completing one of the most important elements of being involved in the PR industry. You are networking.

Networking - the word is music to my ears. If you don't love that word, learn to love it. Networking is essential for our industry. The more people you know, the better. Know that networking does not always have to be on the professional level. That is why I am telling you to look around the room. These are your peers, the people you will be working with in the coming years. The people that you can learn from, and they will learn from you. These are the people that I guarantee you will see again at some point in your professional career. Take a second to get to know people in this room that you do not already know. Chances are some of them already look familiar due to having a similar class load.

I know from personal experience that the people I met through this organization are the one's who have helped me most in furthering my pre-professional career. You showing up today is the first and most important step in becoming the PR practitioner that we all desire to be - it is up to you now where you go from here!

Best,

Kristen Selasky



PRSSA
Public Relations
Student Society
of America

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 Michigan State University PRSSA

When I Grow Up...

As told to becky CUNNINGHAM

Josh Lord is the director of membership and student affairs for the Michigan Dental Association, located in Okemos. Prior to joining the MDA team, Lord was the media and member relations coordinator for the Michigan Manufacturers Association and worked as a public relations consultant for The Rossman Group. Lord is a 2006 graduate from Michigan State University, with a bachelors in communication, specializing in public relations, and is a 2012 candidate for a Masters in Business Administration from MSU.

What advice do you have for members looking for internships or jobs?

Network. Be a part of the community of PR professionals that exists in the Lansing area - even if you're not staying in Michigan. The key to making a successful transition from the life of an undergrad to a working professional is to have connections with an ever-growing network of PR pros and MSU alumni. Start with your "inner circle" - your family, friends, relatives, or professionals that you've shadowed. Inform them of your after-college plans, and see if they can connect you to someone, who might know someone else. Then, utilize the resources at MSU including job search strategy classes, advisors, professors, the alumni network and career services. Also, become active in PRSA by attending lunch and learn sessions, volunteering at events, and using the group to connect to professionals for job shadowing and internship opportunities.

In today's job market, networking, relationship building and revisiting connections (both new and old) on a constant basis is the key to getting a job and internship. If you think mass marketing your resume, sending out generic emails, using the same cover letter and resume for each position you're interested in, and/or waiting for something to fall in your lap is going to get you a job, you're going to have a difficult time.

What do you know now that you wish you would have known in college?

I wish that in college I would have known to always connect my interest in a company back to the core values of the company, and how large markets can truly chew you up and spit you out.

When I went to career fairs and did my first interviews for full-time jobs, I always approached the "Why are you interested in our company" question by referencing a news story that involved the company that caught my interest, or my arms-length knowledge of what the company did - instead of linking the core values of the company back to my own values. Looking back, those jobs weren't right for me anyways, but I would have made a stronger case as a candidate by connecting me to the company through our shared values.

And, by no means am I trying to say that no one should pursue opportunities in large markets (Chicago, New York, etc.). The point I am making is: 1) it is much harder to get connected in those kind of markets; 2) the competition is incredibly robust and aggressive; and 3) the cost of living often is so high that entry level salaries often don't provide any kind of cushion/safety net/opportunity to save and really enjoy life in the "big city".

What was your transition from college to the "real world" like?

My transition was pretty smooth - only because I rolled a yearlong internship (spring semester, summer semester, and fall semester) into a full-time job that was waiting for me once I graduated. I



Josh Lord
Director of membership and student affairs
Michigan Dental Association

approached my boss at the time in October about transitioning to a full-time role. Luckily, I had performed incredibly well as an intern, which made the full-time conversation so much easier. I also was fully indoctrinated into the office culture, which makes life so much easier.

The biggest shock I faced with the transition was the fact that office politics can get in the way of the development of young, hungry, aggressive new employees. Looking back, it is clear to me that more senior colleagues and managers were interested in limiting my growth opportunities and used their stature in the office, combined with my uneasiness about approaching the CEO directly, to their advantage. Eventually, office politics drove me away from the firm.

My advice for making the transition would be this: work hard, work to be recognized, and remember that everyone has their own agenda - which may or may not align with yours. Do everything you can to go above and beyond the call of duty and don't forget there's plenty of eyes on the newbie in the office.

Speaking of networking...

The next professional development will be November 3 at 6:00pm. The location is still to be determined. Professor Janet Lillie will be coming to talk about personal branding and social media. You get one Hubbell Point just for attending! Email Jeannette (jeannetteconklin@gmail.com) for more info and to sign up.

There is always a (Spartan) green lining

by summer LI

After I rejected an internship offer three times last summer in China, I told the chief editor of the accounting magazine office, "Yes, I'd like to work at your firm for two months." I am sure that every PR person who is interested in fashion, art and mass media doesn't really want to work for an accounting magazine firm. The thing that changed my mind was that I was invited to attend two international accounting symposiums. One of these two was The 6th International Accounting Symposium on Management Business and Controls. Even though I couldn't work in the sector that I truly wanted, I still had the chances to meet new people and make new friends from 50 different countries around the world.

The first station was Beijing, the capital of China. Traditionally, there is a banquet dinner the first night before the conference officially starts. The staff, scholars and accounts tend to talk about the accounting issues that are happening this year, what their research focused on and the common accounting people they know. It was hard to fit in; especially since I was the only one that was twenty-something.

After I went back to the hotel, I found one name on the scholars list, Dr. Mike Shields, who is from Michigan State University. Surprisingly, I found out I was not the only Spartan. I felt less pressured after seeing that name.

The whole morning belonged to Dr. Mike Shields. He gave presentations with American humor. When we were allowed to ask the last question to him,

I shouted out "Go green!" Confusingly, he asked me back, "What?" I shouted out even louder, "Go green!" With a smile, he told me and everyone else in the meeting, "oh! Go white! It's my school!" Yes, it's my school, too. The first meeting ended with a cheer between two Spartans.

Unconsciously, I joined the international

Originally, I thought I was the only one who bled green, but I soon found my Spartan family.

As the first day pasted, I got to know almost half of the people in the meeting. By the end of the second day, I became a bridge among the people. I introduced a Chinese professor who was about to go to Australia to my Australia

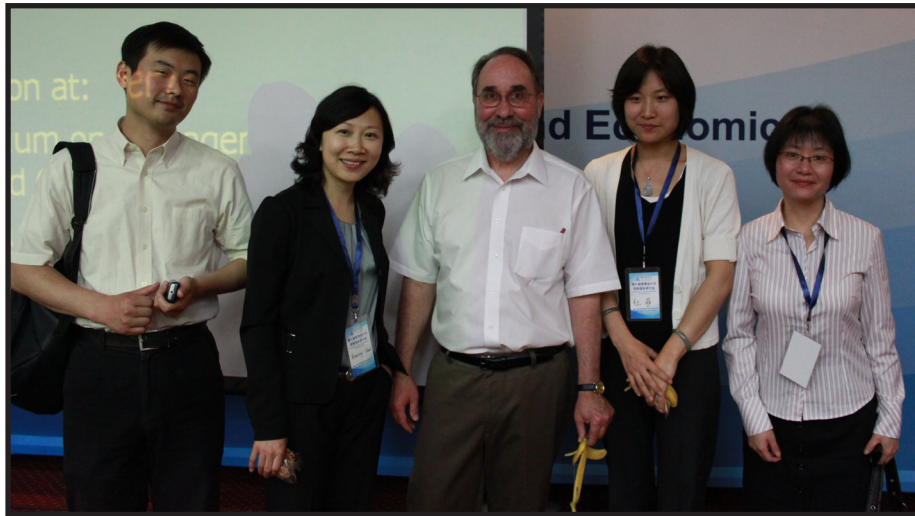
accounting friend.

I was introduced to a professor of Minnesota State University, since she would be attending a meeting at Michigan State in one month. Fortunately, I got some international scholars' promise. They would like to publish their original articles in the magazine I was working for. When they asked me what kind of topics we needed, I really didn't have any idea. I called my chief editor and specified the articles before the meeting finished.

After I came back from the meeting, I was busy following up with these

international contacts. Every day I would continue sending business letters to them. In the meantime, I had to finish up the draft about the Accounting Symposium. I didn't realize how much I had truly enjoyed it until two months had gone by. I left over 100 business cards, 1 draft for publishing and several international article resources.

When I look back, the experience didn't include any fashion, fancy dresses, loud music or a fast pace lifestyle. But it was still very beneficial to me all the same. Don't be afraid of what we don't know. Get to know what we don't know. And, enjoy what we are getting to know.



scholars table for lunch. I felt more confident and comfortable to talk with them. Before lunch finished, I made accounting friends from Australia, Indonesia and America. We exchanged business cards and I introduced the magazine to them. At the end of the lunch, Dr. Tang who was the Dean of the business school in the host university came over. He joined our conversation with good English. Suddenly, he asked me, "Where do you live in East Lansing, Spartan Village or Cherry Lane?" I found out that he was partially a Spartan. He had been to Michigan State University as a visiting scholar for half a year.

What is Public Relations?

by hanna ESPIE

If you were like me, every time you watched *Sex and the City* you knew that Charlotte was a gallery director, Miranda was a lawyer, Carrie was a writer, and wait...what was it that Samantha did again? Samantha was running her own public relations firm, and not remembering what she did, is actually a good thing.

I remember my first PR professor told our class that if he ever knew who we were in the press as PR professionals, he had not taught us well. He told us that the markings of a good PR professional was that you weren't suppose to hear of them. Sounds strange right? At first it sounded odd to me as well, but it must be understood that public relations is about knowing who your client or company is to the public.

Public Relations is the communication between a company through the media to the public. PR is an ongoing and cyclical conversation with the public communicating back to the company. From there, the company decides how to progress and communicate back to its audience.

Ultimately there are two primary types or means of doing public relations: in-house, or corporate public relations, and agency public relations. In-house public relations is when the PR agency resides within the company. In-house PR professionals know anything and everything about the company they work for. The primary job is to enhance the company's credibility by making sure all actions are made in the public's interest. Agency PR is a firm that is hired by numerous clients. It performs all of the same functions as corporate PR departments but for numerous clients; it could be said that in-house PR knows a lot about one thing (the company) and a PR agency knows a little about a lot of different companies, offering a more diverse topical work environment.

Clients of PR can range from sports teams to international companies, from governmental or health agencies to celebrities and non-profit organizations. The goal of PR, no matter the client, is always the same. It is essential to establish a sense of amiableness and good will with all publics to create stability and wealth for the client or company you work for and the individuals in the target audience.

Now the question remains, how does a PR professional communicate with its publics? Just remember you are in a RACE. Research. The first step in any good PR plan is to research the client, the problem that needs to be solved and the target audience trying to be reached. Action. This is the battle plan for how the client's problem will be approached and solved. Communication. The third step is executing the action plan and putting it into effect. Evaluation. The last step, most significant to the PR firm or department, is to reflect on the first three steps of the PR plan and determine what was done well and what could be improved upon.

Arguably, public relations is the most significant part of any company. It is an essential component to the credibility and likability of a company and what they represent. So turn on your charm, put your game face on, and toast a cosmopolitan with the likes of Samantha Jones.

Making yourself a Competitive Career Fair Candidate

by chelsea DIETLIN

The first week of October welcomed Michigan State's own 2011 Career Gallery. This year, the annual career fair brought in well over 4,000 students and alumni for a two day showcase of state, national and international employers. With hopes of obtaining the dream internship or job, science and business students vied for the attention of field professionals ranging from the small non-profits to global industry leaders. With almost 10% of the MSU student body in attendance at the University's largest professional gathering, how do you make yourself stand-out?

Going into these professional meet and greets as a student interested in PR, it is incredibly important to be prepared with a solid personal marketing plan. Prospective employers immediately

evaluate a student's capacity to market himself. If you can not sell yourself, a company representative will not put faith in your abilities to sell their products or clients.

With well over 200 companies in attendance, the first step of your game plan is preliminary research. Create a list of 10-15 companies you are interested in pursuing a face-to-face meeting at the career fair. Check out their websites and make note of the interview and candidate qualification requirements (I always create a word doc of this information and slip it in the folder with my resumes to jog my memory later on).

Second, make sure your resume is primed and perfect. Students Services employs career advisors that are available for resume revising appointments.



Ask your advisor about the various editing workshops hosted by campus colleges for advice on how to make your resume more appealing to employers in your particular field.

Now it is time to create your personal pitch. In a roughly 30-second speech you need identify your most promising assets.

continued on pg. 6

