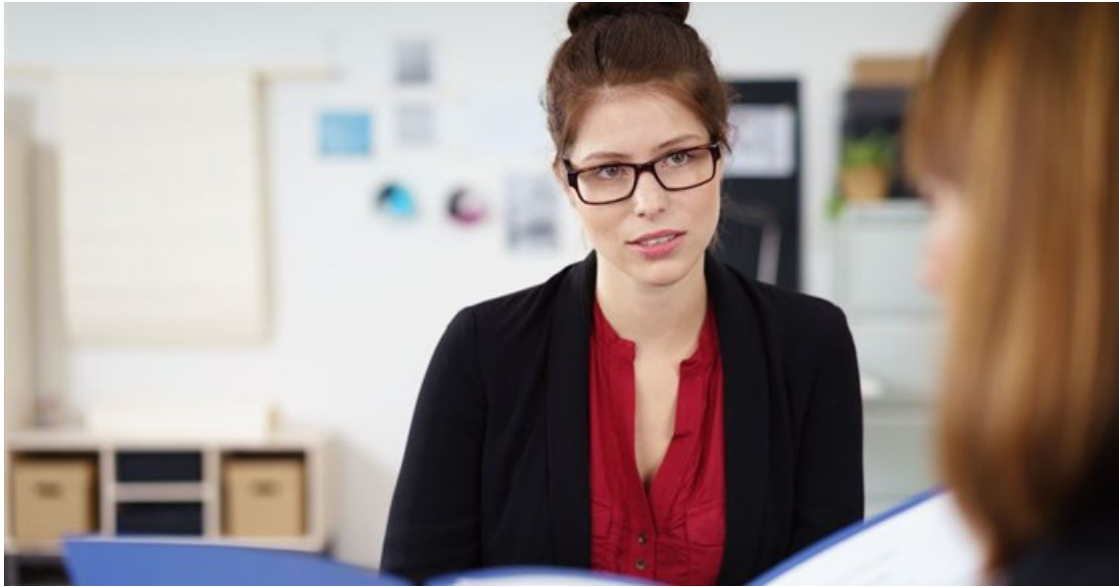


5 career tips for PR graduates

By  Marisa Louw

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Finding a job after your graduation can be intimidating. Agencies are looking for juniors with experience. Internships are scarce. Jobs are scarce!



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You've graduated, what now?

If you have not found a job by the time you graduate you are part of the 10,2% of [unemployed graduates](#) in South Africa. Maybe you were lucky and you found a job. It may not be a job in PR, but in today's economy, a job is a job.

My first job after my graduation was as a receptionist at a medical doctor's practice. I was happy to have a job. It was not the job I dreamed of, but it allowed me to start paying off my student loan.



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I encourage young graduates to look for their dream job but don't waste time doing so. Just get a job, any job. Once you have an income you can start building your career.

Tips to help you build your career in PR

Read

Read as much as you can, every day. When you are in the taxi on your way to work, read. Read English literature. Read the newspaper. Join the library or borrow a book from a friend or relative. Read with the intention to improve your English language skills and PR knowledge.

Write

Start a blog. Not a diary on a day in the life of... Write down your own opinions about an article you read this week. Use a

content editor like [Hemmingway App](#) to help you improve your writing. Practice SEO content writing with tools like [SEO Review Tools](#). Take a story you have read in the newspaper and write your own article about the topic. Don't edit the article. Do your own research and write a new story on the same topic. Write something of about 400 words at least once a week.

Volunteer

Look for opportunities to gain experience within your local community. The child care centre may need funds to buy new stationery for the children. Offer to help them with publicity. Do an interview with the principal, write an article, and pitch it to the local newspaper and radio station. Keep on doing this until you get the interview. Continue doing this until the centre reached its fundraising goals. Then find another community project that needs your help.

Build a portfolio

Your blog, the articles you have researched and written, and the volunteer work you do for the local community all become part of your portfolio. You can build a portfolio on LinkedIn or use a tool like [Wakelet](#). Remember that your personal social media profiles become part of your portfolio. Keep it professional.

Find a mentor

You can learn so much from someone who has worked in PR for more than 20 years. It is difficult to find a mentor that has time for a formal mentorship programme. But remember, mentors, are available online too. #PRChatAfrica on Twitter every Thursday at 8pm is a great place to start if you are looking for a mentor.

Go, find your dream job!

Now that you have experience and a portfolio to present as evidence, you are ready to get out there and look for your dream job. Start at the bottom and work your way up. Work hard. Prove yourself. Don't try to impress your boss. Make sure the work you deliver speaks for itself.

ABOUT MARISA LOUW

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