



NEXT GEN PR REPORT

2023-2024

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THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS CONSULTANCY ORGANISATION (ICCO)

The International Communications Consultancy Organisation (ICCO) is the voice of public relations consultancies around the world.

The ICCO membership comprises 41 associations representing 82 countries across the globe: from Europe, Africa, Asia, the Middle East to the Americas and Australasia. Collectively, these associations represent over 3,000 PR firms.

Members work together to raise standards of quality, address ethical issues, harmonise professional PR consultancy practice, and share knowledge.

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THE ICCO NEXT GEN GROUP

The ICCO Next Gen Group consists of a dynamic team of passionate PR professionals dedicated to investing their time and energy into finding solutions for the industry at large. The group is made up of members representing major regions across the world.

The Next Gen Group works closely with the main ICCO Board to identify challenges faced by young professionals worldwide and propose possible opportunities to address them. The primary goal of the Next Gen Group is to highlight best practices across different geographies and develop standardised solutions.



Networks across 82 countries and over 3,000 PR firm



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Knowledge exchange and collaborative campaigns

CONTENTS

04

EXECUTIVE
SUMMARY

06

OPINIUM
SUMMARY

08

DRIVERS &
INSPIRATION

14

CHALLENGES
& BARRIERS

20

OUTLOOK &
PERSPECTIVE

28

LOOKING
AHEAD:
THE NEXT
GEN GROUP
PERSPECTIVE



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

NAVIGATING THE NEXT GEN: INSIGHTS AND STRATEGIES FOR PR'S FUTURE



**AS INDUSTRY LEADERS,
WE MUST CREATE
ENVIRONMENTS THAT
NURTURE CREATIVITY,
OFFER MEANINGFUL IMPACT,
AND PROVIDE GROWTH
OPPORTUNITIES TO ATTRACT
AND RETAIN TOP TALENT.”**

Nitin Mantri,
Regional Executive
Managing Director of WE
& Group CEO of AvianWE



Every generation scrutinises the one that follows. Baby Boomers eyed Gen X with scepticism, Gen X observed Millennials with caution, and now, Millennials are both intrigued and concerned by Gen Z. Experts and commentators have tried to decode what makes Gen Z tick, dissecting their lingo and grappling with the many myths and misconceptions surrounding them. But from my experience, I find today's young professionals to be pragmatic, independent, and remarkably resourceful. Far from the stereotypes often attributed to them, this generation brings a fresh perspective to the workplace, blending innovation with a strong sense of purpose.

To better understand these qualities and how they shape the future of the public relations (PR) industry, we have launched the first ever ICCO Next Gen Survey. Born from the dedicated efforts of the ICCO Next Gen Group, this survey uncovers the key drivers, opportunities, and challenges faced by our young PR professionals. The insights gathered are invaluable as we strive to support and empower the next generation, ensuring a vibrant future for our industry.

DRIVERS AND OPPORTUNITIES

In a tech-driven world, it's inspiring that creativity remains the top reason for pursuing a PR career, with 57% of respondents highlighting it. The desire to make an impact (44%) and work in purpose-driven roles (33%) stand out, showing that young professionals seek meaningful work. Interestingly, 42% of respondents are motivated by the opportunity to tackle professional challenges, debunking the myth that Gen Z prefers an easier path.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

NAVIGATING THE NEXT GEN: INSIGHTS AND STRATEGIES FOR PR'S FUTURE

When evaluating job opportunities, 60% of respondents prioritise salary, followed by career growth potential (49%), work-life balance (39%), and company culture (29%). Additionally, 71% cite growth and development as key professional inspirations. These insights highlight the diverse motivations of next gen PR talent. As industry leaders, we must create environments that nurture creativity, offer meaningful impact, and provide growth opportunities to attract and retain top talent.

RESILIENCE AMIDST CHALLENGES

An overwhelming 64% of respondents reported a negative impact on their mental health due to their job in the past year, underscoring the need for PR agencies to prioritise well-being. This concern is closely linked to key elements of an ideal work environment: 53% emphasised the importance of responsive leaders, and another 52% highlighted the value of a positive work culture.

Despite the challenges they face, 68% of respondents plan to stay in the PR industry for the foreseeable future, with 28% intending to make it their lifelong career. This resilience speaks volumes about the dedication of next gen talent to the field, even when confronted with adversity.

Their commitment is further reflected in what they enjoy most about their roles: 35% of respondents chose personal development, followed by feeling valued (28%) and working on meaningful projects (26%). By focusing on these aspects, we can enhance engagement and retention, ensuring that young professionals continue to thrive in the industry.

FUTURE OUTLOOK

Looking ahead, the PR landscape will continue to evolve, driven by technological advancements and shifting industry dynamics. Nearly half of the respondents (47%) highlighted the importance of mastering AI skills for the future, reflecting the growing integration of technology in PR. Creativity remains a vital asset, with 37% identifying it as key to future success. Strategic consulting (33%) and research, insight, and planning (27%) are also seen as essential.

There is also a strong sense of optimism, with 59% of respondents confident in the PR industry's growth and 66% believing that CEOs are taking corporate reputation more seriously. Additionally, 61% of respondents believe that companies are paying more attention to corporate purpose, further indicating a shift towards values-driven business practices.

As we move forward, actively investing in these critical skills and fostering an environment where innovation and adaptability thrive is essential. By equipping the next generation with the tools and knowledge they need to lead, we ensure that our industry remains dynamic, resilient, and at the forefront of global communications.



OPINIUM SUMMARY



THE INITIAL OUTLOOK IS POSITIVE WITH MOST YOUNG PR PROFESSIONALS HAPPY IN THEIR CURRENT ROLE, AND MOST ASPIRING PR PROFESSIONALS OPTIMISTIC ABOUT SECURING A FIRST ROLE. ASIDE FROM SALARY, PR PROFESSIONALS PRIORITISE CAREER GROWTH, WORK-LIFE BALANCE, AND COMPANY CULTURE WHEN LOOKING FOR A NEW JOB.

James Endersby,
Chief Executive, Opinium



We are extremely proud to be partnering with the ICCO for their first ever Next Gen PR Report. Our research and insights will help better understand the experience of young and upcoming professionals within the PR industry. By equipping PR leaders with this knowledge we can hopefully address key concerns for the future of the industry as well as inform strategies to retain existing talent and attract new candidates.

The initial outlook is positive with most young PR professionals happy in their current role (69%). Also, most aspiring PR professionals are optimistic that they will secure a PR job when they graduate (74%), with most of these looking to work in an agency (50%). Excitingly, the main reasons given to pursue a career in PR surround the opportunity to be creative (57%) and it's fun, sociable environment (47%).

Looking at their experiences in their current role, young PR professionals' favourite parts of working in PR are personal development (35%), feeling valued by their company and colleagues (28%) and working on meaningful projects (26%). Three quarters (75%) also express that they find purpose in their work and seven in ten (70%) say that they achieve a good work/life balance. This is encouraging, as, aside from salary (60%), PR professionals prioritise career growth (49%), work-life balance (39%) and company culture (29%) when looking for a new job.

However, areas of improvement are highlighted, as two fifths (41%) report that they don't have enough time to complete tasks and over half (57%) don't feel well enough compensated in their role. Also, nearly two thirds (64%) report experiencing negative wellbeing from their job. Relieving pain points in these areas could help improve recruitment and retention in the industry.

Overall, the top current challenges to the PR industry surround financial strain such as economic conditions (35%), and clients unwilling to commit funds (34%). However, as the PR industry looks to adopt the latest tech, integrating AI and new technologies will be a significant challenge (28%), as having mastery of AI tools (47%) is reported as the most relevant skill set for the next generation of PR professionals.

NEXT GEN RESULTS

These findings are based on a survey of 187 PR professionals and aspiring PR professionals aged 18 – 35, conducted between March and July 2024.

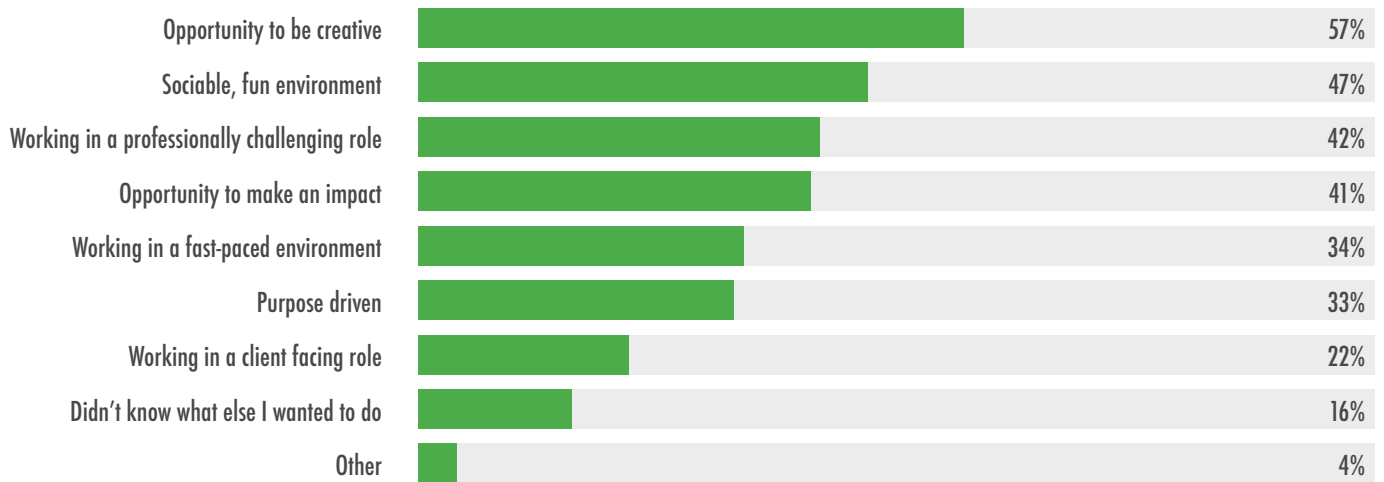


DRIVERS & INSPIRATION

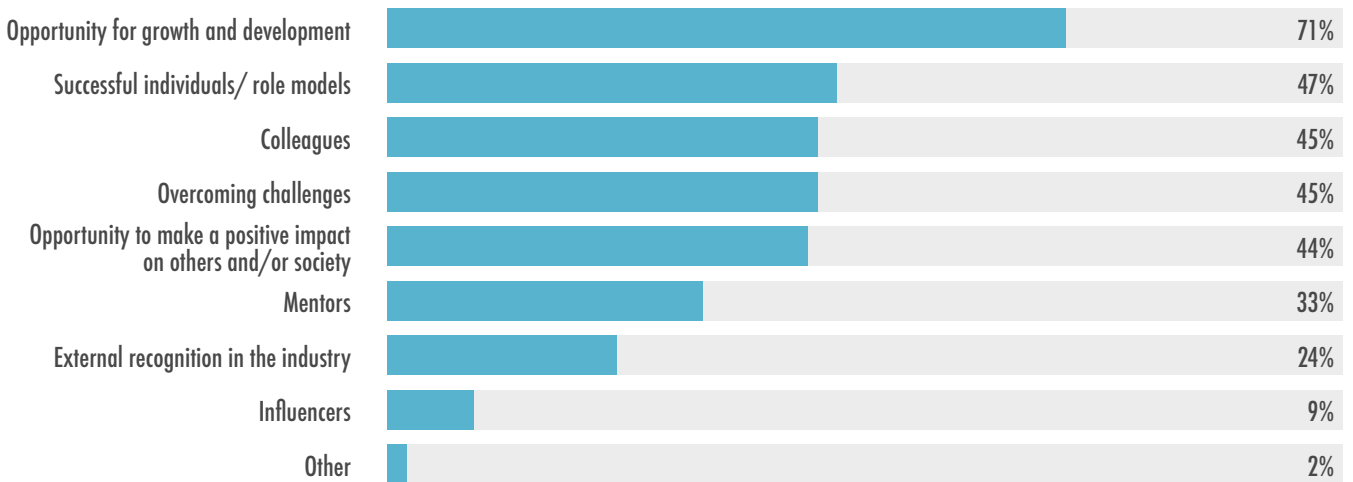


DRIVERS & INSPIRATION

REASONS TO PURSUE A PR CARRER

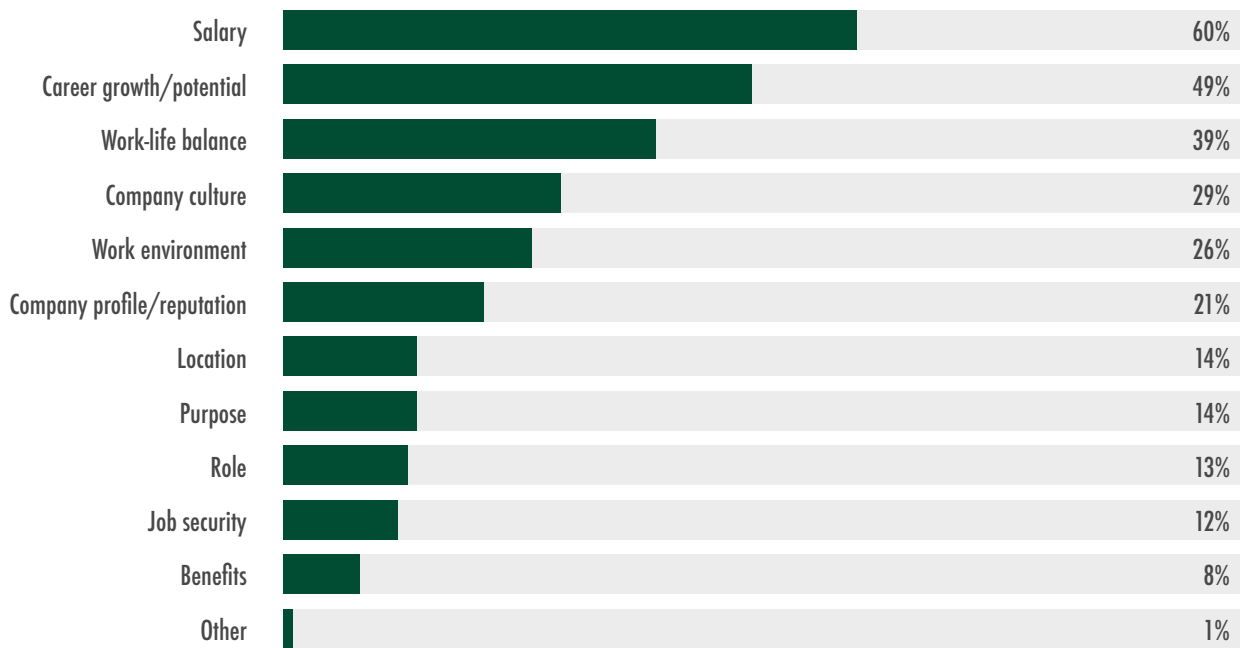


PROFESSIONAL INSPIRATION

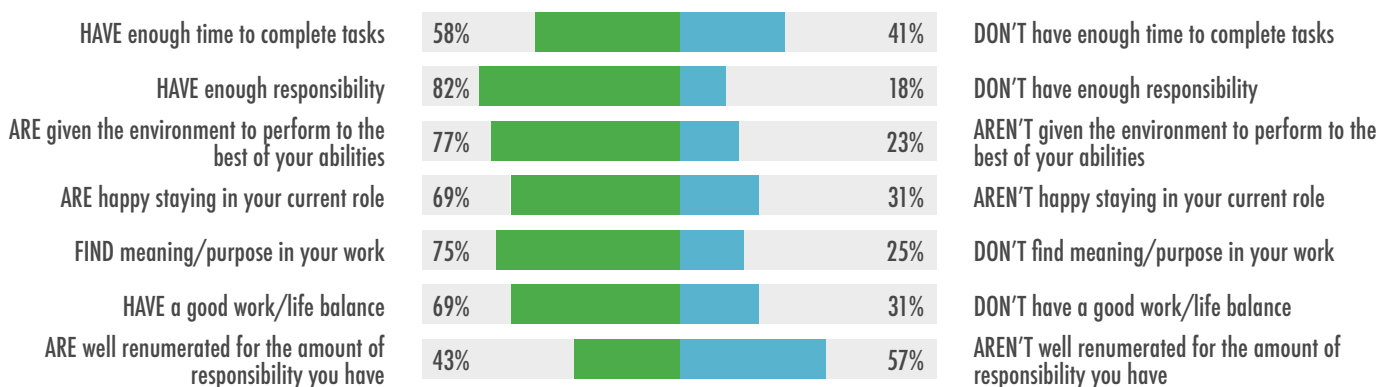


DRIVERS & INSPIRATION

TOP CONSIDERATIONS WHEN LOOKING FOR A JOB



IN YOUR CURRENT ROLE, DO YOU FEEL THAT YOU



DRIVERS & INSPIRATION A NEXT GEN PERSPECTIVE



THE SURVEY RESULTS REFLECT COMMITMENT AND CARRY AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE FOR AGENCY LEADERS LOOKING TO ATTRACT NEW TALENT.

Iskren Lilov (25),
Head of Marketing and
Communications at Ruepoint

ruepoint

From my perspective, a key takeaway for industry leaders is to take note of the importance of work/life balance as something to actively prioritise when it comes to attracting young talent. As the third highest consideration when looking for a new job (39%), it is far more important than I imagine it would have been a few generations ago. Just look at the two lowest-scoring considerations, job security (12%) and benefits (8%); factors which I believe older generations value more highly. The results are a clear indication that the younger generation want to be much more independent; they are not interested in staying at the same company forever or getting an extra streaming-subscription as part of their package. They want to fit their work in with their life, and not the other way around.

With that in mind, I'm also a bit surprised – in a good way – that the younger generation seems to be quite content when it comes to working in the industry. Though a small majority feel they deserve more when it comes to salary, I would actually have expected the number to be a great deal higher. Instead, the results show they're simply happy in their role (69%), feeling like they hold a position of responsibility (82%) and finding their work meaningful (75%). To me, this demonstrates a commitment to working in the industry, which is a very positive sign, and I don't think that was necessarily a given previously.

Personally, I joined the industry because I wanted to be creative and be in a position where you aren't just given tasks to execute, but where there's room for initiative – I actually left a job after two months for lacking just that. In that sense, it doesn't surprise me that creativity and opportunity for growth & development score as high as they do when it comes to the reasons for joining the industry and what inspires them. However, I think it's important to stress that for young professionals, growth doesn't only mean hierarchically, but also personally; that you feel you learn something that impacts you as a person.

DRIVERS & INSPIRATION

THE NEW FACE OF PR

- WHAT IS DRIVING YOUNG PROFESSIONALS TOWARDS PR



PR FIRMS THAT ALIGN THEMSELVES WITH SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE CAUSES AND CLIENTS MAY FIND THEMSELVES WITH A SIGNIFICANT ADVANTAGE IN ATTRACTING TOP YOUNG TALENT.

Girish Balachandran,
Founder and Managing
Director, ON PURPOSE

ON
PURPOSE

In an era of rapid socio-economic change, the PR industry is experiencing a significant shift and it is driven by the aspirations and values of its youngest professionals. The data from ICCO's Next Gen PR Report confirms what motivates this new generation of practitioners, and it's time for agencies and in-house teams to take note.

Unsurprisingly, salary remains a top priority, with 60% of young professionals citing it as their primary consideration when job hunting. However, this statistic tells only part of the story. What's truly intriguing is the complex web of factors that influence their career choices beyond the paycheck.

The allure of PR for these young talents lies in its promise of creativity, with 57% citing this as their main draw. This creative hunger is closely followed by the desire for a sociable, fun work environment (47%), challenging roles (42%), and the opportunity to make an impact (41%). These figures paint a picture of a generation that values purpose and enjoyment in their work as much as financial reward.

What's more, these young professionals are looking for more than just a job; they're seeking inspiration and growth. A staggering 71% cite opportunities for development as their primary professional inspiration. This desire for growth is matched by their admiration for successful role models (47%) and motivation they draw from colleagues and overcoming challenges (45% each).

Perhaps most tellingly, these young PR practitioners are driven by the opportunity to make a positive impact on society, a top five factor in both their professional inspiration and their reasons to pursue a career in PR.

DRIVERS & INSPIRATION

THE NEW FACE OF PR

- WHAT IS DRIVING YOUNG PROFESSIONALS TOWARDS PR

This should serve as a wake-up call to an industry often criticised for spin and superficiality at times and be a reason to commit anew to genuine engagement and change.

PR agencies at the forefront of this shift have recognized the importance of these factors, placing high value on culture, diversity, inclusion, and mental health considerations. This not only creates a safe and enjoyable workplace but also aligns with young professionals' desire to work in an environment that reflects their aspirations to impact the world positively.



SO, WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE FUTURE OF PR?

Firstly, agencies must offer clear paths for career progression, foster a positive work culture, and provide opportunities for creativity and meaningful work.

Secondly, the industry needs to embrace its potential for positive social impact. PR firms that align themselves with socially responsible causes and clients may find themselves with a significant advantage in attracting top young talent.

Lastly, mentorship and professional development programs should be at the forefront of every organisation's agenda. The data clearly shows that young professionals value growth and learning above almost all else.

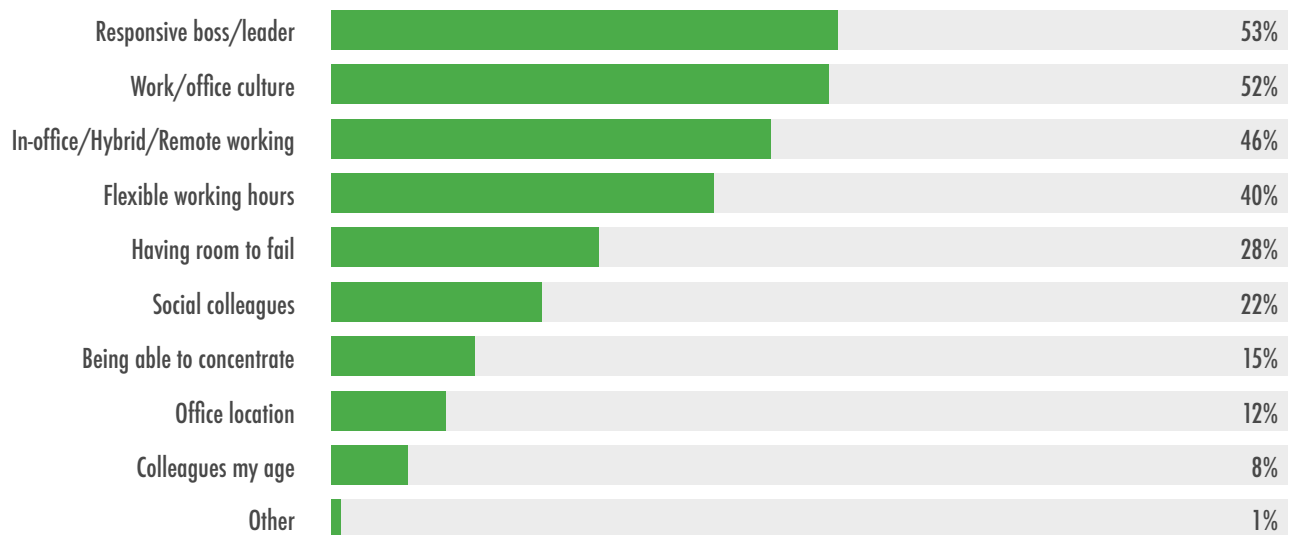
The industry stands at a crossroads. By understanding and adapting to its youngest members, it has the opportunity to reinvent itself as a field that not only shapes public opinion but also contributes positively to society. The future of PR lies in the hands of these young professionals. It's time we started listening to what they have to say.

CHALLENGES & BARRIERS

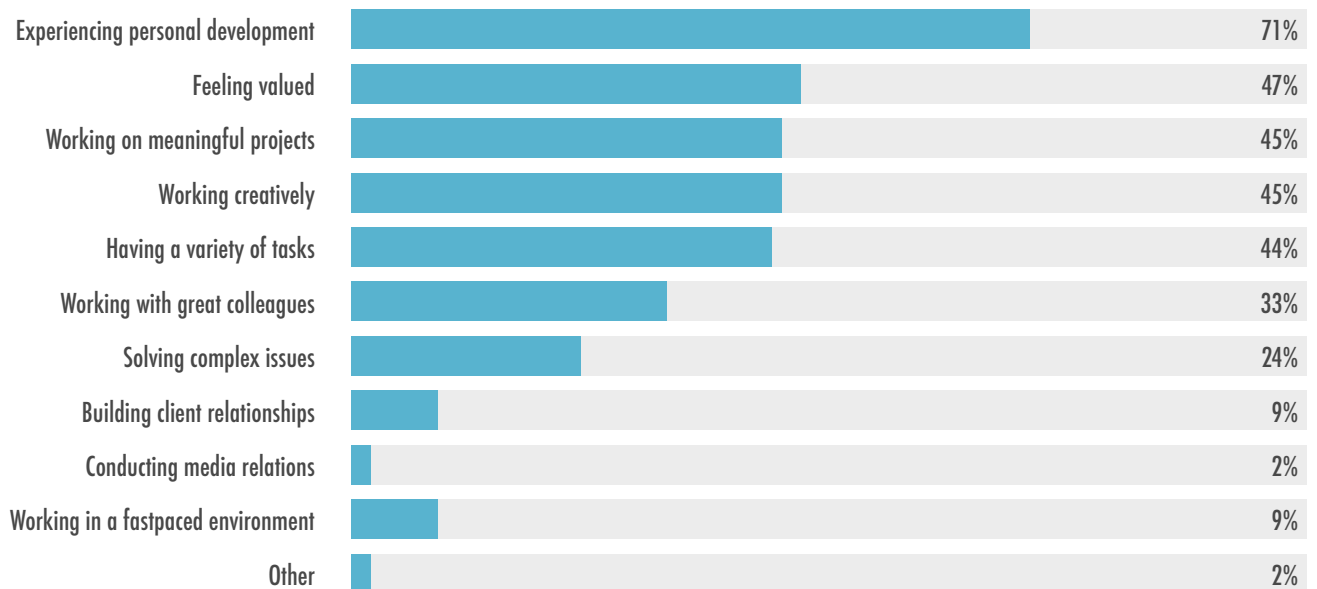


CHALLENGES & BARRIERS

IDEAL WORK ENVIRONMENT

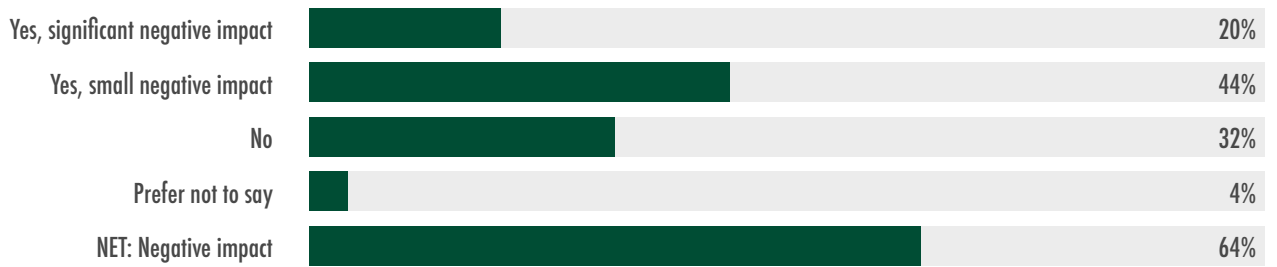


MOST ENJOYABLE ELEMENTS AT CURRENT WORK

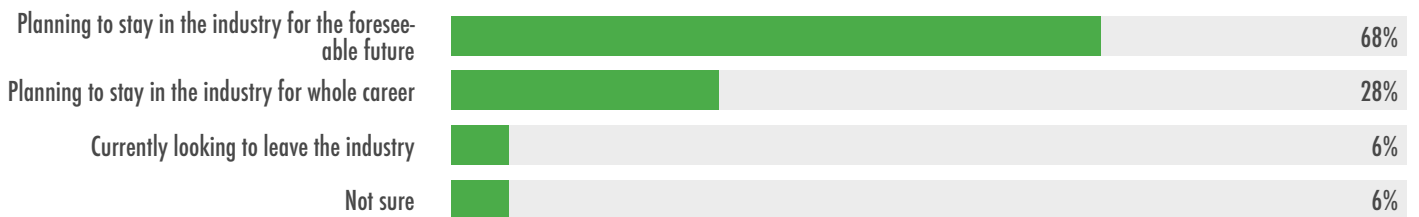


CHALLENGES & BARRIERS

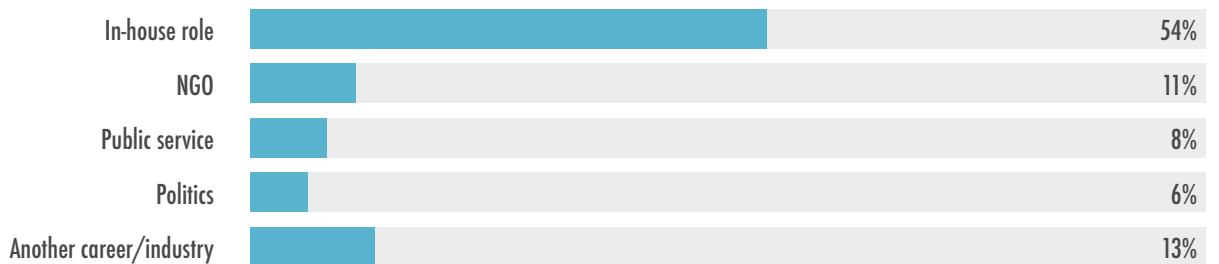
NEGATIVE MENTAL HEALTH IMPACT FROM JOB



CURRENT FEELINGS TOWARDS PR CAREER



DESTINATION IF DIDN'T WORK IN AN AGENCY



CHALLENGES & BARRIERS A NEXT GEN PERSPECTIVE



I BELIEVE LEADERS NEED TO ADAPT TO THE EVOLVING EXPECTATIONS OF YOUNGER GENERATIONS, BUT BEING RESPONSIVE TO EMPLOYEE NEEDS REMAINS KEY TO CREATING THE IDEAL WORK ENVIRONMENT.

Lauren O'Keeffe (29),
Account Director International
& Public Affairs at Burson

Burson

I'm generally optimistic about the future of the PR industry, if leaders can effectively address the barriers deterring prospective young talent with proactive solutions. The results from this year's ICCO Next Gen PR Report confirm that PR remains a strong career choice for many, with 68% intending to stay in the industry for the foreseeable future.

This clearly stems from the dynamic nature of PR agency work, particularly factors like experiencing personal development (35%) feeling valued (28%), working on meaningful projects (26%) and working creatively (25%).

However, leaders must adapt to the evolving expectations of our emerging workforce. Our industry has changed at a rapid pace in the past five years, due to things like the rise of hybrid working models and the growth of AI, meaning factors like the work/office culture (52%) and working arrangements (46%) are now essential to people's choices. Despite these changes to our industry, a responsive boss/leader (53%) is still more important than any other when it comes to an ideal working environment in PR.

What concerned me most about the results was the fact that 64% of respondents said their job has had at least a small negative impact on their mental health and/or wellbeing in the past year. There is clearly an urgent need to prioritise mental health resources and robust support services to help employees through challenging times.

Only 6% of respondents are currently looking to leave the PR industry, but 54% expressed they would be open to an in-house role if they didn't work in an agency. In reality, this can be quite a similar role, so I don't think there is an issue with the work itself, however it signals the need for agencies to remain competitive with in-house roles by prioritising factors like mental health, and fostering a fulfilling working environment.

CHALLENGES & BARRIERS HOPE FOR RETENTION, BUT NEED FOR ENCOURAGEMENT



33

THE RESULTS ARE HOPEFUL, AND PROVIDE CLEAR INSIGHT AND DIRECTION FOR AGENCY LEADERS ON HOW TO RETAIN THEIR TALENT.

Sonya Madeira,
Founder of award-winning
consultancy RICE based in
Singapore and part of the
Global Women in PR (GWPR)
Executive Board



For all the bashing PR and communications gets as a profession, the results give me hope that all is not lost. Like any career option, there are pluses and minuses, ups and downs, and while navigating this journey is very much a personal experience, it is important that we come together as an industry to provide the support and guidance needed by the next generation of PR and Communications pros.

Mental health, in particular, is an area that requires greater understanding, higher empathy and a flexible approach to enable our industry colleagues to make decisions that work better for them in the long run. This will have a significant impact on the numbers that choose to continue in this line of work as opposed to opting for another career.

It is heartening to see a majority of respondents are planning to remain in this industry. The top drivers for this are strong leaders, work culture and hybrid or remote working. I think the writing really is on the wall here - any organisation that is unable to provide these will continue to have a revolving door with youngsters passing through.

On the other hand, providing opportunities for personal development, making team members feel valued and giving them meaningful projects to work on is what will help them stay.

It is interesting that moving in-house remains the end game for many young professionals. Perhaps agencies need to have a think about what they need to do differently to turn the tide the other way.

CHALLENGES & BARRIERS HOPE FOR RETENTION, BUT NEED FOR ENCOURAGEMENT



I AM OPTIMISTIC THAT WE WILL HAVE A WONDERFUL NEXT GENERATION OF PR PROFESSIONALS, BUT LEADERS NEED TO ENCOURAGE THEM TO VIEW THE PROFESSION AS A LONG TERM CAREER OPTION.

Susan Hardwick,
Co-Founder and President
of GWPR



From my perspective I am not surprised by the results - young professionals do need to be encouraged to see the profession as a long term career option - there will always be ups and downs on the journey but with encouragement from the leaders in our industry to stay the course and increasing opportunities for mentoring and career skills development I am optimistic we will have a wonderful next generation of PR professionals.

Some thoughts taken from a recent PR Week article that I absolutely agree with:

- Improve internal comms: engage in listening exercises such as focus groups with older employees to find out about career aspirations and needs. Set up an employee resource group (ERG) or a 'wisdom circle' to deeper engage with topics such as age inclusion, job flexibility, upskilling and career transitioning.
- Start discussing career options when employees hit a certain milestone, maybe weaving it into the annual review. Find out if they need more flexibility, or a change of focus, and if they would be open to mentoring or retraining.



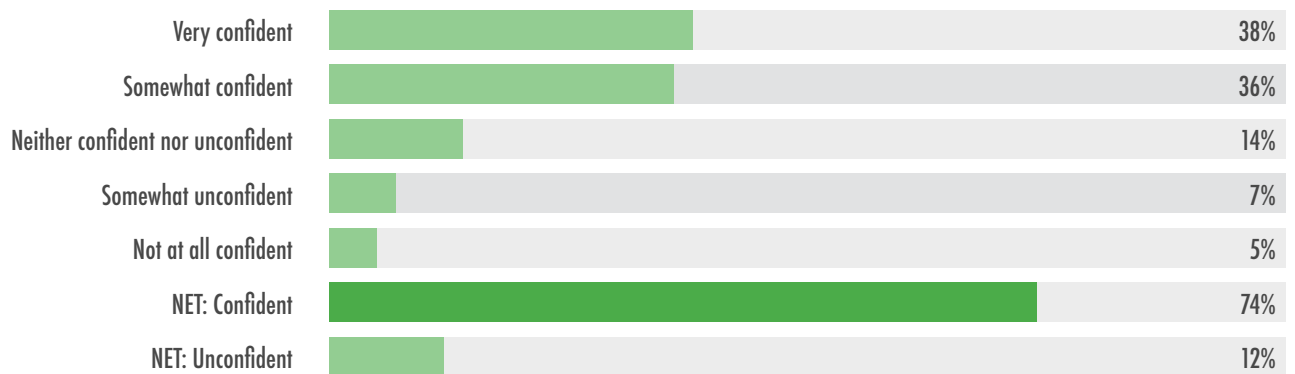
OUTLOOK & PERSPECTIVE

This section contains comparable data
from the ICCO 2023 World Report.

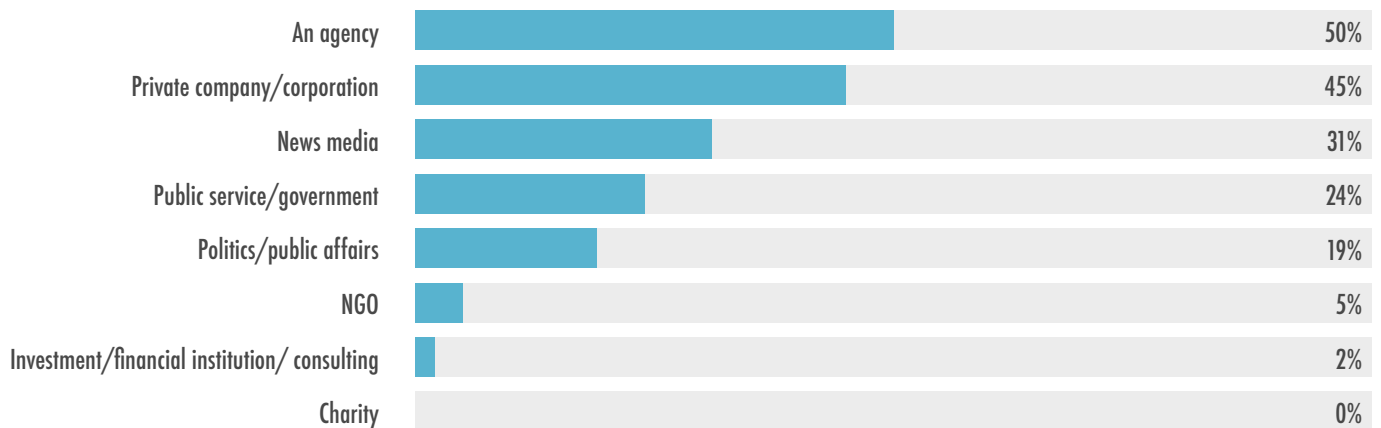


OUTLOOK & PERSPECTIVE FROM STUDENTS

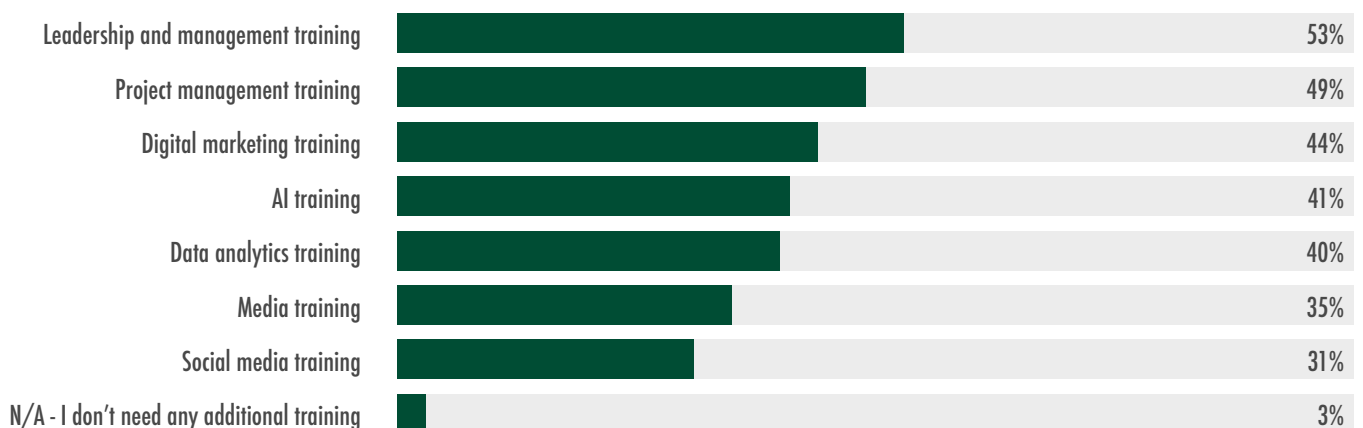
CONFIDENCE IN GETTING A PR JOB POST GRADUATION



IDEAL ORGANISATION TO WORK IN POST-GRADUATION

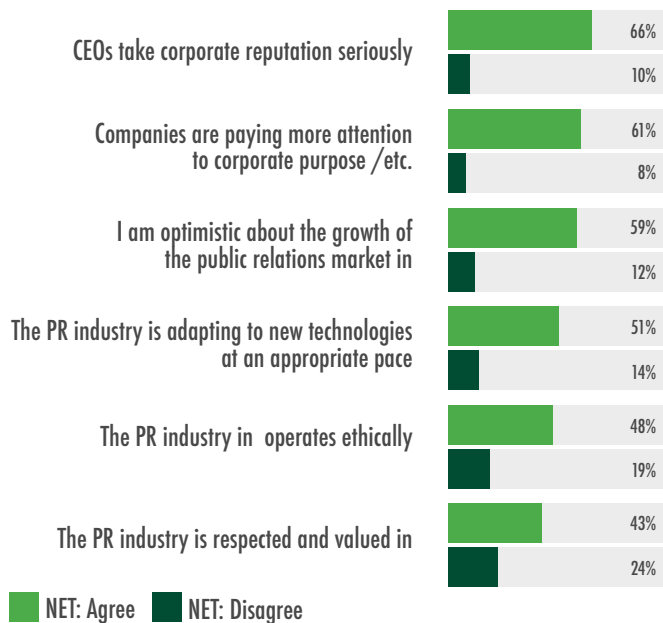


ADDITIONAL TRAINING/QUALIFICATIONS NEEDED TO PROGRESS IN PR CAREER

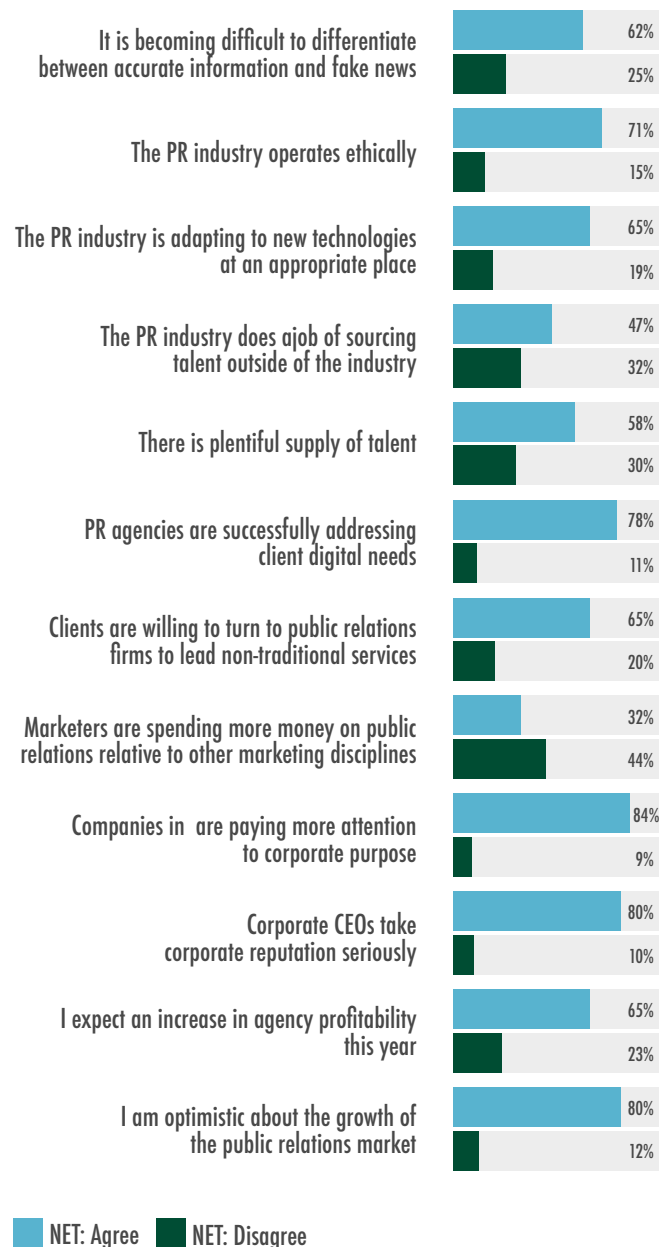


OUTLOOK & PERSPECTIVE

NEXT GEN PR REPORT 2024 ATTITUDES TOWARDS PR INDUSTRY

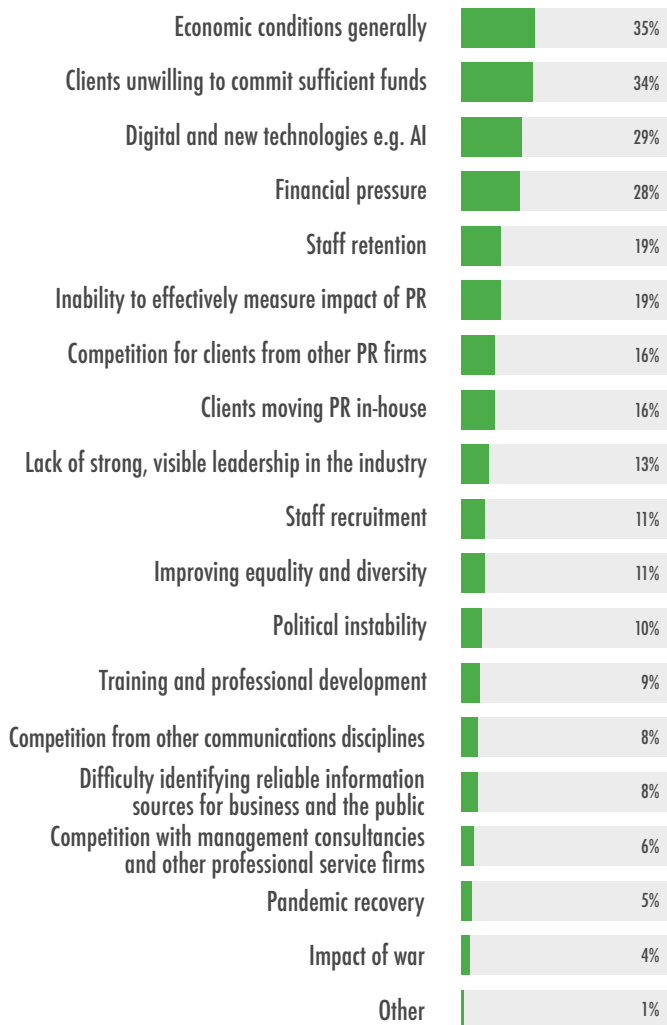


WORLD PR REPORT 2023 ATTITUDES TOWARDS PR INDUSTRY



OUTLOOK & PERSPECTIVE

NEXT GEN PR REPORT 2024 BIGGEST CHALLENGES TO PR INDUSTRY



WORLD PR REPORT 2023 BIGGEST CHALLENGES TO PR INDUSTRY

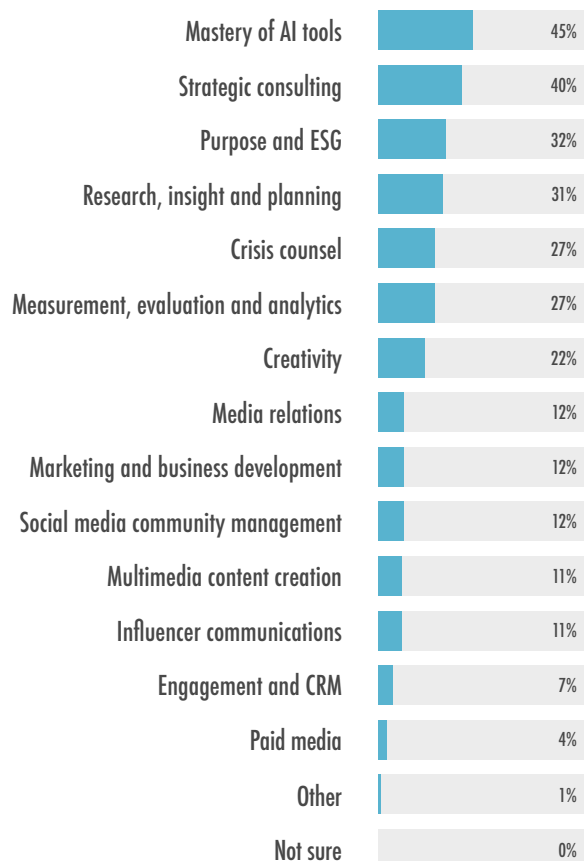


OUTLOOK & PERSPECTIVE

NEXT GEN PR REPORT 2024 RELEVANT SKILLS FOR NEXT GEN OF PR PROFESSIONALS



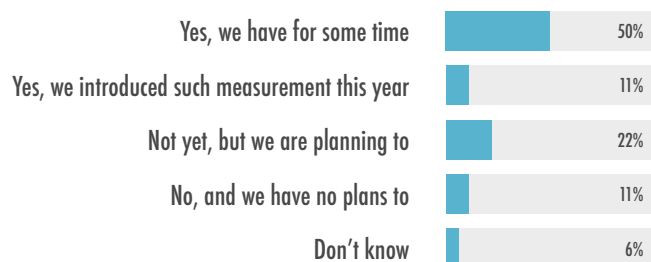
WORLD PR REPORT 2023 RELEVANT SKILLS FOR NEXT GEN OF PR PROFESSIONALS



NEXT GEN PR REPORT 2024 PRESENCE OF D&I POLICIES



WORLD PR REPORT 2023 PRESENCE OF D&I POLICIES



OUTLOOK & PERSPECTIVE

AN EXTERNAL PERSPECTIVE



THIS SURVEY IS INVALUABLE TO THE GLOBAL PR AND COMMUNICATIONS INDUSTRY, IT OFFERS TANGIBLE INSIGHTS THAT HELP US TO BETTER UNDERSTAND YOUNG PROFESSIONALS, THEIR MINDSET AND KEY MOTIVATIONAL DRIVERS.

Rifqah Abrahams,
Lecturer, Media Department,
Cape Peninsula University of
Technology, Cape Town, South Africa



Based on the results, the younger generation seems to be a lot more confident in their own abilities (74%), which is refreshing, as this shows that they have a clearer idea of who they are and where they find themselves. Half of the respondents (50%) know they want to work in an agency, whereas 45% see themselves in a private company; demonstrating forward thinking from this younger generation and a clear idea of where they want to be. They also seem to understand what skills they need in order to fulfil their role within the PR and communications industry. I must admit, the high level of confidence in landing a job in PR surprised me, especially considering the rise in levels of unemployment globally. However the level of confidence and self-awareness shown by young professionals in the results clearly indicates the level of commitment and dedication to finding employment in this thriving industry.

I foresee significant growth within the PR industry, as young professionals are pushing the boundaries, and have identified areas where they need more training. Over half (53%) said they seek leadership and management training after completing their qualification, which shows us that they seek to be leaders, perhaps hoping to run their own business at some stage. These young professionals are the future of the industry and they are presenting themselves with confidence, viewing their profession as being one of ethical standards (71%), an industry that is consciously adapting to new communication and media practices (65%), and they are confident that the industry is moving in a direction that is best for their clients (78%).

My advice to industry leaders and institutions of learning is that they need to continue to nurture and build these young professionals. The industry should be getting involved in the learning process of these young, emerging professionals and help develop their micro-credential profiles, which in turn will further help to expand and build the industry. The world continues to change, and we need to continue to adapt and expand accordingly. There is more room for growth and development, but this requires all parties to work together to continue building this brilliant industry.

OUTLOOK & PERSPECTIVE TALENT, TRAINING, AND TOOLS FOR THE FUTURE.



ENSURING THE NEXT GENERATION'S PERCEPTION OF CORE SKILL SETS AND TRAINING REQUIRED TO PROGRESS IS IN ALIGNMENT WITH EMPLOYER'S VISION FOR DEVELOPMENT AND PROGRESSION WILL BE CENTRAL TO REDUCING CHURN

Matt Ver Bruggen,
President, Capstone Hill Search



The ICCO Next Gen PR Report reveals a mix of optimism and concern amongst the next generation of PR professionals. While confidence in job prospects is evident, significant challenges are also highlighted, particularly with the rapid evolution of required skills and the shifting economic landscape.

The report underscores a strong sense of optimism within the industry regarding growth and employment. Despite concerns about economic conditions and client budgets, an encouraging 59% of respondents expect industry growth in the coming year, and 74% of upcoming graduates are confident about securing industry roles. Only 12% expressed a lack of confidence in either area.

It is also encouraging to see leadership training identified among young professionals as a key requirement to progressing their PR career. Interestingly AI Training was ranked 4th also behind project management and digital marketing training. This is somewhat at odds with the most relevant skill set for next gen practitioners as identified in the report, and indeed the findings in the most recent ICCO World Report, which both listed Mastery of AI Tools as the number one most important skill identified for next generation talent.

Real time market demand also suggests a differing focus. Capstone Hill Search works with some of the world's leading PR & Communications agencies, strategic advisory firms, private corporations and public bodies across multiple sectors.

While leadership ambition is warmly embraced, it's crucial to recognize that before stepping into leadership roles, mastering the fundamentals of both traditional and emerging PR and technical skills is paramount. Skill sets including client relationship management, strategic consultancy, media relations, AI, analytics remain universally in high demand.

OUTLOOK & PERSPECTIVE TALENT, TRAINING, AND TOOLS FOR THE FUTURE.

Strategic consulting is a particularly important skill set, highlighted as the third most relevant for next gen talent. It is also listed as the top area for growth and the second most important skill after AI mastery in this year's ICCO World Report. Delivering strategic insight and maintaining key relationships remain indispensable in the relationship-driven PR industry.

Perhaps not surprising given the sense of optimism toward industry growth, staff retention was also highlighted as a key challenge to the industry in the coming year. Training and development remain a critical factor in ensuring retention, regardless of market growth and demand. Ensuring the next generation's perception of core skill sets and training required to progress is in alignment with employer's vision for development and progression will be central to reducing churn.

Additionally, prioritising diversity and inclusion is not just about attracting talent—it's about maintaining a competitive edge in a rapidly evolving market. To that end we would hope to see 100% businesses recording long-held D&I policies in next year's report. The next generation of PR professionals is eager and capable, and it's the leader's responsibility to ensure they are equipped with the right blend of skills and opportunities to lead the industry forward. While AI and digital skills are gaining prominence, there will remain great demand for interpersonal skills, particularly as the industry recognizes that relationship-building remains at the heart of PR. We might see more integrated training that combines technology with human-centric skills like media relations and client management.



LOOKING AHEAD

THE NEXT GEN GROUP PERSPECTIVE

As the ICCO Next Gen Group, we serve as a voice for young PR professionals in the industry globally. This report has been developed as a tool to highlight what drivers truly motivate the next generation of talent – and what the potential barriers might be. Overall, we are optimistic to see that the PR industry remains an attractive career choice for many, particularly in agency roles, with many young professionals eager to grow their careers in this dynamic field. Over two-thirds of agency professionals plan to stay in the industry long-term, with some even viewing it as a lifelong career. However, retaining our next generation of talent requires a deeper understanding of what encourages them.

The report highlights creativity as a major draw for younger talent, with over half entering the industry for the chance to be creative, but salary remains a crucial factor for job satisfaction, with 60% prioritising it when considering roles. Despite this, almost just as many (57%) feel underpaid given their responsibilities, demonstrating this as a key focus area for the industry moving forward.

Growth and development are also key drivers, with 71% citing these as crucial for staying motivated and inspired, and the opportunity for career growth being the second most important factor when choosing a job (49%).

Work-life balance is another significant priority, ranking as the third most important consideration when job hunting (39%). The good news is that nearly 70% feel they've achieved that balance, with most saying they have the time and environment needed to perform at their best. Additionally, 75% find purpose in their work, which, although not the top motivator, is a critical aspect that could be further nurtured in a world increasingly focused on sustainability and social impact.

To retain this generation of talent, organisations need to prioritise a positive workplace culture, strong leadership, meaningful work, and competitive compensation. Addressing these needs, along with better mental health support and leadership training, will be key to ensuring that the PR industry remains both desirable and sustainable for the next generation of professionals.

None of this is done overnight, and though the findings in this report hint at a solution, the best path forward may differ depending on region, country, and company size - not to mention culture. As the Next Gen Board, it is our ambition to work closely with all parts of the industry - from intern to executive - to highlight the best case-examples, explore new ideas and initiatives, and in doing so help make sure the younger voices are not only spoken, but heard.



LOOKING AHEAD

THE NEXT GEN GROUP PERSPECTIVE

ICCO NEXT GEN GROUP



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