

Reflecting on my five years at Ogilvy Public Relations

By [Kajsa Claude](#)

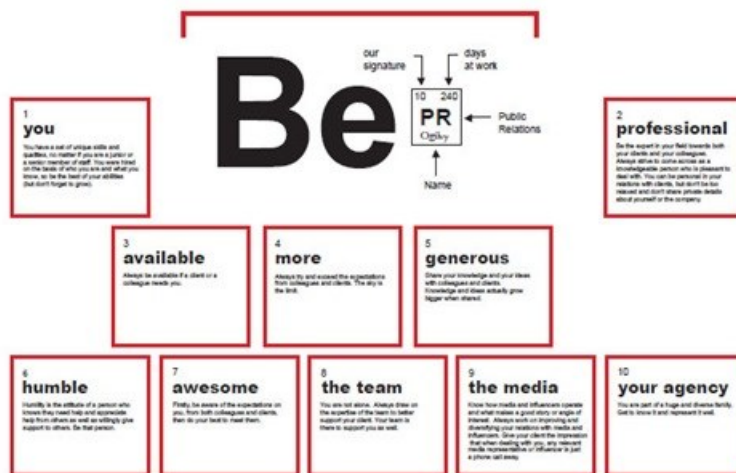
25 Jan 2016

In the last five years, I've witnessed pivotal moments and historical events occur in South Africa including the hosting of the 2010 World Cup soccer tournament, the headway of democratic progress heralding 20 years of liberation and the passing of our most honoured and loved president, Nelson Mandela.

Throughout this time, my career at Ogilvy Public Relations (Ogilvy PR) has also travelled a continuous evolving and significant path. Coming from Scandinavia and working across many multinational companies and industries, my time at Ogilvy PR has provided the biggest learning curves and the greatest triumphant moments. The diverse history and culture in South Africa is extremely rewarding. By understanding where we come from, we have an appreciation of what we do today, how we do it and where our efforts are going to take us.

Commencing work at Ogilvy PR in 2010 as a business director, there was a total staff offering of 15 people. Now, we have grown to an astounding 65. Helping build the PR consumer practice, I was promoted to head of client services in 2012 and I'm still finding my feet in this role today, in a PR landscape which incessantly changes and modernises daily.

The Periodic table for PR Professionals



[click to enlarge](#)

Ogilvy & Mather (O&M) is globally known as the long-standing advertising and PR specialists within the industry producing some of the world's most memorable and classic work. Pivotal to the success of Ogilvy PR are the people within the walls of this institution who don the O&M logo with pride.

The world of advertising and PR is nothing short of competitive. With more and more marketing students graduating each year, the acquisition of a job within an established agency or marketing firm is highly sought after.

I've seen many come through these doors, those who encompass the spirit, inhale the unrelenting determination and elevate themselves and their careers through to top-level management. On the flip side, I've also observed the ones who pass through from entrance to exit as a swift detour, having not taken the time to absorb the culture and work. The truth is, the demands are very high at Ogilvy PR and we don't shy away from the fact that we ask the impossible from our people. We are responsible for turning coal into diamonds.

To make a lasting career in the PR world, you really need to walk your talk and be willing to take on anything that comes your way. As I always say, if you make it here, you can make it anywhere. You are faced with harsh truths daily, constant feedback, be it negative or positive, so it's important to be open minded and willing to take on criticism in an effort to develop and build strengths. You are the exception if you fit in at Ogilvy PR.

Furthermore, while it's important to adapt to the rules of any institution, what we look for at Ogilvy PR is those who have the perfect mix of extreme assertiveness and genuine humbleness. The successful employees are the ones who carve their own niche and voice into what they do and, consequently, forge a path that secure a spot for themselves.

To become a PR superstar at Ogilvy PR, I encourage you to embrace the following guiding principles daily:

- Be You.** Your unique skills and qualities are what landed you a position at Ogilvy PR. Don't blend in, stand out and use your talents to the best of your abilities.
- Be Professional.** Be the expert in your field towards both clients and colleagues. Always strive to be knowledgeable and personable.
- Be the Expectations.** Be aware of the expectations of you from both your colleagues and clients, and do your best to meet them.
- Be More.** Always try to exceed the expectations from colleagues and clients.
- Be Generous.** Share your knowledge and your ideas with both colleagues and clients, instil the culture of ideas growing bigger when shared.
- Be Humble.** Humility is the attitude to have when asking for help and providing help where needed.
- Be Available.** Always be available when needed.
- Be the Team.** You are not alone. Draw on the expertise of the team and support each other.
- Be the Media and the Influencers.** Know how media and influencers operate. Diversify your relations and contacts, build and grow your media relationships.

Valuing the loyalty and staying power of our top achievers show through in the amazing work we produce. We offer development opportunities to our staff and ensure their career is on track. Encouraging growth and learning within our faculty is of paramount priority and we constantly strive to keep staff engaged, stimulated and lift morale at all times. Our people really are our DNA. Ogilvy PR will not exist without its people and we honour those that continuously create the successful business we are today.

ABOUT KAJSA CLAUDE

As head of client service of Ogilvy Public Relations JHB, Kajsa Claude leads Ogilvy PR's client services teams, where she is responsible for the health of OPR's client relationships and the services the teams provide to all their clients.

» Reflecting on my five years at Ogilvy Public Relations - 25 Jan 2016

[View my profile and articles...](#)