

## Seek Out Traditional and Non-Traditional Skill Sets for PR Professional, Part II

Written by PR Etc., Inc.

Published by [Rockford Register Star](#)

Monday, May 22, 2006

In the previous column, I discussed some of the 'traditional' skill sets essential to a career in public relations. Today I outline some non-traditional skill sets that employers – or potential employees – should consider when seeking a role in this profession.

Non-traditional skill sets are actually talents that individuals innately have or are obtained through experience. There are opportunities to showcase these skills during an interview or, if you are the interviewer, to determine if an individual has these talents.

- **Strategy development.** Whether an entry- or executive-level position, public relations professionals need to understand how to develop a strategy that reinforces an organization's message and business goals. Does the interviewee recognize your brand/your marketplace message? Does s/he know your business goals? If they don't know either, you can still test their talents by giving them a written or oral assignment to develop a strategy for unveiling a company or product announcement.
- **Enthusiasm.** If your public relations representative doesn't have the energy and enthusiasm for your product or organization, how will s/he convince the external world to have it? Enthusiasm is also essential to work the internal communications among your organization. In many situations, the communications pro must educate and explain efforts and activities to everyone in your organization.
- **Research.** Much of the work in the public relations field is behind-the-scenes research activities. From studying media to researching competitors' activities to investigating potential partner opportunities, your public relations professional must be able to manage these efforts for your organization to be successful.

There are obviously other traditional and non-traditional skill sets that are essential for your business. The key is to understand them before you begin to interview for the role.