

# FROM INTERN TO SEASONED PR PRO: TIPS FROM THE BOHLSSEN GROUP TEAM

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The transition to full-time can be overwhelming and uncertain. To help answer the inevitable questions every intern-turned-professional experiences, we've asked a few members of our team to share what they learned from taking that leap, as well as their tips for making the most out of a new role.

Now ranging from publicists to executives, [Karen](#), [Lauren](#), [Craig](#), [Andrea](#) and [Jordan](#) all started at Bohlsen Group as interns. Here are the top 10 things they learned by transitioning from intern work to the responsibilities and workload of a PR professional:

## THERE'S NO TEACHER LIKE EXPERIENCE

College professors equip you with the tools you need to be successful in a professional environment, but being an intern teaches you what Public Relations work actually is. "There's a lot that we're taught in the classroom, but there's so much you can't learn (client management, pitching, working with media, etc.) until you're actually doing it," Karen says.

Even when you become a full time employee, you are not done learning. Being around your colleagues every day, assessing whether what you are doing is successful or not, and letting your experiences inform your future work are all ways you continue to learn on a daily basis.

## BE PREPARED TO SWITCH GEARS OFTEN

Former interns Jordan and Lauren both recognized a change of pace once they became a full time employee. "An agency requires you to work on various projects and juggle different clients at the same time," Jordan says. "You have to be able to manage your time so every one of your clients feels that they're the most important."

Switching between tasks and projects often is a positive aspect of working with clients because it keeps you on your toes! As Lauren points out, "I liked learning how to go between all types of writing, from a technical strategic document to a fun quiz pitch."

## DON'T BE AFRAID TO ASK QUESTIONS

No one expects you to be perfect; you're new! Karen suggests that if you don't understand something or are looking for clarification about where your work fits in

the overall process, don't be afraid to ask. It's important to make sure you understand the expectations of your assigned project or task.

### **BE RESOURCEFUL, B-E RESOURCEFUL**

Part of being resourceful is not only knowing when to ask questions, but also coming prepared with possible solutions to those questions.

Craig and Lauren both agree that to make a mature and responsible impression, you can't just go through the motions. Even if it seems difficult, when you're feeling out of your element, it is the perfect time to get comfortable following your own instincts.

If you don't know where else to turn, don't be afraid to use Google. "Google will be one of your best friends," Jordan says.

### **CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISM IS YOUR FRIEND**

Constructive criticism is the best thing for you and your work when you are a brand new PR professional. Rooted in experience and trial by error, constructive criticism provides direction and clarity. It also opens the door for coworkers with various viewpoints to explain their approach to a project, learn from one another, and, ultimately, garner the best result possible for the client.

### **ALWAYS HOLD YOURSELF ACCOUNTABLE**

For both full time employees and interns, there is a certain level of trust that the individual is capable of completing their work. While Bohlsen Group certainly strives for an open, supportive office environment, you have to hold yourself accountable to your own deadlines, manage your own workload, and make sure clients are happy with the work being completed on their behalf. You are responsible for your own success.

### **DEVELOP YOUR VOICE**

The transition from intern to full time is your chance to become the type of employee you want to be seen as by others. Interns may not always feel empowered to speak up, so if given the chance, don't be afraid to do so as a new employee. "I wish someone had told me to take more chances and be more bold as an intern," Andrea says. "Even if you are unsure, there's nothing to lose and everything to gain by speaking up and showing others you can contribute."

Being confident in your work, understanding where you have room to grow, and taking advantage of the knowledge around you are all ways you can develop a better sense of your work style, preferences and skills.

## **STOP, COLLABORATE AND LISTEN**

Former interns agree: collaboration is the key to being successful in an office environment. “You have to work with people to accomplish tasks and you can’t do everything by yourself,” says Jordan. “Use the knowledge of your coworkers and offer advice when someone needs help with a project.”

## **B IS FOR BALANCE...AND BAGELS**

The Bohlsen team is pretty serious about its bagels. It is also very serious about its work. The key? Balance.

It’s important to maintain a balance of both work life and home life. Adjusting to a full-time office schedule can be tough coming from college, a place where, as Craig points out, it is almost impossible to have a routine. However, becoming a full-time employee means juggling client work, admin work, and a busy schedule. So, it’s important to learn skills like prioritizing and time management to keep yourself in check.

In addition to managing and understanding work expectations, don’t forget to check in with yourself to see how you’re doing – maybe take yourself out for a bagel. We recommend the Asiago cheese.

## **BE A SPONGE – CONSTANTLY ABSORB INFORMATION**

Read as much as you can – blogs, news articles, books, magazines, whatever. Karen points out that reading can not only enhance how you think, help put your work in context, and give more insight into the PR industry, but it is also a great way to center yourself when you may be feeling overwhelmed.

Bottom line, soak up all the knowledge you can from the professionals around you. You can always learn from others, whether it is from an AP Style change, feedback on a strategic document, or, perhaps, the scoop on the hot new bagel shop.

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Interested in joining Bohlsen Group as an intern? For Corporate and Nonprofit, please send résumé, cover letter and relevant writing samples to [Muriel Cross and Kerry Barmann](#). For Events and Entertainment, please send résumé, cover letter and relevant writing samples to [Jessica Redden and Courtney Stiehl](#).