

media relations at Weber Shandwick

 By [Jessica Tennant](#)

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This week, as part of our #YouthMonth feature, we go behind the selfie with Tankiso Motsoeneng, junior associate: media relations at Weber Shandwick, who recently won Best Up-and-Coming Public Relations Professional at the 2020 Prism Awards.

1. Where do you live, work and play?

I was born and raised in the Free State but currently live in Marshalltown, a suburb of Johannesburg located in Region F of the City of Johannesburg Metropolitan.

I am a foodie and an adventurous person. I enjoy going to food markets, indoor/outdoor chilled vibes with friends and basically doing anything that networks me with new people. Now that the country is on lockdown, I spend my time indoors, baking, following trends on social media, listening to music and enhancing my skills and knowledge with online courses.



2. What's your claim to fame?

I have been awarded the Best Up-and-Coming PR professional.



#PrismAwards2020: ALL THE WINNERS!

15 May 2020



3. Describe your career so far.

My career has massively transformed with the speed of light. I've learnt to be proactive. It comes with a thirst of always wanting to add value towards the work I do for clients. PR is a very fast-paced field and if you can't keep up, you will hate it. Every day is a new learning. Each day is never the same. I knew I had made it when I became my colleagues' "directory" for media contacts. Laughs.

4. Tell us a few of your favourite things.

Not only do I love meeting new people as well as being out and about, but I also love pets, and music.

5. What do you love about your industry?

The most fascinating thing I love about my industry is what I do. Media relations. It connects me with different people every day. It has taught me to understand that everyone has preferences in life. Most importantly the industry has taught me that there's no such a thing as a stupid idea. It allows you to run with your wild thoughts while also teaching you that you still need to be relevant and relate to your audience. This has also contributed to my personal growth as well.

6. Describe your average workday, if such a thing exists.

There is no such thing as an average workday in public relations. As a junior associate: media relations at Weber Shandwick, one of my day-to-day duties includes and is not limited to media relations, proactively seeking media opportunities for clients, leading projects, compiling reports and participating in new businesses pitches – just to name a few.

7. What are the tools of your trade?

Understanding clients' business is the best tool one could ever have in order to deliver the best results. This is the main mechanism to one producing the best results. There is no way you can provide a service you don't understand. You will be hindered from even finding proactive ways of sustaining your service or even adding value to it. Maintaining a good colleague and media relationship is also the key drive to producing great work. Excellent teamwork and morale always pay off with great results.

8. Who is getting it right in your industry?

There are a lot of formulas to solving the problem and I think at the moment everyone is doing what is working for them, and in this case, there is no right or wrong. The most important factor is everyone adapting to the evolving world and knowing how to satisfy clients with a great quality of work. PR is a demanding industry – we are in a field that offers a service to people and the needs they have. As such, we need to be dynamic at all times to be able to sustain the relationships we have with people.

9. List a few pain points the industry can improve on.

A shift to the digital landscape, crises management and also being a trusted advisor towards clients by being able to guide them on what can and cannot work in terms of storytelling.

10. What are you working on right now?

Most of my clients are tech clients, and currently, I'm working towards a virtual live event that one of my clients will be hosting for Africa. It is daunting as this is likely the first virtual live event that I'd have to support my client. It's a massive summit for the "techie guys".

11. Tell us some of the buzzwords floating around in your industry at the moment, and some of the catchphrases you utter yourself.

- "When we get back to the office"
- "Stay safe"
- "Be careful"

12. Where and when do you have your best ideas?

My creativity is triggered by mood. I need to be excited about the brief to be able to bring out the best ideas. In most cases, I get my best ideas when I'm alone, chilled without any distractions to my thoughts.

13. What's your secret talent/party trick?

Braiding hair.

14. Are you a technophobe or a technophile?

I am definitely a technophile. I normally refer to myself as an explorer. I get so excited just going through my phone and

discovering new features that come with different apps or even my phone. I am more fascinated by AI and IoT. They make one feel like a boss!

15. What would we find if we scrolled through your phone?

Different food delivery apps, games, social media apps and obviously lots of pictures.

16. What advice would you give to newbies hoping to crack into the industry?

You need to be open-minded and keen to learn new things. Nothing is ever personal. Put in the hard work as well as doing it like it's your last, and finally, when you've got a grasp of things, keep up the consistency. Always ask yourself what you want to be known for.

ABOUT JESSICA TENNANT

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