

# Break Free from Your PR and Marketing Rut!

According to many sources, 80 percent of new year's resolutions fail by the second week of February.

I, for one, am still going strong in my resolution for punctuality. However, the general statistics are bleak and discouraging. (It's almost as if "they" want you to admit defeat before getting started.)

Now that we have entered the statistically proven timeframe for resolution failure, let's [consider resolutions in a new light](#). Sometimes resolving to do XYZ can feel overwhelming and impossible, so instead, why not work to break out of a rut or an all-too-comfortable routine? A new year is the perfect time to establish fresh beginnings in your PR and marketing practice, so press "pause," take a step back, and decide on some minor, thoughtful changes that will help reinvigorate your work.

As PR and marketing professionals, our worlds revolve around creativity and awareness. Life in a rut dampens both. Now, make no mistake – I absolutely thrive on routine, and some of my methods are tried and true. But recently, I have found that [making some seemingly miniscule changes](#) can pay dividends when it comes to productivity, creativity, mindset and ultimately, success for my clients. Think about the success of today's most influential businesspeople. How did they "arrive"? By reinventing and rediscovering. Iconic Apple co-founder Steve Jobs once said, "I think if you do something and it turns out pretty good, then you should go do something else wonderful, not dwell on it for too long. Just figure out what's next."

Here are some tips for breaking free of whatever rut has you stuck.

## Find a new perspective

Fresh perspective is invaluable. No matter how many years of experience you have under your belt, seeking the input and opinion of trusted colleagues is always worthwhile. Make the extra effort to get to know, and genuinely connect with, those around you. Even individuals who don't work in your department will have something worthwhile to share. You might be pleasantly surprised. Maybe you'll laugh. You might just find a new go-to lunch spot. But most importantly, by doing this, you will gain a new view.

When it comes to any PR and marketing scenario, it's always important to examine the facts from all angles. You'll find deep appreciation in colleagues who can help you see things from a different point of view.



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## Ask “why?”

All too often, we do what we do because it's what we've always been doing. The best PR and marketing professionals have the wherewithal to ask “why?” It's helpful to question your own habits and your routine. Why are you doing what you're doing? Where can you make changes that would be beneficial?

## Remember to look for the obvious

Sometimes the solution is right before your eyes, yet we miss it time and time again. I know that when I'm deeply immersed in a work project, I become so consumed by the daily minutia and end goal that I can miss something obvious and simple that's right in front of me. Solutions don't have to be complicated or taxing. Something as simple as reformatting a spreadsheet could make all the difference in the world – in how you use information, what information you should add or what elements could be deleted, leading to stronger, more-effective use of that spreadsheet and its components.

## Make comparisons

In life, comparisons are generally a negative thing. Does that social media scrolling leave you feeling like you're a bad dog mom? Or lazy? Or boring? Or unsophisticated? Those evaluations are unhealthy and untrue. But in PR and marketing, comparison is healthy and positive. There's usually a case study resource available to help inspire your client matter, business plan or media objectives. No need to start from scratch. Look to what others have done and then find ways to apply those techniques to your own situation.

## Leave your comfort zone

Leaving a comfort zone can be intimidating. But to break out of a rut, it's vital that you challenge yourself to act in ways that aren't necessarily natural. Are you normally quiet during meetings, speaking only when asked a question? Try being assertive and speaking up! You have valuable perspectives to add. Or, are you normally the one who does all the talking? Maybe it's time to take a step back to listen and let others lead the conversation. IBM Chair, President and CEO Ginni Rometty once said, “Someone told me growth and comfort do not coexist. And I think it's a really good thing to remember.”

## Never stop learning

How many professional organizations are there in the PR and marketing industry? Far too many to count! From the [Legal Marketing Association](#) and the [Society of Marketing Professional Services](#) to the [Public Relations Society of America](#) and Law Firm Media Partners, a conference, luncheon, happy hour or webinar is always taking place somewhere. Register – and, more importantly, show up. I promise you won't regret it; rather, you'll leave feeling fulfilled by new wisdom and ideally a couple of new contacts.

Now is the time to escape a routine that has become too comfortable, too easy, too mechanical, and – dare I say – ineffective and inefficient? I encourage you to analyze

your current PR and marketing initiatives, and make a quick list of areas for improvement, tasks that have become stale, or actions that have worked in the past, but could be better with just a slight tweak. Don't ever be afraid to shake things up. Your clients, colleagues and bosses will thank you. Much like my husband thanks me for improving my punctuality! (Let's just hope I can defy the resolution statistics.)

Do you have other ways to break free from a rut? Leave a comment below or contact me at [bchiefallo@jaffepr.com](mailto:bchiefallo@jaffepr.com).