

Communicating together

Inspiring stories from women in communications

A book edited by

CANELA

Communicating together

Inspiring stories from women in communications

A book edited by

CANELA

*For all those women who feel at home thanks to the power of communication,
for those women who did not hesitate to make their way despite adversity,
and for all the women who accompany and inspire us every day,
personally and professionally.*

1st Edition - 2022

© Texts: Elena Mañas, Paula Valdés

© Design and layout: Sarai Carcedo

© Direction and original idea: Elena Mañas, Inês

Teixeira, Miguel Ángel Sánchez, Paula Valdés,

Sarai Carcedo, Tamara García

This book has been carefully and lovingly
created by the Canela team.

Its reproduction or total or partial edition
by any means and in any format is forbidden
without the written authorization of © Canela
Comunicaciones S.L. But, if you feel like sharing
these inspiring testimonials on social networks
or other digital platforms to make them reach
other people in need, Canela will be happy to
help us raise the voice.

If you are a woman working in the communications sector, you probably meet many women in the lift in the morning. That comes as a relief given that every day in the media and in science and technology there are very few female references for the new generations. In fact, if you work in a communications and public relations agency, as we do at Canela, you are probably surrounded by women.

In this environment, which is so focused on the news, sometimes a small bubble is created. A bubble where in the office, after lunch, men and women talk in a relaxed way about topics such as gender diversity and sexual orientation, politics, cultural differences... Nothing compared to what might happen at a Christmas lunch! Maybe it's because of our passionate interest in everything that happens in the media, whether it's about who's been the most recent person to cause a furore on TV or who's messed up on their Instagram stories; or maybe it's because of that willingness to talk openly about any topic that often comes across in conversations in confidence.

However, although at first glance it may not seem so and in this bubble we are very comfortable, women still face great challenges in terms of inequality in the workplace, also in our sector. Did you know that, although the average number of women in Public Relations (PR) agencies in

Spain is 72.8%, only 57% of the members of management committees in PR agencies are women¹? This glass ceiling is even more evident in the media, where only 18.1% of the directors of national general media are women². With the Iberian perspective that characterises us at Canela, we are also very interested in what is happening in Portugal. Did you know that in 74.1% of communication departments and agencies in Portugal there are more women than men, but only in 37.5% of them the women are in leadership positions³?

Faced with these facts, this Women's Day, 8th March 2022, we decided to reflect on this reality. For the creation of the book you have in your hands, we decided to contact different women who occupy the immense variety of professions that exist in relation to communications: journalists, agency directors, copywriters, community managers, marketing specialists, account managers... We asked them to share with us a story that inspires women who are starting out in our sector or those who have been working in this field for years, but need the strength to continue climbing and overcoming challenges and obstacles.

¹ Adecec. (2020) *La mujer en comunicación y RR.PP. en España*.

² Own calculation based on data from *Top Comunicación*

³ Zerfass, A., Verhoeven, P., Moreno, A., Tench, R., & Verčič, D. (2020). *European Communication Monitor 2020. Ethical challenges, gender issues, cyber security, and competence gaps in strategic communication. Results of a survey in 44 countries*. Brussels: EUPRERA/EACD.

Most of the texts have two things in common. First, many of the participants indicate that we are experiencing an improvement in the conditions for women in the professional environment. In recent decades, our voice has begun to be heard more attentively and the data reflect that the beginnings of a change are materialising. Although there are currently few female managers, in the last year 57% of the people hired in a managerial position in communications have been women⁴. As Deborah Gray, Founder and CEO of Canela, says in this book, "the good news is that there has never been a better time to enter the workforce as a woman. There aren't enough women in senior positions in politics or journalism, but there are more than ever before." May that give us strength to continue striving for equality in the workplace.

On the other hand, many of the women who have participated in this book recall the importance of sharing knowledge among women. Looking back on our professional careers, what has helped us more than the advice a colleague gave us one day? When someone enters the working world for the first time, they are lost and any advice can make the difference between embarking on a new

⁴ Asociación de la Prensa de Madrid. (2021). *Informe Anual de la Profesión Periodística 2021*.

adventure with confidence or ducking in the face of uncertainty. That's why many of the women in this book recommend listening and sharing advice in equal parts. Having female role models, in this and any industry, can inspire an entire career.

The purpose of this humble yet ambitious book, which would not have been possible without the 36 wonderful women who have contributed to it, is none other than to share knowledge among all of us in order to grow in our professional careers. Let's take advantage of this moment of change in which we are living to continue reducing those inequalities that appear along the way in the form of obstacles, and let's do it by doing what we do best: communicating.

Now let's give voice to the women who have decided to share their testimonies so that we can continue to grow and overcome all the adversities we encounter along the way. You will discover them in alphabetical order according to their first names.

We hope that the voices of these 36 women achieve their goal and are a source of inspiration to encourage you to keep moving forward.

ALBA CALVET

Director at Canela Spain

Writing about gender equality in my current personal moment is challenging. I just became a mother for the first time and I'm equal parts overwhelmed, tired and excited. It's hard to talk about equality when you add motherhood into the equation, isn't it? I've been thinking for a few months now: "how have all these working moms done it, how have they managed to get it all done...?" And they have, maybe not all of it, but almost. I am lucky to have worked in a sector, the communications sector, where there is a great majority of women, super capable and very professional, from whom I have learned practically everything I know, who have excited me, inspired me and empowered me!

I sincerely believe that there has been a great change in recent years, but I also believe that there is still a long way to go, we can not be satisfied or deluded. So as good communicators we must continue talking about the subject, inspiring the younger ones and denouncing what we do not like. For example, the majority of women journalists who appear on prime time TV need two hours of "bodywork and painting" before going on screen while their male colleagues do not.

Recently, I saw a campaign on Instagram, "I'm worth it" from L'Oreal Paris, with Kate Winslet as the protagonist, what a great success! In the video the actress appears, very beautiful, made up, but quite natural, and while she tells us why you should be who you choose to be, she is removing her makeup. I was totally hooked, firstly because Winslet catches your eye and for many she has become a reference when we talk about real women. Secondly, for her message; she is empowering women to be who they want, with or without makeup. Her slogan could not be more accurate: "I'm worth it' is about owning your right to be you". And finally, it comes at the perfect time, approaching the 8M and on Instagram, the channel par excellence of "I want and I can't". So hopefully more brands, marketing and communication directors, company presidents, etc. will be encouraged to tell real stories in which women feel identified.

ALICIA VICENTE

Communication Manager at PCcomponentes

Enthusiasm, passion, training, transparency and the perfect mix of positive energy and common sense have been the key points that would define my professional career. I was so young that I don't remember the exact moment when I told my parents that I wanted to be a journalist, in my case, it was already in my DNA and that has always made things easier. That's why I firmly believe in such clichéd advice related to pursuing a goal or a dream because, if you really want it, in one way or another, it will be in your life.

In these years one never stops learning and that is also what our profession is about, but if there is one piece of advice I had to give, it's easy, "don't lose your common sense". It is not really mine, it was given to me years ago by a great professional in the sector, but I have applied it on so many occasions and it is so necessary in the industry that it deserves to be highlighted.

Adding one of my own would be transparency, it may take you a very long way, but if you have come this far and you are convinced that this is your direction, always go with the truth, do not allow yourself the luxury of deceiving yourself, do it for you.

ALMUDENA DEL MAR MUÑOZ

*Senior Marketing Manager at Free Now in Spain, Portugal,
France and Poland*

When we were kids, very few of us were capable of asking our parents for the things we wanted by name. Our limited vocabulary was probably a bit more descriptive and sounded like "mum, I want to go to that place where we watch films with our cousins". Our families needed a lot of imagination to understand what we wanted to tell them.

I was no different, however, what is true is that from a very young age I have been fascinated by colours, shapes and forms, and from an early age, I could recognise brand logos here and there. My mother would be surprised when walking through another city when I would say "look mum, that's your bank", or in the letters that came home I would point out the ones from dad's work, without obviously knowing how to read at the time.

Knowing that communication was somewhat complicated and intangible didn't hold back my aspirations to be the new creator of the "Spark of Life" concept. I was never afraid to study something different from my friends, nor was I afraid to jump from one country to another, or to make the leap into a small company that developed a website that didn't even have an office of its own, to travel in a shared and more sustainable way, what a thing, huh? I knew I was doing something I liked and I wanted to grow in it.

Over the years I realised that I had truly chosen something where I was contributing, learning and above all, doing something that was good for others.

After 9 years working to offer the best sustainable mobility options to citizens, I can confirm to my childhood self that I am where I wanted to be.

ANA MOTILLA BLANCH

Editor-in-Chief at El Periódico de la Publicidad

If this is about inspiration, I will start by saying that we have a wonderful profession. Pioneers in implementing and driving change, we are increasingly leading social transformation and trying to influence the world to make it a better place. Communication and Advertising are increasingly powerful and it is up to our future professionals to use that power well.

As a result of this great responsibility, companies in the sector must set an example and, for the most part, are already committed to measures that are increasingly supportive of women. They look at the person, not the gender, and try to make work-life balance a reality on both sides to facilitate the possibilities of professional growth. Women in this sector find an environment full of opportunities.

The fact of being a woman is no longer a limitation for anyone (especially when we talk about Advertising or Communication) the opportunities are the same for everyone and, perhaps, what we should recognise is that in many cases we are not aware of our true abilities. Exploiting them,

differentiating ourselves, being aware of what we are better at than our opponents without any kind of complex or fear, is what makes us fulfil ourselves in what we do without looking back in time, or finding gender rivalries.

ARA RODRÍGUEZ

Editor at Hipertextual

Perhaps I have found myself in one of the few branches of journalism in which women are in a minority. With Journalist faculty classrooms full of females, the male division tends to gravitate towards sport or technology. Eventually, contrary to the enrollment figures, men end up being the predominant voice in politics, economics and media management. It is curious to see how the tone repeats itself as a constant.

It was years ago when, accustomed to purely male press conferences and meetings, I found myself in a unique situation. Male colleagues, speakers, CEOs and collaborators used to be the norm. And let no one misunderstand this, it didn't seem like a bad thing to me, I've never felt less than, and the relationships have always been wonderful. But one day, as fate would have it, and for reasons that are not relevant, I ended up in a meeting with 10 women -not yet the norm-. And the reality is that I didn't know how to interact. I wasn't used to it, I was out of practice. I didn't know the rules. Absurd, isn't it? After all, we stand for equality. At the time I didn't feel that way. And that, looking back in time, is something sad, that should not be repeated and should not be an anecdote.

But for a while now, the key women in the media are starting to take their positions. It is simply inspiring.

And it is something that, from the world of the technology press -or in my case technology companies or startups- is an impetus to keep working. To keep searching for those female, male or mixed circles where everything is taken equally. It's complicated, there are few women in this sector. And the few that there are, that we are, we are just starting. There is still a long way to go, to have that voice.

The people that overwhelm the world of startups -a world still full of testosterone- are a reflection of those in the media who cover this type of information. Advice? Just to keep working hard. This will ensure that the journalists of the future focused on this subject do not feel out of place or that they have lost connection with their peers.

ARANTXA AGUILERA

B2B, Corporate & Digital director at Canela Spain

Woman, mother, journalist. If I were asked to describe myself now, that would be the order in which I would list these words. But I have to admit that there have been times in my life when I would have been a journalist first and probably a woman last. Moments when to show professionalism you had to forget your main facet... or fall into the cliché.

Looking back over my career in the world of journalism and communication to value the journey we women have made in our fight against inequality, sexism and glass ceilings in this industry, I have been touched. Fundamentally, because so much has changed in a couple of decades that I feel grateful. I still remember those times when I was an intern in newsrooms where the bosses were men, and most of the editors-in-chief were also men. In a sector - the technology sector - where going to an event probably meant being one of the few girls in the room. And, above all, where the mere fact of being a woman surrounded you with equal parts of sexism and condescension. Every day.

I am aware that there is still a long way to go, that there are still many men who don't even understand what our fight is about. But the balance is positive, and this is what I would like to highlight in these lines. Girls, there is light at the end of the tunnel, and it is getting brighter and brighter,

thanks to so many brave, generous and fair women who know how to value talent without gender. Women who understand personal circumstances. Women who guide our career and teach us how to guide the careers of others. Who practise sisterhood. Who educate their children in equality. And who pave the way for new generations of female communicators, journalists, publicists and creatives to develop their careers and grow professionally and personally. So that, when they are asked, they can define themselves first as women and then as everything else they set their minds to. Let's go for it!

CARRIE FRAIS

*Journalist, podcaster, co-founder/director FiG Communications,
MumAbroad and 4Voices and Ambassador for Inspiring Girls*

I've always worked in communication in one form or another during my career but it's not been a conventional career path. I left that to my older brother who has stayed in the same job in the same place and has been happy doing so for more than 30 years. After completing a degree in economics and modern languages in Cardiff, I took a year out in Barcelona and instantly fell head over heels in love with the city, knowing that one day I would return.

I thought long and hard about a career which would give me transferable skills, flexibility and freedom. Journalism seemed to tick that box for me so I went on to complete a postgraduate degree in TV and Radio journalism. I subsequently worked for 15 years in television and radio news for some of the UK's leading broadcasters, presenting and reporting on major events including the Indonesian Tsunami and the London terrorist tube bombings, which was both stimulating and challenging (and sometimes extremely stressful). My broadcasting career taught me key life skills – the ability to work under extreme pressure, to communicate clearly and concisely and the importance of teamwork.

I took these skills with me to Barcelona in 2006 where I established MumAbroad, a go-to resource for international families living in Europe, FiG, a creative and communications agency and more recently, 4Voices, a public speaking platform for teenagers. I'm also the Barcelona ambassador for Inspiring Girls, a regular podcaster and first-time author. Having strong communication and interpersonal skills has helped me both professionally and personally as well as everything that falls in between.

All life transactions result from communication, so my advice would be to do it well. I'd also tell any youngster to stay curious and if possible, keep things varied. 50+ years is a long time to be in the workplace!

CATARINA OLIVEIRA

Director at Canela Portugal

More than anything, communication requires empathy, curiosity and an enormous passion for people. The challenge comes when we have days where one of these ingredients fails – and there's a pretty good chance life gets in the way and our inspiration is carried off with the wind. So, how to overcome this and thrive in our sector? Over the years, I've learned three major lessons: first of all, remember that we are all human, meaning we all have good and bad days, desires and needs - clients, journalists or influencers are no different! If you like to be treated with clarity, honesty and a sparkle of humour, they will too. Secondly, as PR people, we have the magical power of solving problems and inspiring others – through new products we launch, in depth interviews we manage or creative campaigns we develop. Be mindful of this gift every time you need to boost your energy levels! Last but not least, work according to your personal values. Many people stay too long in places they just don't belong to – we ought to be ourselves, experiencing new challenges and being faithful to our true beliefs. Curious to try being a freelancer?

Plan your finances, search for clients and go for it! Want different types of clients than the ones your company has? Search in LinkedIn companies that might be a good fit and be clear in your intentions when proactively applying for a job. You'll be surprised with the feedback you'll receive. Choose your life every morning, the universe will take care of the rest.

CORDY GRIFFITHS

CEO at Ballou

I started my career as a journalist. I joined the Press Association as a news reporter, covering all sorts of stories including the death of Princess Diana. Being a reporter was a great way to hone my writing skills and practise the art of relaying information as succinctly as possible. As my old editor used to say, if a reader doesn't have the story in the first three sentences, you're doing something wrong. After 7 years as a journalist, I decided to cross the fence into PR. As a reporter, I was bombarded with press releases so I had a very good understanding of what PR entailed and what journalists need from a PR. I had in-house roles at companies including Google and Expedia, managing teams of agencies across EMEA and Latin America.

The skills I developed as an in-house PR were very different from the ones I used as a reporter. Here I was mainly the conduit between the in-house corporate communications team and the PR teams in each country. Ensuring the agencies were properly briefed and supporting them to get coverage was my goal. To complete my PR career, I decided I needed agency experience too, so I joined Ballou 11 years ago. It was an adjustment juggling a range of clients at first but, having been a news reporter, I knew I would love the fast pace. My in-house experience meant I knew exactly

what a client wants from their agency. I am now the CEO of Ballou which has grown to more than 60 people across three countries. Being a PR involves so many different skills: writing, storytelling, sales, diplomacy and teamwork to name a few. It also gives you access to the heart of a wide range of companies which is a great privilege.

While my journey in PR has been rewarding, if I was starting again now I'd start at an agency. The variety of clients, the opportunities to learn from other PR colleagues and the speed that you gain experience make it such a valuable learning experience. Once you have cut your teeth in the fast lane, you can take your pick of in-house roles further down the line.

DANIELA JURADO
VTEX EMEA General Manager

A narrative to call our own.

I imagine that most of you remember a campaign created in 2015 by Procter & Gamble called #LikeAGirl. To help combat the prejudiced view that unfortunately part of society still has about women, the American brand turned prejudice into empowerment. The ads, aimed at the younger generation, showed that doing things "LikeAGirl" should not be seen by society as an insult, as it unfortunately still is. The prejudice, in the P&G campaign, turned into pride for girls who seek a way to see themselves valued for combining qualities such as sensitivity and strength.

How does this discussion play out in the modern professional environment? I lead a team of more than 70 professionals, deal daily with clients and suppliers (most of them men, by the way), and I feel that we women are still building our own narrative. Have you ever noticed that when a woman stands out in the job market, the qualities that are attributed to her as differentials are always those traditionally linked to the male universe: decision power, firmness, assertiveness, resilience? Basically, it is almost as if they told us that we are competent not for being female leaders, but for leading "like a man".

Now, men and women may be equally talented in their fields, but we don't hear that a man manages a team so masterfully that he practically looks like a woman.

We are - and by we I mean a whole generation of women who have entered the job market in recent years - in search of a narrative. We don't want to see our talents and efforts recognised as a result of our ability to bring out our masculine side. We want to lead like a woman; we want to offer feedback like a woman; we want to close big deals like a woman; we want, in short, to make our mark on the world as the women we are.

I believe that the way to build this narrative is directly through the increase in the number of women in leadership positions in large companies and the great results that they will be able to bring. A tip I would like to leave for all the women reading this article is to take a risk! When you see an open position and feel that you are made for it, remember that hardly anyone will meet 100% of the requirements and yet someone will be selected. That someone could be you. I say this because currently at least 70% of the candidates who apply for our positions are men, and I know from experience that we are often the ones who self-exclude ourselves from an opportunity.

Things will change, in fact they are already changing, and the setbacks faced by the current generation will be the scaffolding on which future generations of women will stand to undertake even deeper discussions. Because one thing is certain: the world has already understood our role... It is up to us to fight to respect it. #LikeAGirl.

56.9%

of the members of the Management Committees of PR agencies in Spain are women

Just 22%

of senior positions in 240 media outlets in 12 countries are held by women, despite the fact that, on average, women account for 40% of all journalists working in those 12 locations

The average number of female employees in PR agencies in Spain is

72.8%

Sources: Adecec. (2020) [La mujer en comunicación y RR.PP. en España](#). Robertson, C. T., Selva, M. & Nielsen, R. K. (2021). [Women and Leadership in the News Media 2021: Evidence from 12 Markets](#). Instituto Reuters.

DEBORAH GRAY
Founder and CEO at Canela

To My Younger Self.

Please don't worry about your future, it will unfold as it should. You are the main protagonist so use your agency* to make the world of work the place you want it to be.

I remember graduating and thinking ... Now what? What should I do? Where do I go? The world seemed so big and so open with no clear path ahead. I didn't really know what I wanted to do as a career, I had "narrowed it down" to teaching, politics or journalism. And as it turned out I have done a bit of all of them. I have worked as a legislative intern on Capitol Hill, as a Press Officer for a children's charity in Scotland, in the Marketing Department of a major telecoms company and at a PR Agency in London, been an English Teacher in Spain and my current, but by no means final gig, is the Founder of a PR agency that employs 36 people in Spain & Portugal.

The good news is there has never been a better time to enter the workplace as a woman. There are not enough of us in senior positions in politics or journalism (although plenty of us are teachers) but there are more than there used to be. And all of us owe a great deal to those who have gone before us and broken down the barriers. I think the best way we can repay that debt is to keep levelling up the

playing field for the next generation. Small but consistent changes in behaviour can make all the difference. Challenge the things that you don't agree with. Don't compromise when it comes to equality. You have as much right to be the professional you want to be and the parent you want to be as the people you are sharing those vocations with. Your value comes from your contribution not from your gender. Share your knowledge with everyone. Create safe work spaces. Make mistakes. Learn. Don't make them again. Be kind. Be Happy.

And P.S: Younger Self don't get upset about bad haircuts, they will grow out.

*as in personal agency not PR agency but if you can do that then do that too :)

DIANNE VEGAS

Head of Consumer Tech at Canela Spain

As a woman, I still face many challenges, not only at a professional level but also on a daily basis, and although there is still a long way to go to achieve the same rights and freedoms as men, I look back and I feel a lucky woman for everything I have experienced in this sector.

After 15 years of experience in communication and public relations, and specifically in the area of technology, although dominated by men, I must emphasise that paradoxically I started hand in hand with great women who shared their knowledge with me and introduced me to this wonderful world. If I am half as good as them, and if my testimony is enough to get a woman interested in this exciting world, I am satisfied.

Just as they reached out to me to give me all the necessary tools to start from scratch in the world of communication, every day I strive to do my bit to share all the good, and sometimes not so good facets, of our work. I like to know and share that everyday something new awaits us: challenges, events, campaigns... that make every day different and bring us value.

Moreover, it makes me very proud to know that there are more and more women in this profession, and that we are above the global average in terms of occupying managerial positions. By this I mean that, although there is still a lot of work to be done, we should be proud of what we have achieved and that the change in our sector is tangible and we are part of it.

ELENA COMPTE

Communication and Public Affairs Manager

There are many women in the field of communication, many more than in other areas. However, in the highest positions and in the most important companies, there is still an overwhelming majority of men. This means that we still have a long way to go in our profession to achieve parity.

Moreover, few people understand what we female communications professionals do, even in our own company. They know that we talk a lot on the phone, write a lot and go to parties, or what others interpret as parties, which in reality is nothing more than work outside the office and often outside working hours.

These two realities that we experience lead me to the same conclusion: we must value our work. What we do, what we know and what we contribute to our environment. Both to the organisation in which we work, and to the sector and the rest of the public, both internal and external, with which we interact.

Our job is to look after the reputation of the company; we are the ones who prevent a crisis from happening or minimise its negative effects when it does. Each person in the entity in which we work must know what we do and under what circumstances to come to us.

We must always be the right hand of the management team, and sometimes the right and the left. Communication must occupy a privileged place in the company.

And on a personal level, our achievements must also be given the value they deserve. The work of the team, the agency, the journalists and all the suppliers who contribute to making something a success should always be highlighted, but make sure that your merit is not diluted among the others.

ESTHER RAMOS SAN PEDRO

*Community Manager specialised in television fiction
and teacher at Aula CM*

In Greek mythology, the phoenix is a long-lived bird that regenerates itself in the ashes of its predecessor. The more orthodox claim is that the phoenix dies in a show of flames and others claim that the bird decays before being born again. The only thing that has become clear to us is that it has become the symbol of “starting over”. Of resilience.

And yes, I am a resilient person and a phoenix that has been able to reinvent itself and move forward in recent years thanks to effort and perseverance, to never losing sight of the goal and knowing that it is okay to fall down and get up again. Because thanks to all that, it has led me to be the woman I am: a free woman, who is passionate about television and social networks, who goes to therapy every week, knowing that communication and work have saved my life. Thanks to all that I have been able to teach and show my experience to the world and to other women.

It may sound pretentious and ironic to hear the phrase “my work has saved my life” but it is the reality. When I was told that I was going to be responsible for the social networks of the series “Serve and Protect”, I saw the world, which I thought was perfect, collapse completely. And the thousands of cases of gender violence that I saw in fiction

provided me with some sort of protection. I protected myself and they helped me to get out of that black hole in which only ashes remained.

But those ashes regenerated and have become a phoenix that wants to fly and show the world its talent. And now that the butterfly has already flown, it is time to teach and educate that even though fear exists, fear is the only thing that keeps us alive and allows us to fight and continue to grow as women and humans.

ESTHER VALDIVIA

CEO of *Publicaciones Profesionales SLU* and Editor at *Mujeres a Seguir*

Let's not relax.

We are at a time when yes, we are not going to deny it, women are in fashion. What for some is still a simple strategy necessary for companies to comply with good governance recommendations, and/or a marketing strategy used by brands to sell, is really an unstoppable movement for women, with a much deeper background, which has come to settle permanently in our society.

If you look at it, we are everywhere, with our femininity at the forefront. With the best academic records at university, at the leading edge of the most advanced research, in healthcare, running technology companies, occupying the main halls of museums, shining in all sports, represented on boards of directors and piloting the most advanced companies. With all this, we might think that Aphrodite's mirror was never so shiny and that women are omnipresent in almost everything that moves. But not so much.

It is true that the advance of female talent is unstoppable, but let's not relax, we still have a long way to go. If we represent 51% of the population in Spain, to be fair, we should maintain the same proportion in the social conversation, but the reality is that the structures of power and work are still subject to the male conception of success. We still have a long way to go, a lot to communicate.

And that is where our work as communication professionals acquires an extraordinary responsibility, giving voice to information with a female focus, generating energetic content that demonstrates how talent has no gender and invites us to get to know their stories of commitment, experience and life. And as a sample, a button. That was the seed that moved us in 2014 to create our magazine *Mujeres a Seguir*, which today is a real agora of conversation with a female focus, open to permanent dialogue.

Let us not forget that only with equality, also in the treatment of information, does a window of hope open.

EVA CORRALES LÓPEZ

PR Manager en HONOR España

If you had asked me when I started working in this sector, where do you see yourself in 9 years? I would probably never have answered “being PR Manager of a tech company”.

It's not a question of not having ambition, but of wanting to grow little by little, achieving goals without haste, patiently, taking advantage of every experience in the different agencies I've been through, learning from the good and the bad to grow professionally. Also, I've wanted to enjoy all the achievements I've made with my team, always surrounded by the great professionals and friends that this sector has put in my way.

If I say that the journey to get to where I am today has been easy, I would be lying, but if I say that looking back, the good things outweigh the difficult and stressful moments, then I am being honest. The communication sector is not easy and it is not always friendly, it is probably even one of the most stressful... but every obstacle you overcome makes you grow, every achievement you make makes you a better professional, and all that effort shapes you to reach your goals.

We are the link between companies and consumers, going through the media, creating beautiful, close and friendly stories around brands, and although it may seem easy it is not always... but that's the magic of this job.

Three tips that for me have been key in this sector:

1. Lean on the team, the best results are always achieved together. The team will be your best support in successes and failures.
2. Be humble, listen to the professionals next to you and try to learn as much as you can from them.
3. Don't throw in the towel.

FERNANDA BARTELS

Senior Social Media Manager at Satisfyer

I think I got to where I am now by staying true to my values and working hard. For years, I worked in male-dominated environments such as tech and sports. It's not necessarily easy but women need to be present, speak up and have their voices heard. I'm a firm believer in leading by example. By simply being there, I hope I've opened the doors for others to follow. Also, when you are working with a topic that is so close to your core values, which was the case for me, working hard becomes a given. There's nothing more rewarding than showing up for yourself and for your teammates.

Now, I'm working for Satisfyer, one of the leading brands in sexual wellness, and I have shifted my energy to a different cause which I'm also very passionate about. I believe we need to empower women to revisit their understanding of pleasure, self-esteem, self-love. We need to break patriarchal beliefs that are still very deeply ingrained in today's societies, and I hope my work contributes to this mindset shift. It's been an exciting journey and I'm very much looking forward to continuing it with great partners and colleagues who share this vision.

With that said, when I look back and think forward, I would like to encourage the next generations of female communicators to stay true to what they believe in. Build on that, fight for your causes, and use your voice to make an impact. No change is too small, every action is valid when it's embedded in something you truly believe in.

Only **16.3%**
of women are very
satisfied with their
jobs, compared to
83.3% of men

Only **56%**
of women working in a communication
company hold management positions,
compared to 71% of men

Only **36.4%**
of women consider their
salaries to be adequate

Source: Moreno, A., Fuentes Lara, C. & Khalil, N. (2018). *Gendercoms. Brechas y oportunidades de género en la profesión de Gestión de la Comunicación en España*. Madrid: Asociación de Directivos de Comunicación.

FIONA GOLDSWORTH

MD of Business & Technology at Brands2Life

Working in communications is rarely listed as a career aspiration by children when asked at school what they want to do in future. Despite not having the glory of astronauts or the heroics of doctors, it tends to be a role that we overlook and underestimate, despite being hugely rewarding and exciting. Having grown up abroad and learned new languages, I never took for granted the ability to communicate effectively with people in all parts of life, whether at school, with friends, family, at work and more. This meant that the work experience I sought out focused on conveying messages to people, whether helping the public to understand what happens to nuclear waste produced by a power station or educating about the importance of healthy eating on behalf of a health insurance company. Throughout this process, my parents helped me to understand my strengths and to nudge me towards roles where listening, understanding, empathising and talking had prominence. Being a peace-keeper is also paramount in communications, as we seek to understand different perspectives and to address any concerns or misunderstandings to welcome different stakeholders on our journey. These are skills that are honed through experience and by learning and taking on feedback to improve time and time again.

No day is the same in communications, especially working with technology brands; a fast-paced industry where being able to learn quickly, translate complex issues into comprehensible messages for target audiences and anticipating potential bumps in the road are just some of the skills required. It's thanks to the people around us that we continually learn. Not just from those more experienced sharing their feedback and providing the support needed in a crisis, whether at work or in juggling family life with a demanding career, but also from those starting out in their careers. They tend to see challenges through fresh eyes and bring new channels of communication to the table. Listening is just as important as conveying in communications, and we listen when we're interested in someone or something. Be curious, ask questions and show interest – that's how to do well in this field.

IRIS DELMEE

Global PR Manager at Sendcloud

As a millennial, I was lucky to grow up in a generation full of possibilities. I could study whatever I wanted, got the chance to taste various professions through internships, and spread my wings via a semester abroad. All of this paved the way for me to chase my dreams and do whatever I wanted to do.

What I aspired to from the start was simple: writing. As a little girl I already loved telling stories and as a teenager I discovered the magical world of PR and media when I started my own fashion blog. A dream was born: when I grew up I wanted to work in Public Relations. At the age of 25 I can say I achieved that goal, as I can now proudly call myself Global PR Manager.

As a young professional it feels odd to share advice, as I can only rely on my own experience, but I like to live by this quote by Pippi Longstocking: “I have never tried that before, so I think I should definitely be able to do that”. It doesn’t matter if you’re female, male, non-binary, young or old: I believe you can do anything until proven otherwise. At Sendcloud we often joke that the sky is no limit and I think it’s exactly that mindset that can bring you further than anything in the world.

Don’t think in boxes or obstacles, but in possibilities and opportunities instead. Speak out what you want to accomplish, say yes to new adventures and keep an open mindset. It may seem obvious, but if you have a clear goal in mind and adopt a proactive attitude – you can do anything, no matter who or what you are.

ISABEL LANDEIRO

Communication Consultant at Isabel Landeiro

My name is Isabel Landeiro and I have a degree in International Relations from Universidade Lusíada University, but soon I became interested in public relations and was invited to be part of the project -still in its early years- of GCI. I worked for 20 wonderful years in this communications agency with many good moments and some not so good ones, to be expected, but the balance was very positive and worth it. In 2014 I left GCI to start the Isabel Landeiro project, Endorsement Consulting, which I currently represent. It is a project specialised in influencer marketing, an important tool of communication.

Communication allowed me to broaden my horizons and become a more secure, confident and relaxed woman, characteristics that can easily be found in most Portuguese women. It was working in communication and in a communication agency, that allowed me to learn that nothing is impossible, because with a lot of commitment, creativity, honesty and positivism everything is possible. In communication, miracles can happen, but they can only be achieved with the constant updating of knowledge and innovations that arise in our ever-changing world.

Communicating allows us to divulge and make brands, products, and people known to their audiences. Communicating is creating influence and influence is power, because only by being known and having the target audience on your side, you can achieve success. But success is only achieved when there are competent public relations professionals working behind the scenes. And here, I apologise to the men, but women are the best.

ISABEL ROMERO CARRETERO

*Head of marketing at Metricool.com and Director
at Escuela de Copywriting*

The world of communication is plagued by messages that say the same thing, that sound like clichés, but there is hope because there is also a new trend that praises authenticity and "doing the same thing in a more creative way".

It seems that the decentralisation of communication thanks to social networks has boosted creativity, and authenticity. Communicators on Twitch, Youtube or TikTok use these mouthpieces to generate communities that are not pigeonholed in the traditional model, nor in traditional roles, they attract new generations or those people who want to break away from the "known".

If you want to succeed in this world you need to have your own voice, to not sound like the same old thing, and the only way to do that is with authenticity.

Authenticity creates closer companies, messages full of truth, not simply advertising inputs. Authenticity is what makes your readers or followers sit up and listen, authenticity generates movement.

So if I had to recommend a single action to generate effective communication it would be authenticity. It's also important to observe the new trends in the channels mentioned Twitch, Tiktok, Youtube. However, staying focused

on what competitors are doing will only make you repeat the same thing over and over again - observe your competitors but also other sectors or influencers to apply those conclusions to your strategy. Authenticity does not recognise gender but it does recognise truth.

KARINA SÁNCHEZ

Brand and Communication Manager at Clicars

What do you want to be when you grow up?

My partner loves to ask me every now and then what I want to be when I grow up. Usually I would answer him the typical (and not less accurate) answers: to be happy, to be free, to be the professional I have always dreamed of... However, lately I have changed my answer and I have started to answer that I would always like to be a person who feels she is in the right place and surrounded by people who make her a better person.

Many times in this turbulent world of communication we forget to stop time and think about what we want to "be when we grow up". Without this turning point we will never manage to bring out the best version of ourselves and enjoy a sector such as communication that has the enviable potential to bring great values to companies, but also to society and to ourselves. We need to realise that our work cannot be just a synonym of little conciliation, profitability or filling in a calendar. Communication must bring us something more, make us feel satisfaction, pride, peace... In short, that we are in the right place and that the people around us are capable of inspiring us and bringing out the best in us.

It is the way in which all those powerful women will be able to grow without fear in this industry and contribute value without thinking about their sex, race or age... Simply because they will be chosen because they will be in the place they want to be doing what really fulfils them and with the desire to give back to society part of what it has given them. And although it may seem easier to tell it than to achieve it, although it may seem scary or dizzying to start from scratch, the important thing is to never settle or give up because I assure you that it will end up being worth it.

LAURA CORTÉS

Head of Marketing at Adyen Spain and Portugal

Traditionally, there are areas of the company where women are in the majority, why? It is a question that today continues to provoke more questions. But in the end it is a fact, and we have to accept it. I don't know if being a woman has helped me or not throughout my career, because I have not experienced any situation that has allowed me to confirm or deny it. As a professional I have always thought that diversity is richness and progress, and having people in your team who help you question, raise dilemmas and therefore grow and make them grow, is essential to develop your career and that of your team.

Something I often hear is that women tend to be guided by instinct or the sixth sense..., but precisely in the world of communication what we use the most are the results, data, analysis, benchmarks... And this leads me to think that what some call instinct, others call data driven? In the end, you can't guide your career because you have a certain DNA, because of your age, because of the sector you work in, or because of what other people say...

For me it is turning out to be the sum of everything, never stop being who I am, with my circumstances, and without being able to separate some things from others, because in the end there is only one person who has a profession, a life and a diary with hours for everything. And that person makes decisions that help their company to grow and their team develop.

LUISA RAMOS

Communications Manager at TikTok Spain

Although I have certainly worked very hard, I think I am fortunate to have been in the right place at the right time to develop and grow. However, if I had to look for pillars that form the basis of that personal growth, I think I would highlight three. The first is to be passionate about what you do. Enjoying your work is essential to ensure you never lack motivation. In my case, in my first jobs I discovered the exciting world of technology. I love being able to see, and understand, at first hand what the future will be like. Being able to build it, and to tell people about it, is really fascinating!

Secondly, to have the restlessness of always wanting to learn. The only constant in our profession, and in the technology sector, is change. Being resilient, being hungry to learn, to understand and to adapt to new forms of communication is key to being able to develop in this environment.

And lastly, having examples and leaders nearby to help you grow. In my case, I have always been lucky enough to be surrounded by great women, professionals and leaders in communication. I have learned many things from all of them, and many of them have encouraged and inspired me to grow.

They have given me the opportunity to shine, and without them I would not have been able to get to where I am today.

I love that there are these kinds of initiatives to inspire other women to pursue their dream of leading communication teams!

MARIA JOÃO VIEIRA PINTO

Editorial Director at Marketeer and Executive Digest

Patrícia Mamona was told that she was too short. That she would never be good at triple jumping. That she would never achieve great results. One year ago, Patrícia brought us an Olympic Gold. In the triple jump. And no, she hasn't grown any taller..

No one ever told me that I would never be the editor of a magazine. The truth is that I hesitated when I was offered the job, and it was only the third time I was asked that I said "yes", undermined by complexes that the media was male-dominated. Wrong, and proof of this is that in the last few years there have been several women - and there still are - leading newsrooms.

I started slowly. Learning the lay of the land, not least because I have never been, nor do I like, to get out of my depth. It is true that at several times I avoided the spotlight. In press conferences or press trips, male directors wanted to take to the stage. I let them, of course, because I also knew that given time, my work, projects and results, would put me in the spotlight, without being under pressure!

Today, most of them no longer live around here. I still do. And, today, I believe that Communication and Media sector rules are increasingly made and written by women.

For their ability to have the radar always on and to respond on several fronts; for their sensitivity and good sense; for being able to be in the picture even when we are not present.

Leading is not imposing, it is sharing and learning. And the recognition that there is no one speed to move forward, that there are curves where we need to slow down and moments of going backwards. Because communication is about people for people, and journalism is only possible with people at the centre.

In the last year,
57%
of those hired as
communication
managers were
women

The number of self-
employed and employed
women in communication
exceeds that of men in
both cases

Source: Asociación de la Prensa de Madrid. (2021). *Informe Anual de la Profesión Periodística 2021*.

MARTA DELGADO

Account director at Brandelicious

Communication was something I came to by chance, my idea was to work as a journalist and I discovered this world during an internship in a national newspaper. I remember the surprise I got when I discovered the role of “communicators” who enabled the exchange of information with companies, produced press releases and revealed new trends that were developing in different areas. After the initial impact I understood that, if you are passionate about communication and public relations, ours is undoubtedly a profession to unleash those skills. Another relevant aspect, which in my experience has been the factor that has helped me grow professionally, is to specialise. It seems obvious, but when you start working in a communications department or in a communication agency, it is common to take different clients and do a little bit of everything for each of them, you enter a wheel.

Therefore, my advice is to be clear about what interests you, what moves you and what you are passionate about communicating. In my case, it is gastronomy and I have made it not only my hobby, but also my daily work. This has allowed me to have an in-depth knowledge of this sector and it has been and is very useful when tackling projects; it allows you to have the ability to advise the client

and really understand the needs of the media so you can offer them relevant, quality information.

On this path it is vital to absorb the experience and know-how of those around you. In my case, I have been fortunate to have had references, all of them women, who have taught me everything I know today. This wisdom is shared and the attitude and desire to enter this world are a fundamental part. Beyond what I learned at university, working in communication is something you learn by practising, and also by failing, of course.

From my experience, being a communicator is a comforting profession. My leitmotif is to help others to achieve impact and reputation and, when you do, it is very satisfying. And, unlike other sectors, it is an area made up, for the most part, of women. The way forward is for us to end up leading this sector.

NATALIA MARTÍNEZ

Editor-in-Chief at Tapas Magazine

They have not made it easy for us and, to tell you the truth, they still aren't. There's the glass ceiling, the parapet holding back so many dreams that are nothing more than basic objectives; the wage inequality, which forces us to measure our value in gender and not in talent, and what can we say about the omnipresent judgement to which we are subjected, by people both inside and outside the sector -yes, those who have no opinion also feel free to contribute it-, questioning whether what is expressed in your writing is your own original thoughts.

In the face of all this, the best antidote that can exist is the right combination of perseverance and authenticity, at least that is what has helped me. Perseverance to not give up and to get to the right place at the right time. As it was my case, after living abroad and rebuilding yourself, when you come back the doors are not always open; hang in there. And authenticity, to not be afraid to stand out and trust the grit and instinct that moves you to tell stories. I started telling them in 2012, through the airwaves of Cadena SER, between 2014 and 2016 I told them in English from Vietnam, when I returned to Madrid the machine was somewhat ungreased and in 2018, after having put all its

pieces back together, it started working again: I have continued telling stories linked to gastronomy from speakers such as La Vanguardia, Viajes National Geographic or Traveller; now I do it as editor-in-chief from Tapas Magazine, in Spainmedia.

I am aware that, however much I have ahead of me, life is a long-distance race, but I am also aware that this race does not run by itself. I have learned that in this profession it is necessary to surround yourself with good people who pave the way, but it is no less sensible to surround yourself with others who will leave a stone or two in your path. You learn from both the good and the bad, and one of the things that keeps me closer to the keyboard is the thrill of learning something new every day.

NATALIE LINK

Co-Founder and Managing Director at Adel & Link Public Relations

Daring to be bold.

I had never planned – never even thought about – founding my own company, but when the opportunity arose a little over ten years ago, I decided to go for it. I suppose quite a few of my family and friends at the time thought that I was taking a big risk: leaving a safe job and being the main breadwinner of the family with two young children – the stakes were incredibly high! But what can I say? It just felt right. So, I guess my first advice is: be brave and trust yourself and your instincts. And I continue to do just that as we develop the agency further – we love to try out new ideas, develop new services and challenge ourselves to not be afraid of bold decisions.

We all know that not everything always works out perfectly and I think that especially the last two years have been a challenge of a different kind for most of us. And they have been particularly difficult for mothers. I think my most important lesson for a healthy relationship with myself is: don't expect yourself to be perfect and don't feel you have to do everything yourself. It's ok to ask for help when you need it – from your partner, family, colleagues, friends.

However, I believe that one of the biggest keys to success in business is an optimistic and positive attitude to life. I feel incredibly lucky to be working in a creative industry, with interesting clients who have great stories to tell and an amazing team of wonderful people who can bring them to life. And I believe that the positive energy resulting from this inspires both colleagues and clients. So, thinking back to the risk I took all those years ago, I'd do it all again in a heartbeat!

NOELIA SÁNCHEZ GONZÁLEZ

Director of Communication and Marketing at Habitat Inmobiliaria

Communication is one of the most exciting sectors because it offers the opportunity to know all the "secrets" of a company, shape them and offer them to the rest of the world. Over the years, communication has evolved to become essential and has gone from being something dispensable at the drop of a hat to becoming a fundamental pillar of a company's reputation.

During my professional career, I have worked in both agency and corporate environments; both are very different but very enriching. Working in an agency provides the opportunity to get to know different sectors and learn from your own and other colleagues' successes and failures. It is also a unique opportunity to be up to date with the latest trends in communication.

On the other hand, working in a company's communication department gives you the opportunity to get to know a business in depth, you have contacts with all the departments and you become a real "spy", thus being able to develop a global communication strategy.

Having the opportunity to live both experiences has given me a lot in my professional life. If I were asked what the secret to good communication is, I would sum it up

as "common sense". You have to be very attentive, have a critical spirit and know how to highlight the strengths in order to transform them or to dress them up to be attractive, but always on the basis of reflection.

For those who are hesitating to enter the world of communication, I would encourage them to go for it; it is a dynamic profession, where you learn a lot and it enriches you professionally, but also personally.

SARAH LEVY

Communication at The George

The first definition of the word communication in the RAE (Royal Spanish Academy), is "action and effect of communicating or communicating", others begin with "union that is established between...", "transmission of...". From my point of view, communication is a need, which has evolved over time, as well as the channels and ways in which we satisfy this need.

I discovered the career of Advertising and Public Relations when I finished the artistic baccalaureate in school, where my favourite subjects were design and audiovisuals. I remember perfectly well reading the program of the course, and deciding that I would take it, just because I was interested in the subjects when I read the program. I enjoyed the course, the theory is good, it's interesting. And the practice is even better, the different jobs we do are creative, you grow and develop learning together with teachers and colleagues as a taste of what you will later experience on the job. At work you apply the basis of what you learn at University, but it is in the day to day where you really finish developing and learning.

I have always been a very extroverted and communicative person. But now I have communication inside me, in my DNA. I see communication in everything, I look at every

detail. Any brand, establishment, small or big, recognised or unfamiliar, the way they communicate with the public, the way people communicate with each other. Any form of advertising catches my attention. The details are really important. It is important to do what you love, to dedicate yourself to what fulfils you. I'm still at the beginning of my career, and I have many projects that I'm still working on. But every day I come to work excited, and I feel fulfilled with what I have achieved so far.

I encourage anyone who finds what they like, in the communication sector, or in any other sector, to work with perseverance. Every effort has its reward.

SILVIA FERNÁNDEZ

Writer at El Publicista

Women have the power to create the most beautiful thing in the universe: life. And if we are capable of forming a new being inside us for months, it is absurd to think that we are inferior or that we cannot do whatever we set our minds to.

Over the years, we have had to hide like a shadow behind male pseudonyms in order to show our talent, our work, in order for our ideas, thoughts and creations to achieve “something”. And, although it is true that we have experienced a positive evolution in recent years, inequality still exists at all levels. As a journalist specialising in the advertising field, I see how, on a daily basis, technical files arrive at the newsroom where many women are included, but few are in top positions. I see many awards to creatives, but few to female profiles. If more than half of the people working in communication and advertising are women, why are only 22% in management positions? It is time to make the industry wake up, to give us visibility, to fight to be at the top. But, above all, it's time to love ourselves and trust in our value; it's time to take advantage of our condition as women to show the world everything we are capable of. And there is no better tool for this than communication and sorority: giving visibility to our colleagues, recommending their work and supporting us.

We are fighters par excellence, we get up every time we are tripped up and, although sometimes giving up can be the easy way out, there is always a way to prosper. If in 2022 you detect a company that is not committed to diversity, to giving everyone an equal opportunity to grow, or simply does not know how to take advantage of female talent, run away, because that company is destined to fail. Trust in your talent and, as Ptazeta says, "aim high, everything comes".

SOLEDAD GARCÍA

*Editor-in-Chief of Metros2 magazine, PhD in Journalism
and co-author of the book Employability and quality in
the employment of women journalists*

Will is power.

"If you get an interview with Emilio Aragón, you can collaborate with us. None of my writers have been able to do so". These were the words that the man who would later become my editor-in-chief said to me, after looking at my report on the construction of a nuclear cemetery that I had brought him to see if I could get it published. "I'll get it," I replied. Thus began my journey as a journalist 30 years ago.

I was a journalism student who had just turned 20 and, as luck would have it, I ended up in the magazine of the Instituto de la Juventud (INJUVE), where they proposed that challenge to me. I got the interview, they published it, and from then on, others came, such as Gran Wyoming, and reports. I was publishing! From there, I would move on to radio, Europa FM. I started collaborating in a night-ly program and I ended up presenting it, and also finally directing it, for three years. Those were very intense years, two hours a day of live radio is a lot of minutes, a lot of content. I learned to enjoy and suffer what it is to be in front of a microphone, to overturn stones to search out news. At that time, 1994 and later, information was gathered by telephone, by contacts. There were no emails, there was no Internet. If your cell phone ran out of battery you had to

find a phone box and call in to deliver your live report. Those were very intense and beautiful years. The radio: the daily magazine, the news. I was still studying and writing for the INJUVE magazine.

Entering journalism is not easy. The important thing is to get in and not stop. My life was a frenetic and exhausting daily turmoil and a desire to do journalism, which also led me to be commissioned to produce and coordinate an INJUVE newspaper in Asturias in the summer of 1994, and to represent Spain at several European conferences of journalists held in Bonn (then the German capital), and later in Amsterdam. When faced with the challenges that were proposed to me, my answer was always yes. Then I looked for a way to make them work. After the radio, I would collaborate in several economic magazines and in a European project to develop the Spanish part of a media directory for young people. I ended up as editor-in-chief of *Metros2* magazine, where I have been for 25 years, facing challenges day by day. A constant, intense, difficult and absorbing journey, where the greatest incentive is always the desire to achieve. That and the necessary dose of journalistic vocation which I have seen fulfilled on several occasions.

One of the most emotional, in 2019 when I was awarded the 1st Via Célere Real Estate Journalism Award for the report, *2018: Odyssey in housing*. Another, the outstanding cum laude for my thesis in Journalism, *The incidence of the crisis on women journalists in the communications industry 2008-2013*. I have also participated in congresses and publications specialised in gender; I am co-author of the book *Employability and quality in the employment of women journalists*. All this, seasoned with three children.

I think the most important message is: “will is power”. Yes, the road is hard and arduous, but tremendously satisfying when you achieve your goals. The most important: to be true to yourself and not to be afraid of challenges. Go for it!

According to the ECM, one in three female communications professionals in Europe say they are personally affected by an invisible barrier that prevents them from moving up the career ladder

In 74.1% of communication departments and agencies in Portugal there are more women than men, but only **37.5%** are leaders

In Europe, in **75%** of communication departments and agencies, women are in the majority, but only one in two senior communicators is a woman

Source: Zerfass, A., Verhoeven, P., Moreno, A., Tench, R., & Verčič, D. (2020). *European Communication Monitor 2020. Ethical challenges, gender issues, cyber security, and competence gaps in strategic communication. Results of a survey in 44 countries*. Brussels: EUPRERA/EACD.

SUSANA BALADO

Head of PR at PDPAOLA Jewelry

I dedicate this text to my 18-year-old self.

To that girl who cried in bed because she couldn't study Advertising and PR because there was no faculty in her city. To her, who knew since she was a child that her vocation was communication strategies. The same girl who thought it would be impossible to work in fashion coming from a small city and without contacts.

Yes to you, who read this and think that because you are a woman, maybe you have fewer opportunities or more difficulties to grow.

I will tell you that today we are fashion PR directors, that you are happy because you work in something you are passionate about and that thanks to the desire, to push ahead, to knock on every door without fear, thanks to all the savings you are going to make working in other things to specialise in fashion communication after studying marketing and, above all, thanks to believing in yourself, you get the things that one day at 18 years old lying in bed crying you thought you would never have.

I won't lie to you, it will not be an easy road, but in our favour we will have a profession led mainly by women, and in your case, they will give you the strength to keep moving forward and growing. Yes, you will be frustrated because there is a lot of intrusion in the profession and because you don't have contacts, but you will be able to do it, because if you nurture a talent, a dream, sooner or later, you will always have your moment, that opportunity to shine.

SUSANA DE PABLOS

*Journalist in charge of the 'Management' and 'Innovation' sections
at DiarioAbierto*

Thank you very much, journalists.

Being a journalist means learning to discover threats and opportunities for your community. It requires collaborating with your team to take on a stimulating challenge: an editorial, radio, audiovisual or communications project. The goal is to produce the best product, to provide the best service. If you still don't write well, read a lot. If you don't understand, ask humbly. And have generosity, an essential to turn a group of people into a team involved in an exciting project that, don't forget, will be part of your resumé.

In my beginnings, other people trained me, advised me and accompanied me, while together we developed a project. I remember with special gratitude Silvia, a former university classmate. She turned me overnight into a journalist specialising in science and technology and sent me to Bordeaux on behalf of Diario16.

Millions of thanks to Ana María, whom I met at Cinco Días. We are long distance friends, she returned to Santiago de Chile. She taught me how to focus my articles, offered me her contacts, corrected my texts to improve them... She was extremely generous. She turned down a project, in her opinion poorly paid, which I accepted. And when I shared with her my intention to carry it out, she generously respected my decision and helped me to carry it out.

My gratitude to Marta, she opened the doors of El País to me. Another exceptional woman I love and admire is Pilar. We met years ago, she was an editor at Capital magazine, and I was an editor at Emprendedores. Thanks to Pilar, I helped to energise the social network eDirectivos, launched by Wolters Kluwer to promote its magazines, and I managed to collaborate in Estrategia Financiera, in Capital Humano...! And it is thanks to Pilar that today I write for diarioabierto.es.

My debt to women and men journalists is priceless. Thanks to the Canela team for counting on me for this project. Thank you very much, journalists.

VICTORIA TEJERO IRIBARREN

Head of PR & Corporate Communications Manager at Ubisoft Spain

When I analyse what has helped me to get here, I look back and I immediately get a smile on my face. And the fact is that in this profession I have always enjoyed a great sense of camaraderie. I have had the good fortune to coincide with great women, many of them now great friends, with whom it has been easy and enriching to work as a team. I have also been part of diverse groups where respect and tolerance have prevailed, where progress and learning have always been within my reach. And all this has contributed significantly to my career.

In my recipe for continuing to grow as a communications professional, there are two things that I consider indispensable. On one hand, working to get to know the audience we are addressing well, because understanding their values and their trends in information consumption is key to connecting with them. On the other hand, I think it is important to keep up to date with new tools and channels, to make the most of them and maximise communication.

And on a day-to-day basis, I would recommend being curious, listening a lot, keeping an open mind and, in short, enjoying the conversation with opinion leaders, colleagues and clients.

Finally, if the person reading these letters has already decided to join this adventure, I would add working on skills such as empathy, honesty, analytical skills and creativity.

YOONY KIM

Head of Public Policy and Communications at HousingAnywhere

Dear YOU,

The definition of success is very different for each person, as are all the aspects related to gender and the wide world of communication, but I can say that, in my case, I made my way through, having fun and being happy, as a woman in the field of communications profession, so here's my personal story.

I believe in celebrating differences. I consider gender differences as valuable diversity and focus on being "fair" rather than "equal", as it pushes me to consider different circumstances, personalities, capabilities and competences. I believe you can bring out the best in each other, including yourself only when all these differences are considered and respected.

Of course, being a female professional presented me with some interesting challenges and I have a perfect example. More than a decade ago, as a young and enthusiastic professional, I had the privilege of serving a marketing & communications manager role for a great brand - Harley-Davidson - in South Korea. The motorcycle industry is still extremely male-dominated. On top of that, Korea was (and still is to a degree) a very much of a male-dominated society. Against all odds, my gender turned out to be an

advantage because I was a rare breed and it was easier for me to be noticed while carrying out my responsibilities. So I served my role enjoying the "special attention" that I got for being different as I considered it to be my strength. It was not always easy but hey, in the end, that's also part of the fun.

Looking back, I see that life is a journey of finding who you are and what makes you happy. At this stage of my life, I especially enjoy writing a business proposal for myself. You know it all: purpose, mission, vision, values, swot, competitor analysis, perception mapping, gap analysis, USP, positioning, objectives, strategy, action plan, evaluation, etc. We do it all the time as a communications professional so why not about you? It helps me tremendously in finding my USP and positioning my differences in the way I desire and ultimately, in shaping "who I am not" in order to get closer to "who I am". The best part is, you can set your own deadline and the only one who you need to seek approval from is YOU!

From "Crazy, Addictive and Wild" Yoony.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Alba Calvet, Alicia Vicente, Almudena Muñoz, Ana Motilla, Ara Rodríguez, Arantxa Aguilera, Carrie Fraiss, Catarina Oliveira, Cordy Griffiths, Daniela Jurado, Deborah Gray, Dianne Vegas, Elena Compte, Esther Ramos, Esther Valdivia, Eva Corrales, Fernanda Bartels, Fiona Goldsworthy, Iris Delmee, Isabel Landeiro, Isabel Romero, Karina Sánchez, Laura Cortés, Luisa Ramos, Maria João Pinto, Marta Delgado, Natalia Martínez, Natalie Link, Noelia Sánchez, Sarah Levy, Silvia Fernández, Soledad García, Susana Balado, Susana De Pablos, Victoria Tejero y Yoony Kim.

