EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Want to make good money in PR—and have a good time doing it?

Work for a public company or a government agency. According to our first-ever PR Daily Salary and Job Satisfaction Survey, these organizations offer you the best chance for good money and good raises, ample benefits, and high job satisfaction.

Here’s more good news from the survey: In spite of a still-wobbly economy, the majority of PR professionals across the board received salary increases in 2012, ranging from cost-of-living increases of 2–3 percent to a healthier 10 percent. And many PR pros expect to get pay raises in 2013. Professionals at public companies were most likely to get a pay hike (81 percent) compared with those at nonprofits (75 percent), and those at PR agencies (69 percent).

However, the 2,764 respondents we surveyed online—communicators, marketers, and corporate and agency PR professionals at all levels of their careers—made it clear that they’re out for more than the paycheck. They want to do more challenging and strategic work for their companies and clients, instead of getting saddled with endless administrative tasks. They want the freedom to telecommute or do flextime. And they want their organizations to get serious about career development, and improving internal processes and practices.

Who did we hear from? Twenty-nine percent of our respondents are with PR agencies, while 23 percent are with private companies, and 16 percent with public companies. Twenty percent are with nonprofits, and 9 percent work for government agencies. Thirty-four percent have been in the business for 5 years or less, 20 percent for 5 to 10 years, 21 percent for 10 to 20 years, and 15 percent have been in the field for more than 20 years.
Seventy-seven percent of our survey respondents are female versus 23 percent male, corresponding to the female/male split in the PR industry as a whole. (As PR Daily reported in 2011, women make up anywhere from 70 percent to 85 percent of the business.)

As for the size of the companies these PR pros work for, it’s a good mix across the board. Seventeen percent work for a company with fewer than 10 employees, while 30 percent work for companies with 11 to 100 employees. Twenty-two percent work for companies with 101 to 1,000 employees, and 31 percent work for companies with more than 1,000 people.

Whether they are at PR agencies or corporations and nonprofits, the job titles of our respondents were all over the map—“account executive” and “communications manager” were the most commonly named titles (at 24 percent and 20 percent, respectively), along with several other common titles, including “account manager,” “associate,” “communications manager,” “marketing communications manager,” and so on.

The nice thing about surveying communications people is that they’re not a shy bunch. They were more than willing to tell us what they want to change about their jobs, and how their organizations need to change, if they’re expected to stick around. You’ll find many of their comments inside.

We also found out what’s driving PR people crazy when it comes to their work time being wasted. Lengthy approval cycles, useless meetings, and poor planning all drain away time that can be used on more productive work for their organizations. (Note to PR execs: You’ll stand a better chance of retaining talent if you make workplace efficiency a top priority this year.)

A QUICK NOTE: ON A FEW OCCASIONS THE PERCENTAGES IN THE GRAPH EXCEED 100 PERCENT BECAUSE WE ROUNDED THE PERCENTAGES UP.
MAJOR FINDINGS IN KEY AREAS

SALARIES

As the economy creeps toward a rebound, PR pros are getting raises. Seventy-one percent received increases in 2012, and 59 percent say they expect to get raises in 2013. In 2012, 24 percent got raises of 2–3 percent, while 22 percent got raises of more than 10 percent. Men and women were equally likely to get raises: Seventy-one percent of women got raises, versus 70 percent of men.

Interestingly enough, it’s not the long-timers in the business who get the most pay raises. Seventy-five percent of our respondents working in the field 5 to 10 years got raises, while 67 percent of those in the business for more than 20 years got raises.

As for what they’re earning, 26 percent of respondents are making $50,000 to $75,000 annually; 25 percent make $35,000 to $50,000; 15 percent earn $75,000 to $100,000; and 15 percent earn more than $100,000.

Among our respondents, the Midwest hosted most of the high earners—33 percent of those from this region earn more than $250,000.

BENEFITS

Eighty-six percent get medical coverage from their employers, and 77 percent get dental coverage. Half of the respondents have 401(k) plans with company matching.
Wellness benefits are proving popular with PR pros—many respondents noted that their employers give them gym membership reimbursements, on-site workout facilities, and health premium discounts for people who participate in wellness programs.

As for the benefits on PR pros’ wish lists: Fourteen percent say they’d like a 401(k) plan with company matching, and 14 percent say they’d like a profit sharing plan. Many respondents also say they’d like their employer to shoulder more of the monthly cost of health insurance.

Forty-eight percent say their company provides on-site training, and 47 percent say they get access to off-site training such as conferences and workshops. When it comes to their training desires, formal mentoring is mentioned most often: Thirty-nine percent say they’d like to have a formal mentoring program in place.
PR pros are generally OK with their jobs—provided they’re getting good work to do, in a well-organized, communicative environment. On a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being highly satisfied, 43 percent chose level 3—right in the middle. Challenging work was chosen by 62 percent as a key factor in job satisfaction, followed by co-workers (52 percent) and the workplace’s casual atmosphere (43 percent).

Asked what’s most likely to cause dissatisfaction with their jobs, respondents say the lack of effective in-house communication (38 percent), staff disharmony (25 percent), and the lack of flexible hours and telecommuting (21 percent).

Well-paid workers appear to be most satisfied with their jobs. Forty-six percent of those earning more than $250,000 rated their satisfaction at level 5, while only 5 percent of those earning less than $35,000 chose this level of satisfaction.
WORK/LIFE BALANCE

Forty-seven percent of respondents telecommute at least one day a week; 27 percent of this group telecommutes five days a week. High earners are more likely to telecommute: Forty-two percent of those making more than $250,000 say they telecommute, while only 22 percent of people earning less than $35,000 say they do.

Forty-one percent say they work at least one weekend a month, although 30 percent say they never work on weekends.

Desk-bound lunches are commonplace: Sixty-nine percent do lunch at their desks, while 13 percent eat in their company’s lunchroom.

When it comes to drains on their productivity, respondents are most likely to blame delayed approvals (56 percent), followed by inefficient meetings (46 percent), and flawed information (44 percent). Read on to dig deeper.
While many respondents may not be delighted with their compensation, most of them got more money in 2012: Seventy-one percent say they received a salary increase in 2012, while 29 percent did not. For those respondents who did receive a salary increase, 24 percent received a 2–3 percent increase, while 22 percent received a salary increase of more than 10 percent.

Those most likely to get increases were at the higher end of the pay scale: Eighty-eight percent of respondents earning more than $250,000 received a pay increase, as did 77 percent of those earning $150,000 to $250,000, 76 percent making $100,000 to $150,000, 71 percent earning $75,000 to $100,000, and 52 percent earning $50,000 to $75,000.

DID YOU GET A RAISE? [ACCORDING TO EXPERIENCE]
$100,000, 75 percent pulling in $50,000 to $75,000, 74 percent making $35,000 to $50,000, and 57 percent earning less than $35,000.

However, the most experienced professionals were not necessarily most likely to get a pay hike. Seventy-six percent of people in the business between 1 and 5 years received raises, while 75 percent of those working 5 to 10 years in the field got raises; 67 percent of those in the business more than 20 years got raises. Only 52 percent of people working in the field for less than a year got pay hikes.

Professionals at public companies were most likely to get a salary boost in 2012: Eighty-one percent received an increase, compared to 75 percent at nonprofits, 72 percent at private companies, and 69 percent at PR agencies.

Men and women were about equally likely to get raises: Seventy-one percent of women say they got raises, versus 70 percent of men.

Fifty-nine percent of all respondents say they expect to receive a raise in 2013—if those who expect a raise, 32 percent anticipate a 2–3 percent increase, 25 percent expect a 3–5 percent increase, and 18 percent expect a 1–2 percent increase.
Employees of public companies were most optimistic about the likelihood of getting a raise in 2013: Sixty-five percent expect a salary boost, compared to 60 percent of private company employees and 60 percent of those who work for nonprofits.

ANNUAL BASE SALARY

Twenty-six percent of respondents pull in $50,000 to $75,000 annually, while 25 percent make $35,000 to $50,000. Fifteen percent are in the $75,000 to $100,000 range, and a total of 15 percent make more than $100,000.

Nearly half of the respondents working for PR agencies earn less than $35,000, while 31 percent of those working for private or public companies and 11 percent working for nonprofits earn that amount. In the mid-range salary group of $75,000 to $100,000 earners, the pendulum swings toward corporations: 45 percent work for private or public companies, and only 14 percent work for PR agencies.

In the high-earning $250,000+ group, 38 percent work for agencies, while 19 percent work for public or private companies. Thirty-one percent of these high-earners are self-employed.

As might be expected, the less time on the job, the smaller the paycheck – and vice versa. Eighty-seven percent of those in the field for 5 years or less earn less than $35,000; 88 percent of those in the biz for 10 years or more earn more than $250,000.

Among our respondents, the Midwest hosted most of the high earners – 33 percent of those from this region earn more than $250,000; 11 percent in the Northeast and West Coast, respectively, earn more than
$250,000. The coasts claimed most of the mid- to high-range earners: 24 percent of Northeasters and 15 percent of West Coasters earn $100,000 to $150,000, and 26 percent of Northeasters and 29 percent of West Coasters earn $150,000 to $250,000.

Women are somewhat more likely to be in the lower pay ranges: Eighty-five percent of respondents earning less than $35,000 are women—in the $250,000+ pay range, 67 percent are women. This is an interesting finding, as women seem to predominate at the bottom of the pay scale, as well as the top of the pay scale.
CAREER PEAK SALARY

Sixty-eight percent say their current salary represents their career peak in earnings, while 32 percent say their current salary is not their career peak.

For respondents who are not currently earning their career peak salary, 24 percent say their top earnings were in the $75,000 to $100,000 range, while 22 percent say they had earned $50,000 to $75,000. Nineteen percent say their peak earnings were in the range of $100,000 to $150,000.

COMPENSATION SATISFACTION

Respondents aren’t jumping up and down for joy about their take-home pay. Thirty-eight percent say they are “somewhat dissatisfied” with their current salary, while 33 percent proclaimed themselves satisfied with their earnings. Fourteen percent are in the “very dissatisfied” group. Men and women appear to be equally satisfied or dissatisfied with their compensation in similar percentages to the above.
Not surprisingly, lower-paid professionals are less happy with their take-home pay: Seventy-four percent of respondents earning less than $35,000 are somewhat dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with their compensation, while 62 percent of those earning more than $250,000 are quite pleased or exceedingly pleased with their pay.

PR agency workers are most likely to be very dissatisfied with their pay (21 percent), with self-employed professionals (17 percent) close behind. Those working for public companies are happiest with their compensation: Twenty-one percent are either quite pleased or exceedingly pleased with their paychecks, followed by 18 percent of private company employees, and 17 percent of nonprofit workers.

RAISES FOR COLLEAGUES

Only 11 percent are responsible for salary decisions for other people at their company. Of this group, 72 percent say they do expect to give raises to their associates. The average raise, say 39 percent of the raise-giving group, will be 2–3 percent; 34 percent expect to give out raises of 3–5 percent.

Of respondents who make decisions on staff salary increases, 67 percent say they base these decisions on an employee’s overall performance, while 12 percent fix increases based on a worker’s contribution to the bottom line.

BONUSES

Thirty-nine percent say they received a bonus in 2012—of that group, 40 percent say their bonus was between $1,000 and $5,000, and 29 percent received a bonus of less than $1,000. Six percent received a bonus of more than $25,000.
WHO GOT A BONUS? [ACCORDING TO EXPERIENCE]

Public company employees were most likely to get bonuses (59 percent), followed by private company employees (47 percent) and PR agency employees (38 percent).

The longer they’ve been in the field, the more likely these professionals are to get bonuses: Sixty-four percent of those with more than 20 years in the fold got bonuses, compared with 48 percent with 10 to 20 years in the field—and just 17 percent of those who’ve been in the biz less than a year. Sixty-five percent of bonus recipients felt that the amount of their bonus was just right, while 33 percent believed their bonus wasn’t enough.

In 2011, 62 percent say they received bonuses, about the same as the number who received bonuses in 2012.

“We get quarterly bonuses. Wish we would just get a higher base salary rather than bonuses that are taxed at higher rates.”
Experience is the most important factor affecting decisions about promotions at their organizations, say 64 percent; 45 percent say internal connections or “chumminess” plays a key role in getting promoted, while 38 percent say interpersonal skills weigh heavily on promotion decisions.
BENEFITS

BENEFITS PROVIDED BY COMPANY

Slightly more than 86 percent receive medical coverage from their employers, and 77 percent receive dental coverage. Sixty-six percent receive vision benefits, and 57 percent receive short-term disability coverage. Half of our respondents said they get access to a 401(k) plan with company matching.

Many respondents note that their companies provide wellness benefits in some form—such as reimbursement for gym memberships or on-site workout facilities. Flextime programs and days for personal time off also received shout-outs.

“We get ‘flex dollars,’ which can be used to purchase extra vacation, health benefits, etc.”
MOST WANTED BENEFITS

When asked which benefit they’d most like their company to provide that is currently not part of their benefits package, 44 percent said “none.” Fourteen percent say they’d like a 401(k) plan with company matching, while 14 percent say they’d welcome a profit sharing plan.

Even if they already have medical coverage, some respondents noted that better medical coverage would be a big plus—or paying cheaper monthly premiums for this benefit.

TRAINING

Forty-eight percent of respondents say their company provides on-site training. Forty-seven percent say their company offers off-site training opportunities, such as conferences and workshops. Fifty-three percent say they are offered access to webinars and podcasts that provide training. Many respondents also say their company provides mentoring on an informal basis.

“Training money is provided, but each employee is expected to find needed training from external sources.”
DESIRED TRAINING

When asked what type of training they’d like their company to offer, 39 percent say a formal mentoring program (as opposed to informal mentoring) is high up on their wish list. Thirty-four percent want off-site conferences and workshops, while 17 percent would like to see more on-site training.

PR newbies were more likely to say they wanted on-site training: Twenty-three percent with less than a year in the industry chose on-site offerings, versus 11 percent of those in the business for more than 20 years. Thirty-eight percent of the newbies chose off-site training and conferences as a must-have, while 28 percent of workers with more than 20 years in the industry chose this training benefit.

“Off-site conferences and workshops are our method of training, but only one of us can go at a time, and I would like to go to these training sessions as well.”
JOB SATISFACTION

OVERALL SATISFACTION

On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 the lowest level of satisfaction and 5 the highest, 43 percent pegged their satisfaction level smack in the middle at level 3. Thirty-nine percent chose level 4, and 10 percent chose level 2.

PR agency professionals were most likely to choose the middle level of 3 (46 percent), followed by private company workers and government agency employees (43 percent each). However, agency workers and nonprofit employees were also most likely to choose the lower ends of the scale, levels 1 or 2 (13 percent each), followed by private company workers (12 percent).

Well-paid workers are most likely to be happy with their jobs. Forty-six percent of those making more than $250,000 rated their satisfaction at level 5, while only 5 percent of workers earning less than $35,000 chose this level of satisfaction.

Women and men are about equal in terms of their job satisfaction. Forty-two percent of women chose level 3, while 39 percent of men chose the same level. Thirty-nine percent of women put their satisfaction at level 4, compared to 41 percent of men.
MOST SATISFYING ASPECTS

Challenging work is at the top of the list of the most satisfying aspects of the job, with 62 percent making this choice. Fifty-two percent say their co-workers are the top reason for their job satisfaction, and 43 percent say it’s the workplace’s casual atmosphere.
Professionals on the job less than a year are somewhat less likely to value challenging work as a key aspect of their satisfaction—54 percent say challenging work matters the most, and 52 percent of these newbies named free coffee as a key job satisfaction perk. Seventy-one percent of people in the business more than 20 years chose challenging work as the most important factor in their job satisfaction—while only 22 percent chose free coffee.

“I work for a charity with a four-star rating from Charity Navigator, believe in our mission, and know the impact our services have on the vulnerable in our community. It gives me a good feeling to know that I’m making a difference in my community. Sure, I’m underpaid ... but I do important work.”

MOST ANNOYING ASPECTS

Lack of effective in-house communication is the top item causing dissatisfaction for 38 percent of respondents, followed by staff disharmony at 25 percent. Twenty-one percent say the lack of flexible hours or telecommuting are cause for dissatisfaction, while 20 percent put the blame on unqualified bosses.

Number of years on the job played a role in determining the most annoying aspects of the job. For instance, 25 percent of those with 1 to 5 years of experience cited boring work as a turnoff, compared with just 10 percent of respondents with more than 20 years of experience. The reason, it seems, is because upper management is sticking the newbies with the more mundane tasks. Meanwhile, all levels of experience agreed that lack of effective in-house communication is rubbing them the wrong way.

“Our self-service organization means all information is available, but notoriously difficult to find as well as time-consuming.”
WHAT TO CHANGE IN THE ORGANIZATION

Respondents were asked to choose one thing they would change in their organization. While responses varied widely, some common themes emerged: More communication and clear direction from management are clearly needed, along with cohesiveness on company goals and standardized policies and practices.

“There are too many unnecessary meetings, too little communication, and too many chiefs and not enough Indians.”

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Thirty-two percent say they are satisfied with their current position at this point in their careers—but 31 percent pronounced themselves somewhat dissatisfied. Twenty-three percent say they’re quite pleased with where they are now in their career.

Curiously, there was little variation on the levels of satisfaction when it came to the number of years they had been on the job.
WORK/LIFE BALANCE

WORKING HOURS

A workweek of 40 to 50 hours is standard for 57 percent of respondents, while 21 percent work 35 to 40 hours a week.

High earners work longer hours: Sixty-seven percent of those earning more than $250,000 work more than 50 hours a week, while only 13 percent of sub-$35,000 earners do so.

Experience in the industry seems to correlate with overtime. Twenty-five percent of professionals who’ve been in the business more than 20 years work more than 50 hours a week, compared to 19 percent of those with 5 to 10 years of experience, and 10 percent of those with less than a year.

Only 22 percent telecommute—of this group, 47 percent say they do so one day a week, while 27 percent telecommute five days a week. Many respondents pointed out that their time spent telecommuting is variable, depending on personal needs and work projects.
High earners are more likely to telecommute: Forty-two percent of those making more than $250,000 say they telecommute, while only 22 percent of people earning less than $35,000 say they do.

Longtime industry pros are also more likely to work away from the office. Twenty-eight percent of those with 10 to 20 years of experience are telecommuting, as do 23 percent of those with more than 20 years. Only 15 percent of those in the business for less than a year are telecommuting.

Self-employed professionals are the most frequent telecommuters—66 percent do so, versus 25 percent of public company employees, and 24 percent of private company employees. Self-employed workers are also most likely to spend most of their time telecommuting: Sixty-five percent who telecommute do so five days a week, followed by 33 percent of PR agency workers who telecommute.
WEEKEND WORK

Working on weekends is a necessary evil for many respondents—41 percent say they work one weekend a month, and 15 percent say they work two weekends a month. However, 30 percent say they never work on weekends.

High earners are more likely to rack up working hours on the weekend: Sixty-one percent of those earning $150,000 to $250,000 work one or two weekends a month, as do 66 percent of those earning more than $250,000. Of the respondents earning less than $35,000, 45 percent work one or two weekends a month.

Government agency workers are most likely to avoid weekend work: Thirty-six percent say they never do it, followed by 34 percent of private company employees. Self-employed workers are most likely to clock in every weekend (31 percent), while only 9 percent of PR agency employees work every weekend. The more experienced professionals are most likely to do work on the weekends: Fifteen percent of those with more than 20 years of experience say they work every weekend, while only 7 percent of those with less than a year in the business work every weekend.
Of those who do weekend work, 67 percent say they don’t get extra compensation for doing so, since it’s considered part of the job. But 17 percent say they make an effort to get the time back in other ways, such as taking longer lunches or working shorter days.

**VACATION TIME**

Thirty-nine percent get two weeks off a year; 30 percent get three weeks.

Government agency workers get the most vacation: Forty-two percent get four weeks or more, while only 18 percent of PR agency employees get that much time.

As for using the vacation benefits they receive, 53 percent say they don’t get around to using all their time. Of this group, 57 percent say they’re allowed to roll over unused vacation time to the following year, with some limitations.

“We can roll over one week per year, but we must use it by our next anniversary date or we lose it. We also have the option to donate unused vacation time, which may be used by other employees in times of need.”
MONEY VS. TIME OFF

If able to choose between getting more money or getting more time off, 65 percent say they’ll take the cash, while 35 percent would take the extra time. Men were somewhat more likely to prefer the cash: Seventy-one percent say they’d take the money compared to 62 percent of women.

Slightly more of the lower-paid respondents say they’d prefer money to time: Sixty-seven percent in both the under-$35,000 and the $35,000 to $50,000 categories say they want the cash, compared to 58 percent of people making more than $250,000.

“Would love to say time, but with my responsibilities, I probably couldn’t take the extra time off anyway.”
LUNCHTIME

When it comes to deciding where to have lunch, many people go no farther than their workspace: Sixty-nine percent have lunch at their desks, while 13 percent eat in the lunchroom with their colleagues. Only 11 percent get out of the office for lunch with colleagues or clients.

Highly paid professionals are most likely to lunch at their desks—75 percent of those making more than $250,000 do so, while 59 percent of those making less than $35,000 do desk lunching. Sixteen percent of people earning $150,000 to $250,000 go out to lunch with colleagues or clients, while 15 percent of those earning less than $35,000 go out for lunch.

When it comes to organizational habits, 73 percent of PR agency employees eat lunch at their desks, compared with 71 percent of government agency employees, and 54 percent of self-employed people. Public company employees are most likely to get out of the office to lunch with clients or colleagues (15 percent), followed by private company employees (14 percent) and government agency workers (13 percent).

“I’ve been trying to leave the office and take an actual lunch. It’s taken me five years to finally figure out that everyone needs a break.”
WORK EFFICIENCY

When asked how much time they devote to the job they were hired to do, 70 percent say nearly all their time goes to the expected job tasks, while 24 percent say most of their time does.

Social media has been a key disrupter in terms of changing how time is spent on work tasks, say some respondents. They point out that while they may have been hired for a particular area of expertise, or to perform specific tasks, they are required to spend more time on social media campaigns. Seventeen percent say that social media is the key drain on their productivity.

WHAT IS THE GREATEST WASTE OF TIME?

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<th>Activity</th>
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<td>Social media</td>
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PRODUCTIVITY (OR LACK THEREOF)

Delayed approvals create the most time suckage when it comes to remaining productive, say 56 percent, followed by inefficient meetings (46 percent) and flawed or conflicting information (44 percent). Excessive bureaucracy and poor planning were frequently cited as drains on productivity. Sifting through emails takes away from as much as six hours a week of productive activity, followed by delayed approvals (five hours) and social media (four hours).

Time in the industry was a key differentiator in this question. One of the greatest drains on productivity for those with more years in the industry was meetings; meanwhile, younger PR pros cited social media and other online activities, as well as running errands during work time, as a chief disrupter.
What are the greatest drains on your productivity?

### According to experience

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<td>29%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other online activities</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other time-sapping activities</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### More challenges, greater responsibility

Our survey respondents had no problem offering ideas for the one thing they’d change about their job. More challenging assignments and more high-level responsibilities top their most-wanted lists—they want to sink their teeth into good projects, work more independently, and get on the ladder to more promotions.