

have about the job you guys do?

Shante: The #1 misconception is that in PR you just go to events and you may send out a press release every now and then. There is a lot of tedious legwork and research; you have to know what you are doing. If you are doing PR you are probably doing event planning as well, you are coordinating press opportunity. You are the liaison between the record label, the artist and the venue. You juggle a lot of responsibilities; there is a lot of writing involved not just with the press release, but in any correspondences. The media coaching and grooming that you do with the artist, a lot of work goes into a successful publicity campaign.

Some people believe to become a successful publicist you need to possess an inkling of intelligence coupled with minimal ability and drive to succeed. What educational background is necessary and what advice can you give for those trying to break into this market?

Saptosa: You definitely need writing skills, I would suggest having a degree in English or Journalism for PR. Even if you don't have any of that you still need a good writer's background. You need to be an analytical thinker; you need to have some internship and an entry-level job experience in the media.

Shante: Make sure you get in from the ground up and put your time in by paying your dues as an intern. Also, in this industry everything is relationship driven. Everything you get depends on your relationship, you could get all A's in your class as well as be the best intern. But, if you don't know how to cultivate and manage relationships, you are dead in the water. You got to have a knack for it, if you don't it's like swimming upstream no matter how you try to force it, it just doesn't work. There are people who can't seem to achieve any type of success and you wonder why. It's because they are not a people's people and they do not know how to keep up a relationship. There are a lot of people who really have a deficiency when it comes to making relationship and satisfying people. Education and internships go so far but it is your quality to create relationship that will help you make it.

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135th Street successfully orchestrated Young Jeezy's release party. One of the things that struck me is that you all remained calm during the storm when unpredictability stepped in. How was that possible?

Shante: We expected pandemonium, I would not have been any happier if it came out any less crazy. This was not a quiet dinner for 12 and then 3000 people showed up. I wanted it to be as crazy as possible with the block shut down where people could not get in.

There is a lot of excitement around your latest project, tell us about it and can college student become participants?

Saptosa: It is called "The Executive Experience" and we pitched it to the Post Office. Basically it is a PR campaign challenge, it's for a team of students in the tri-state area (New York, New Jersey and Connecticut), where it is being piloted at to submit their PR campaign for three of the postal services online product services:

NetPost [<http://www.usps.com/netpost>]

Click N' Ship [<http://www.usps.com/clicknship>]

Direct Mail [<http://www.usps.com/directmail>]

They have to come up with some type of PR campaign to see who promotes this better. There will be sixteen semi-final teams narrowed down to six finalists. Each team has to develop a public relations campaign that targets the 18 to 34 years old demographic. The teams will test their campaigns and present their results and methods to a panel of celebrity judges. Then, the winning team will be announced and awarded a scholarship during a ceremony in April of 2006. ◀◀