

The Alternative Employee Handbook



Welcome...

There... that wasn't so bad was it? The interview. The writing test. The wondering. The wait. That you're here, now, reading this, says it all went rather swimmingly. So **well done, congratulations** and **welcome** to the **public relations sensation** that is **PR Agency One**.

YOU'LL HAVE FUN. WE'LL HAVE FUN.

BIG FUN.

WE'RE NOT SAYING IT'LL ALWAYS BE EASY,
BUT JOY WILL BE HAD, PLENTY OF IT.

YOU'LL PICK UP PLENTY OF TOP DRAWER PRO PR SKILLS,
GREAT EXPERIENCE, A STACK OF AWARDS AND FRIENDS,
NOT TO MENTION YOUR CHANCE TO BUILD A MASSIVELY
REWARDING CAREER AT A MASSIVELY REWARDING AGENCY.

GOOD NEWS.

BUT THE PARTICULARLY WONDERFUL THING
ABOUT PRAO, IS THAT YOU CAN GO AS FAR...

AND AS FAST... AS YOU WANT.

SERIOUSLY UPWARDLY MOBILE, WE'RE KEEN AND COMMITTED TO
GIVING SERIOUSLY UPWARDLY MOBILE PEOPLE A FRONT ROW SEAT.

**THE LOUDER YOU SCREAM,
THE FASTER WE'LL GO.**

SO GET AMBITIOUS. PUT IN A SHIFT. STEP UP.
AND GREAT THINGS WILL HAPPEN.

LIFE WILL LOVE YOU.

CARPE DIEM AND ALL THAT. MAKE SENSE? GOOD.

Vision and Values



Independent and Proud

Did you know we're independent? We are.

TRULY INDEPENDENT

Mainly James, partly Steve but everyone here has a personal and important role to play in making this a great place to work. No backers, no banks, no boardroom nonsense. We are us. And it's on all of us that our success relies.

That's why we invest so much back into the business. Into decent salaries, next level training, Christmas parties and regular socials.

It's an investment in each other. Into our shared success.


James saw early and clearly how digital would revolutionise the PR industry. So he struck out on his own and started PR Agency One.

Steve Leigh joined him. (Not met Steve yet? You will soon - he's the sensible one).



From day one we've been at the forefront of the traditional media relations / technology / measurement crossover. We work hard to stay ahead of the game. We work even harder to help our clients build their businesses on great, attributable PR. Modern, measured... magnificent!

That we're successfully building our own business tells you clients like what we do for them. That you're reading this now says you see it like we see it. One can't help but admire your taste in PR agencies.



Don't worry, we're not going to go all psychobabble on your newbie derriere. We shan't shield our eyes from the sun as we wistfully survey the futurescape whispering haiku. It's much simpler than that.

Our mission is to be so good at growing client brands, reputations and delivering commercial outcomes that we are the clear PR choice.

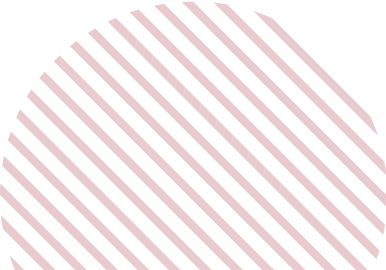

Our vision is to become a £3 million turnover PR agency. An agency celebrated for great quality, business-building work. Measurable work.

Armed with the facts we can be confident in our conversations, in our creativity and in the fact that we can genuinely deliver the right PR service for the right clients. Are there 'wrong' clients I hear you ask? Yes there are.

For example, we decided to go public with our decision not to work with Royal Brunei Airlines, a business which is wholly owned by what we feel meets our definition of an oppressive regime.

This decision was widely acclaimed as a positive thing and we are pleased that our position was well received.

We felt it was the right thing to do and our decision might put some pressure on the organisation and government in question to change and also create an incentive for others to follow suit.



The decision was covered on PR Week and a few days after we went public with this, Brunei softened its position on the matter (although in our opinion there is still a lot more work it needs to do to improve its position on human rights).

We as a business and as a team of people have clear red lines.

We won't work with tobacco companies, e-cig brands, dodgy regimes and 'defense' companies to name just a few.

Basically anyone who we feel won't leave the world a better place than they found it. You'd be surprised what's out there.

That said, sometimes we work with businesses that are in crisis or which have damaged reputations in need of repair. We do this by working with businesses to make genuine changes, or to communicate how they have changed, are trying to change or have been misconstrued.

But only if we feel we are making a change for the better and not damaging our own company values.

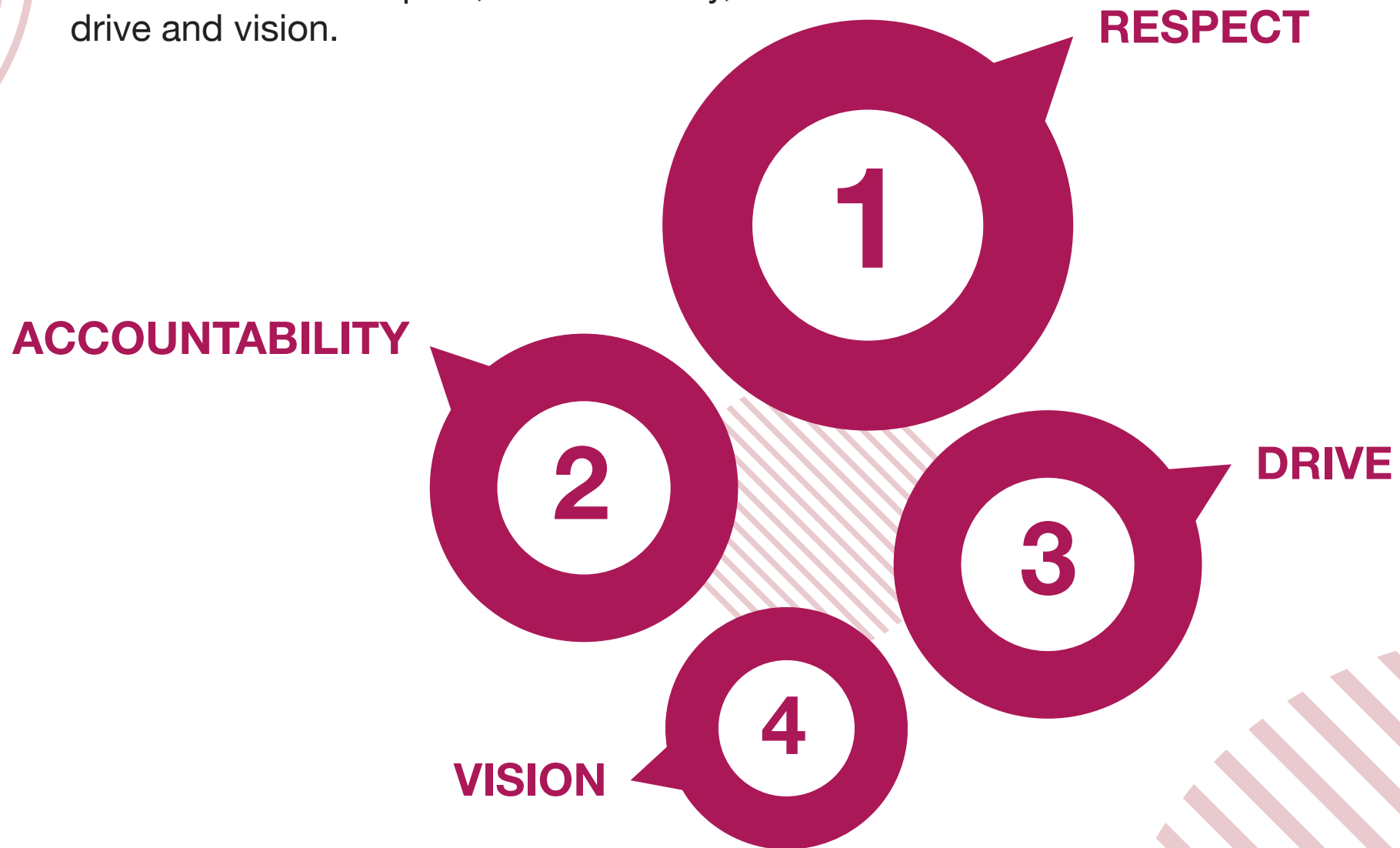
By remembering we're here to serve. To give our clients world class PR. The better job we do, the more work we get, the more successful we are. And here's the good news.


The creativity, the media relations, the measurement stuff - we're already world class at it.

But only when we remember the 'here to serve' stuff. The 'how can I help?'



Our **values** are pretty straightforward too.
Values based on respect, accountability,
drive and vision.





Respect: guess what? Nobody - and we mean nobody - is better than anyone else.

All opinions are valid, all feelings matter, everyone is equal as an individual. Just be open, honest and a decent person irrespective of your pay grade.

At PRAO real respect doesn't mean pussy footing around a subject. Respect can also mean being direct and open and honest about what we believe.

Respect does mean frank conversations and - yes - sometimes these can get heated if we are passionate about a subject, but if we agree to respect each other, recognise and always (always!) apologise if we over-step the mark then we respect you are being respectful too.

Accountability: everyone's accountable.

We're given responsibility, we take it and we work hard to deliver on it, to do a great job for clients and for the company.

Drive: yes. When it comes to taking on responsibility or going above and beyond the word yes is a good word.

Use it. Often. Happily.


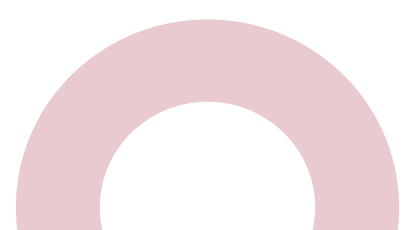
If you want to succeed here then nothing should be too much effort. Yes?

Vision: whatever makes us happy as individuals we need to be happy working as a team.

To do that it's important we retain our shared goal; a company born out of a desire to do things differently - to use technology to advance best PR practices and measurement.

Whatever our different perspectives we can only succeed together.

A vision that vision extends to a micro-level appreciation of our clients and the important day to day detail of our work for them.



As strong as we feel, as committed, as focused, and as bullet-proof as we like to think we are, we need to look after each other. To have each other's backs.

If we can't look after each other then how can we look after our clients? It's the only way this thing will work.

And if that means asking a tough question or sharing an opinion that makes you feel a little uncomfortable, or being straight with someone about something they might not want to hear, then that's fine - as long as it's well-meaning and done with respect.

STEP UP. ASK QUESTIONS. EXPECT HONEST ANSWERS. QUESTION. CONSULT. CLARIFY THINGS YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND. IF THERE'S A PROBLEM OR SOMETHING YOU'RE UNHAPPY WITH, DON'T SHY AWAY FROM IT, CALL IT OUT.



HONESTY

IS THE STARTING POINT OF RESPECT. IT'S THE BEDROCK OF OUR VALUES.

Values that we measure. In our recent staff survey we scored an average 8.78/10, proving that not only do we listen to our team we use those insights to deliver on our company vision and values.

Diversity and Inclusion



“
**SOME ARE
BORN
HERE, SOME
DRAWN
HERE, BUT WE
ALL CALL IT
HOME**
”

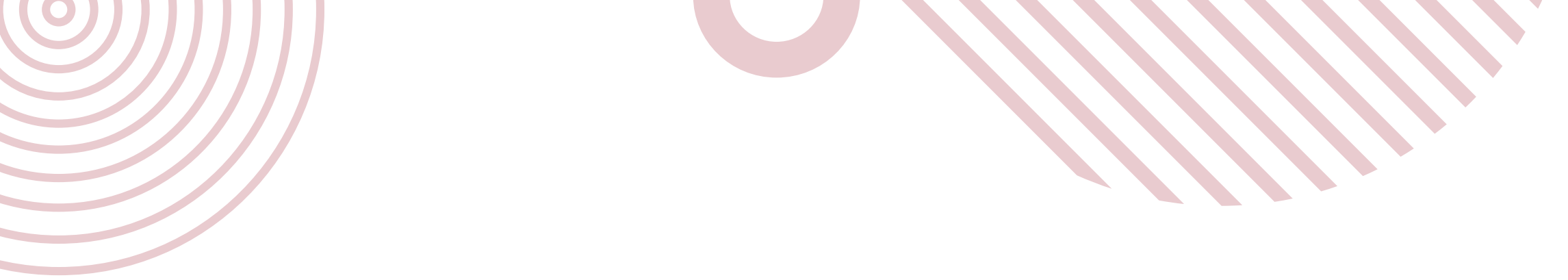
said Tony Walsh in his wonderful
'This is The Place', his poem made famous
after the 2017 Manchester bombing.



And the common theme that those born, drawn and all calling this place home have found?

MANCHESTER'S WONDERFUL WARMTH AND INCLUSIVITY.

Famed for her openness, inclusion and respect for human rights, with nearly 200 languages
Manchester is one of the most linguistically and culturally diverse cities in Western Europe.



It's a city-wide commitment to kindness and inclusion that we at PRAO take very seriously indeed and is expressed through our Diversity and Inclusion Policy. A policy that relates straight back to our shared respect and that nobody is better than anyone else.

That's why we're working with Stonewall on their Diversity Champions programme - the leading employers' programme for ensuring all LGBT staff are accepted without exception in the workplace.

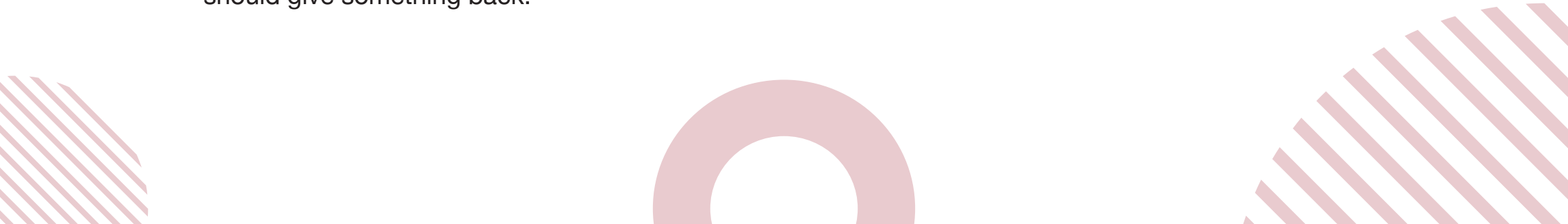
And that's why any decision we make...

About recruitment, progression, pay, are all based on past, present or predicted performance. Not bias.

A HAPPY, PRODUCTIVE WORKPLACE IS THE DIRECT CONSEQUENCE OF A DIVERSE AND INCLUSIVE WORKPLACE. WE'RE GRATEFUL AND PROUD TO BE BOTH.

"Some are born here, some drawn here, but we all call it home" - and at PRAO we'll do everything in our power to make this workplace as kind, as caring and as inclusive as we can.

"Cos Greater Manchester gives us such strength from the fact. That this is the place. We should give something back."



Location, location, location...



Why Manchester?

Simple. Because Manchester is awesome.

Consistently at the top of the best places to live in the UK there's a spirit, sass and economic sense about Manchester that makes it the envy of cities across Europe.

BIG HEARTED, BOLSHY, BOOM TOWN.

A city skyline that's a testament to the scale of ambition here, an ambition drawing the brightest and the best from around the world to realise their dreams.

Tier One PR talent without Tier One price tags. New thinking, new horizons, new opportunities. New you?

That rents are cheaper, people friendlier and the quality of life better than London is great too. Just think of those skyhigh capital city costs, the commercial rents, the inflated salaries, the transport, the hassle and the hassle and the hassle... all for what?

For equivalent or even inferior quality PR work at rates far exceeding those in Manchester. And anyway... London is but a quick hop on the train away.





Why Chorlton?

Because in an awesome city, Chorlton is the most awesome barrio.

BIG, BOHEMIAN, BEATEN UP CHORLTON.

You won't have look too hard to spot a few local 'celebrities' around and about. All part of the charm that is charming Chorlton.

And you'll be as likely to rub shoulders with BBC journalists, artists, musicians and stars of Cold Feet or Coronation Street as you are to bump into a pimped up mobility scooter.

From Beech and Wilbraham to Manchester Roads, to that strip opposite the bus station on Barlow Moor Road, Chorlton is a limitless mix of pizza, prosecco, vegan, veggie, crafty, beery, sushi, rice'n'three fun.

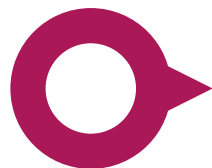
GO EXPLORE!



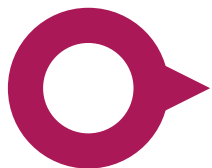
Here are the following top recommendations for sushi and giggles:



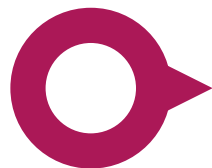
Out of the Blue – the best fishmonger in the world. Lovely lunchtime sushi.



The Creameries – if you're feeling flush.



Barbakan – a continental deli which is AMAZING for lunch.



Pi – a pie lover's delight!



Unicorn – hippie heaven vegan co-op veg shop. Just don't ask for honey!



Mary & Archie's – well decent!



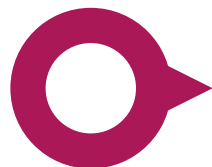
Electrik – our local! Great for lunch, great out the back when the sun's shining.



The Chorlton Tap – a vegan alternative to Electrik Bar.



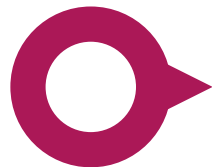
Font – a nice bar for lunch when the sun is shining.



Brewski – Poutine-a-licious



North Star Deli – another nice spot for lunch.



Barbeque Roastery – Amazing coffee freshly ground on site.



In addition...

Beech Road:

Launderette,
Bar San Juan (Tapas),
Lead Station, Elk,
Zitano, The Beech Inn and
The Horse and Jockey (the last
two are great on a sunny day!)

Barlow Moor Road:

Double Zero for authentic
Neapolitan pizzas
Man Bites Frog
and many others...





2011

Feeling frustrated at the lack of clarity, measurement and innovation within the PR industry James dreams of doing things differently and after a run around Chorlton's glorious waterpark with Paolo he's encouraged to do just that.

Using an inheritance of £7000 from his Uncle Ian, James takes a leap of faith to start his own business which will bring together crucial parts of the marketing mix: PR, search, digital marketing and evaluation. Everything in one place. And PR Agency One is born.

Operating from his kitchen table and cafes in South Manchester James acquires his first accounts - Priority Exhibitions and Proludic.

Previous colleague and friend Steve Leigh is welcomed onboard.



2012

PR Agency One's reputation for excellence starts to spread and there soon becomes a need for more talent – we hire our very first Account Manager and Account Executive.

The Google Penguin update hits while James is presenting at a conference outlining the need for PR and SEO to be more collaborative.

Amongst a room of ashen faced SEO types, always ahead of the curve, James takes full advantage of being an SEO PR first mover.

PR Agency One grows up and gets its first home: 553a Wilbraham Road, in the heart of the vibrant south Manchester suburb, Chorlton.



2013

Some key account wins include PFA and One4All.

Gemma Eccleston joins a growing B2B team as an Account Manager.

James is listed in Insider North West's top 25 rising stars of the digital and creative world.

The first ever PRAO blog goes live online.

Elektrik is firmly established as the PRAO local.

Staff members 6



2014

The consumer team welcomes Abigail Outhwaite as a Senior Account Manager.

Phase one of the office expansion starts with the knocking down of internal walls to make a bright, modern, open plan space.

The start of many award wins for PRAO – 2014 PR Moment Award for Best Use Evaluation for Fletchers.

PRAO takes the brand international, sponsoring the EU Search Awards.

Broke £500k



2015

OneEval, our proprietary evaluation framework and integrated reputation tracking and measurement tool is launched.

Some very energetic members of the PRAO team take part in the Asics Manchester Marathon relay for charity.

Our biggest account, One4all, gets even bigger when we pitch for and win the entire marketing budget.

And so, it begins...the first annual Christmas trip abroad. First stop, Amsterdam.

Staff members 12



2016

- As the PRAO brand grows and develops it's given a sharp looking rebrand.
- The first ever PRAO company conference takes place to establish a clear vision and business strategy for the future.
- The second phase of the build is completed making the office space even bigger and brighter and with the addition of Chorlton's finest sun trap – our very own PRAO terrace.
- Win large PR agency of the year - CIPR.

○ Staff members 13

○ Broke £1m



2017

- Launch of the South Manchester Co-Working Space.
- We look to grow and nurture the very best PR talent by introducing a Graduate Recruitment Programme.
- Win a PR Moment Award for Best Use of Media Relations.

○ Staff members 14



2018

- Sky News pay a visit to the office to get a comment from PR and digital industry expert, James, about YouTubers KSI v Logan Paul fight.
- Our Christmas trips continue. This year, the ever so festive Oslo.
- Some big names join the PRAO client portfolio - Decathlon, Serenata Flowers, RADA and KPMG.
- Abigail Outhwaite and Gemma Eccleston are appointed to the Management Team.
- Progressive changes are made to the operational performance of the business introducing a clear set of vision and values, ethics policy and a HR support provider.
- We openly encourage our employees' feedback with the addition of a staff survey.

○ Staff members 16



2019

- Win the following awards:
PR Moment –
 Best Independent Agency,
 Best Technology Agency.
CIPR Excellence –
 Best Sports, Art and Culture Campaign.
PRCA Digital –
 Best Use of Reporting and Measurement in a Campaign.
AMEC –
 Gold Innovation Award for New Measurement Methodologies.

○ Staff members 22

○ Broke £1.5m

Training and Development



Our people promise

At PRAO, we know we're only as good as our team. That's why we hire the best. And that's why we put so much energy and resources into making them even better.

In the same way our client work is focused on helping our clients fulfil their PR potential, we want you to fulfil yours too.

Did you know we work to the PRCA Communications Management Standards (CMS), 'the hallmark of PR excellence'? We do. It's a fact.

And did you know that every member of our team has a Personal Development Plan? That's a fact too.

Not only do we help you set ambitious goals, we work hard to help you achieve them. All the mentoring, training and development that you need to grow and to achieve, personally and professionally.

WE SUCCEED TOGETHER.

That's why we commit to giving you:

- Informal one to one catch ups with line managers or mentors
- A six month progress review
- A formal 12 month performance review

Also regular CIPR and PRCA training plus access to the latest thinking in digital, PR and reputation management through our close partners such as, Manchester Digital, Digitangle and Google, Search Metrics and SEMRush means you'll always be right at the cutting edge of the industry.



External training courses include:

- [Manchester Digital courses](#)
- [CIPR training courses](#)
- Management coaching for those looking to make strides into management
- RADA in Business management courses
- Business coaching and psychological counsel



Inhouse training includes:

Writing workshops run by our in-house team of NCTJ-accredited writers, insight and strategy planning; alongside business skills such as presenting, time management and client relationships.

- News Sense Training
- Writing Master Classes
- Media Sell-In Masterclasses
- Digital Measurement Masterclasses
- An introduction for Reputation Management
- Personal Reputation Masterclass
- Using surveys for PR
- Marketing attribution
- Gorkana Training
- Sprout Social

Lunchtime learnings

Our regular lunchtime learning sessions are taken by team specialists and delivered on a wide range of useful subjects.

In a culture of learning and continual self-improvement everyone at PRAO invests time in themselves.

IT'S A COMMITMENT MATCHED BY A FORMAL TRAINING BUDGET OF £10,000 AND A PROMISE TO CONSIDER FUNDING POSTGRADUATE STUDIES OR PART TIME QUALIFICATIONS.

Courses that could be part funded or include flexi time attendance.



Company conference

Because our growth relies on all of us, it's up to us all to shape our future. A future we discuss every year at our company conference.

Your chance, whether Junior Executive or Account Manager or Director to take the reins for the day and tell us how you feel we should develop the business.

IT'S INCLUSIVE, RESPECTFUL AND A GREAT WAY FOR EVERYONE TO CONTRIBUTE AS WE GROW.

For example, the decision to stay in Chorlton extend the office and add a lovely sun terrace was a company conference decision. And a fine choice that's proven to be.

The new management structure was a company conference decision.


Benefits, bonuses and socials and all sorts of nice stuff like that have all been conference decisions.

And so is this handbook. The result of PRAO staff asking for a guide to those benefits.



PRAO Staff Benefits


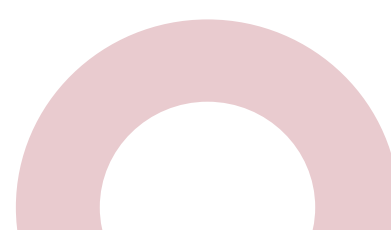




From birthday holidays to handsome remuneration to meditation to cheap rail fares we've got all the benefits.

Lots of little (and not so little) somethings that together add up to a healthier, happier, better rewarded quality of life. PR Agency Win.

Rewards, fun and fizz

- Informal ad hoc nights out – there's never a wrong time for a right old knees up. Just a warning though... you'll never get that karaoke mic off Steve once he's in full Morrissey mode.
 - A £50 gift card and magnificent employee of the month trophy! Slightly spooky. Somewhat kooky. Completely skulltastic.
 - Friday night drinks. How does the sound of James' debit card left behind the bar in Elektrik sound? Yeah exactly. Mine's a large one.
 - A food cupboard stuffed with goodies - fruit, vegetables, healthy snacks and hmmm Monster Munch.
 - Enjoy a lovely open, airy, creative office space. Did we mention the sun terrace?
 - The world famous PRAO Christmas party - watch this space. With previous Christmas parties in Amsterdam, Budapest, Oslo, Copenhagen.... anything could happen!
 - Volunteer? Claim up to three paid volunteering days for charity work.
- 
- 





Health and wellness

- Free health and fitness training twice a week. Nutritional advice too. Monday afternoons and Friday mornings never felt so good.
- Free weekly lunchtime meditation classes. Relax, unwind... empty that mind.
- 24-hour access to an Employee Assistance Program, offering confidential mental health support and an advice line with face to face / telephone counselling sessions included.
- Flexible holiday policies including buy-back days.
- Your birthday? Your holiday. Do something nice.
- Cycle to Work scheme – save money on a new bike and/or accessories.



Family friendly and flexibility

- Because sometimes life and especially family life can be unpredictable we offer flexible working and family friendly policies.
- Furniture delivery? Sick parrot? Plumber, plasterer, patio layer? With hybrid/blended working, three days' working remotely from home per week means you can be there when you need to be.
- Maternity scheme that's above the statutory minimum.
- Childcare voucher schemes. No, not discounted kids. Discounted childcare.
- Trains are ace. But they can be expensive. NOT with a FREE railcard. Go where you want to go cheap, cheap, cheap!



Remuneration

- Your salary is reviewed annually benchmarked against all the major salary surveys so it's always competitive.
- Introduce a new client to the business and get a bonus - 5% of the annual fee.
- You receive an annual bonus of between 5-10 % of your salary depending on business and personal performance.



Awards

YOU'RE IN AN AWARD WINNING AGENCY NOW SOLDIER. AND NOT JUST ANY OLD AWARDS. WE'RE TALKING THE CREAM OF ACCLAIMED NATIONAL PR AWARDS.

- **CIPR** - Outstanding Consultancy of the Year
- **PRCA Dare Awards** - 3 awards including Medium Consultancy of the Year 2021
- **PR Moment Awards** - Best Use of Content 2021
- **CIPR Excellence Awards** - 5 Awards including Integrated Campaign and Best Use of Digital 2021
- **The Drum Awards Search 2021**
- **PRCA Digital** - Best Use of Reporting and Measurement in a Campaign Award 2020
- **UK Search Awards** - Best Use of PR in a Search Campaign and Best Use of Search 2020

AND INTERNATIONAL

- **EU Search Awards 2021**
Best Use of PR in a Search Campaign
- **4 GOLDS at the 2020 AMEC Awards**
Best Use of a Measurement Framework,
Best Use of New Technology in Communications Measurement,
Most Effective Planning, Research and Evaluation in Consumer Communications and Innovation Award for New Measurement Methodologies no less!

CHUFFED? IT DOESN'T EVEN COME CLOSE!

So Yeah. We didn't just talk a world class measurement game. We walk one. And now we've got the international awards and acclaim to prove it.

PRmoment
Awards 2021

PRmoment
Awards 2021

PRCA
DARE
AWARDS
3x
WINNERS | 2021



The Drum
Awards
Search
Winner

amec
AWARDS | 2020
WINNER
x4 GOLD WINNERS

CIPR
EX
5x WIN

PRm
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Be
Eau de

CIPR
EX

PR
Eau

CIPR
EX
5x WIN

PRmo
Awards 2021

Best Use of Content -
Eau de New Car for Autotrader

PRmoment
Awards 2021

Best Use of Creativity (Gold Award) -
Eau de New Car for Autotrader

PRCA
DARE
AWARDS
3x
WINNERS | 2021



The Drum
Awards
Search
Winner 2021

PRCA
DIGITAL
AWARDS 2021
WINNER

amec
AWARDS | 2020
WINNER
x4 GOLD WINNERS

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amec
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2020
AWARDS





CLIENTS:

WE'VE LOTS. LOTS AND LOTS.

SOME BIG NAMES.

**AUTOTRADER, GAZPROM, ALLIED LONDON,
DECATHLON, RADA, SERENATA FLOWERS,
DUOLOGI, WILEY, BUY IT DIRECT, TOTAL FITNESS, GCVA,
KURA, THE ACCOUNTANCY PARTNERSHIP, HONCHO MARKETS LTD, KPMG,
ONE 4 ALL GIFTCARDS, PATATAM LTD, SCALA CONSULTING LTD,
MARKETING SIGNALS, LIGNIA WOOD COMPANY LTD, JLA,
FLETCHERS SOLICITORS LTD, ECHO MANAGED SERVICES LTD,
NEXER DIGITAL, ATG ACCESS, SLATER HEELIS, ALLSOP,
SEOMONITOR, PUSHON, WORKMOBILE, VISUALSOFT,
LANGLEYS, FLETCHERS, MEDICALERT, PRIVATE MIDWIVES,
PREPAID INTERNATIONAL FORUM, CHRISTMAS TREE WORLD,
MLP LAW, MILESTONE, UVISAN. TO NAME A FEW..!**

