


For marketers or anybody thinking about a new role and challenges

 By [Bryan Ndlovu](#)

23 Jul 2015

As I journey through my challenging yet fun entrepreneurial life, I have engaged with young marketers who are looking into their careers and ready for new challenges; marketers that want to start afresh in their own way as I too, have done so.

They are updating and sending out their CVs, mostly to recruitment agencies, with the hope that they will get feedback on the job that suits their profile. They are forever on websites, subscribing and requesting that if you come across a job prospect you should make them aware. I know this, I have been on both sides at different points in my career - from trying to arrange CVs plausible enough for employment, to putting together a job description, engaging with recruitment agencies, going through CVs and conducting interviews.

However, with this article I want to focus on one thing and that is my opinion, that job seekers spend a lot of time searching for jobs and landing as many interviews as possible, which is good and necessary - but what they lack is involvement in understanding the brands they would like to work for before they even land an interview. As an aspiring marketer, brand knowledge is of paramount importance. I recommend marketers must take some time to do the following in order to understand brands.

Go digital - It is the easiest form of research on your computer. Thoroughly read the website don't just browse over it. Get to understand what the brand wants to be known for. You can even go as far as proof reading the website and presenting any copy flaws just for interest sake. Interest is always valued. Go through their social network site i.e. Facebook page if they have one. Consider the following questions:

- Do they have a social media strategy?
- Do they have management of the social network? How often do they post on the wall?
- How do they respond?
- Is it fast, quick, adequate?

- Who follows them?

You can pick up a lot on the communication message and how that is managed digitally by a brand. It is also an easy space to understand what competition is doing as well as what the total category is doing.

Go In store - See touch and feel the brand if it is a product and particularly in FMCG. Remember you will not get an opportunity to know market share data of the brands you are interested in, but product representation on shelves will surely

give you an idea.

- Consider the following:

- Share of shelf amongst competing brands.
 - Brands that are in direct competition but within the same category.
 - Price range.
 - Packaging look and feel.
 - Is the product glossy, is it expensive?
 - Is it on price and quality?
-
- Look at the product in store activity.

This will give you an opportunity to form assumptions about market share, pricing strategies, cross category activities. Who is active and less active in store? Remember this is an important space, when all fails most brands take the fight in store.

Consume media - Buy magazines that are key to the brands or sectors you are interested in. Get to make an opinion about their communication strategies. Who owns share of voice at that particular time. Watch TV and don't be a passive marketer who says TV is boring, but I drive brands for people who watch television. Pick up which brand is most active and when. Don't walk into a business and say I am concerned they do not have a big advertising and marketing spend without trying to understand that prior.

Engage with the product - Buy the product, engage with the service to an extent. If you cannot encourage yourself to engage with the users of the product, ask questions that tell you how people feel and think about the products or services.

This is just some advice I wish to share based on my own experience. You may not know the answer to an interview question or have the full skill to do the job, but you will surely impress someone by displaying involvement and active interest in the business. Doing this gives you the opportunity to really review the business and get to understand if it is the company you want to work for while you are in the interview process.

It is a process that can assist you in asking the right questions when you engage with your potential employer. It can also be an opportunity to really be able to list/mention the names of brands you want to work for, based on reasons you can substantiate that go beyond the nice adverts they make that you like about the brand. Brand marketing is a bigger discipline that advertisers and marketers need to display understanding of.

ABOUT BRYAN NDLOVU

Currently the Owner & Brand Consultant at Bryan Nkosiathi Knowledge (Pty) Ltd, a brand building company. I am a brand and business enthusiast with experience since 2003. My experience cuts across brand communication, general classical marketing & brand building with local and international brands. I have occupied roles such as Strategy Planner, Group Brand Manager to head of marketing as Marketing Manager for a multi-discipline business department. My passion is commercial brand building whether at an individual, product or corporate level.

■ Marketing is great, when it makes financial sense - 28 Aug 2015

■ For marketers or anybody thinking about a new role and challenges - 23 Jul 2015

[View my profile and articles...](#)

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>