

The Role of Account Planning

Planning is a philosophical commitment to getting advertising right – combining distinctiveness and relevance in a way that makes it effective.

Research Skills

Planners should be well grounded in research skills, able to know what type of information is required how to collect it and how to interpret it – but that is just the start.

Data Interpreter

Planners must also have the human relationship skills to make the information understandable and useful to everyone – particularly the creative team. Planners create the bridge between the data and illumination.

Advertising Orientation

Planners should be passionate about advertising, strategy and marketing and enjoy talking about it – they should be a sensitive contributor to the creative process, not just an evaluator of it.

Eclectic User of Information

Use secondary information, case studies, qualitative and quantitative research to form their opinions, persuade their audiences and make better decisions.

Challenger of Assumptions

They should be able to generate hypotheses and draw conclusions, taking nothing at face value and challenging assumptions until the whole picture makes sense.

Point of View

Good presenter. Able to argue a point of view coherently and concisely, able to 'win' an argument without making others feel like a loser. A quick thinker, able to speak authoritatively without seeming dogmatic or inflexible.

Team Player

Someone who can appreciate and use inputs from others, someone who knows when to push and when to relax.

Day to Day

Planners work day to day on their accounts, keeping up with events, anticipating information needs, participating in discussions and debates about the advertising or the brand.

Overhead Costs

Research can be a source of income – if you charge for moderating etc.. but cost accountability/profitability is not typically a means of evaluation for Planning. Indirectly, planning can have a significant impact because it saves creative time by helping the department run more efficiently (tighter, more inspirational strategies and stronger client "buy in" can help reduce wasted creative time).