



# Leadership Profile

## 2020 CEO Search

# Executive Summary

PRSA is the nation's leading professional organization serving the communications industry. Founded more than 70 years ago, PRSA is the principal advocate for industry excellence and ethical conduct and provides its nearly 30,000 professional and student members lifelong learning opportunities and leading-edge resources to enhance professional connections and support them at every stage of their career.

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PRSA's career-enhancing initiatives and programming include the annual PRSA International Conference, in-person workshops, on-demand training, webinars, accreditation, awards, thought leadership, a members-only online community (MyPRSA), resource library and award-winning publications.

Through these initiatives, PRSA brings together the profession's collective disciplines and strengthens professional connections through Chapters, Districts, 14 Professional Interest Sections and other communities. PRSA is collectively represented in all 50 states by 110 Chapters, which are organized into 10 Districts.

PRSA also has a presence on more than 370 college and university campuses through its student organization, the Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA). In addition, the PRSA Foundation, an independent charity, raises funds to ensure a more diverse PR future by focusing on today's generation of talented students.

PRSA is also a founding member of the Global Alliance for Public Relations and Communication Management.

PRSA researches, tracks and speaks out on current issues impacting professional practice, principles and reputation. PRSA advocacy also focuses on three core areas: the business value of public relations, ethics and diversity within the profession. The PRSA Code of Ethics is widely regarded as the cornerstone of the ethical practice of public relations. First developed in 1950, the Code applies to PRSA members and is designed to be a useful guide as they carry out their ethical responsibilities, setting out principles that uphold core values, including advocacy, honesty, expertise, independence, loyalty and fairness.

PRSA's [2020-2022 Strategic Plan](#) outlines many of its key strategic initiatives. For more information, please visit [www.prsa.org](http://www.prsa.org).

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) is responsible for all program, financial, and operational aspects of the organization. Reporting to and collaborating closely with PRSA's Board of Directors, the CEO will guide the development and implementation of PRSA's strategic vision and plan as well as the programs and policy positions necessary to support the membership. Further, the CEO will serve as an effective steward of PRSA's resources, both fiscal and personnel, to ensure PRSA is well-positioned to achieve its objectives and meet member needs. The CEO will lead the strategic direction and overall management of this enterprise with an annual budget of approximately \$14 million and a 43-person staff.

A seasoned leader and manager, the CEO will be expected to work effectively with the Board and the staff to further develop program and service offerings that will be valued by PRSA members of today, as well as attractive to potential members. The CEO will also work to foster strong relationships with aligned organizations and to identify opportunities for partnership. The successful candidate will develop an internal culture focused on innovation, accountability, empowerment and mutual respect. Further, the CEO will serve as an inspirational leader who will motivate, develop, hire and retain an outstanding staff.



# The Role

*Specific responsibilities include, but are not limited to:*

**Oversight** of the day-to-day operations (financial, strategic, managerial, HR, technologic) of PRSA.

**Work closely** with volunteers and senior staff, evaluate existing PRSA programs and content, make recommendations for potential opportunities that PRSA could pursue and oversee the implementation of new programs, certifications and other educational offerings.

**Serve as a spokesperson**, in partnership with PRSA volunteer leaders, for PRSA and ensure a consistent image of the organization.

**Develop and execute**, in collaboration with the Board, a thoughtful strategy that will ensure PRSA is well-positioned for future growth.

**Continue to expand the membership** and reach of PRSA, attracting new members and coalition partners, as well as retaining existing members.

**Identify** and help generate new/enhanced sources of revenue.

**Excel** at building and fostering meaningful relationships with PRSA members, volunteer leaders, staff and potential partners who interact with the field of public relations and communications.

**Increase recognition of PRSA** as **the** thought leader and networking hub for knowledge and information, best practices and events related to the public relations profession.

**Anticipate, embrace and manage change** in the external and internal environments affecting PRSA.

**Review and adjust** PRSA's business operations and make appropriate changes where needed to allow cost-efficient operations.

**Deploy technology** strategically to deliver PRSA services and information to members and key constituents.

# Candidate Profile

For this highly visible and critical position, PRSA seeks a visionary and strategic leader with an ability to inspire others to collectively achieve outstanding results. The successful candidate will be a person with stature and presence, capable of leading an organization that represents a diverse group of public relations and communications professionals. The new CEO will excel at working with Boards and other key stakeholders to articulate and create an evolving vision for the future of the organization, ensure best practices in governance, generate consensus around that vision and its priorities, and be a charismatic and motivational leader to implement and execute on the goals and objectives. The CEO needs to be creative and innovative with an ability to lead the Board and members in planning for the continued success and growth of conferences, partnerships, products and services – all designed to help lead the profession into the future. The CEO must be financially astute, with an open and entrepreneurial mindset for continuing the ongoing process of refining the organization so that PRSA continues to provide value to its membership in a constantly changing external environment.

The successful candidate will be a poised and energetic leader who also has outstanding interpersonal acumen and communication skills. The CEO will be a service-oriented listener who engages all constituencies in a meaningful and respectful manner. The successful candidate should also bring a solid understanding of social media and the importance of digital marketing to ensure PRSA is communicating with its members and other external influencers as effectively and efficiently as possible.

The CEO must be a diplomat who is skilled at building bridges and developing relationships in a variety of settings with diverse constituencies. The candidate must have a track record of successfully leading and building consensus in complex environments. A strong emphasis will be placed upon the proven ability to deal with a broad range of individuals, backgrounds and perspectives in a collaborative, strategic and consensus-driven manner. The successful candidate must be personally committed to diversity, equity and inclusion and helping PRSA improve the demographics of the organization and the profession. The ideal candidate will bring demonstrated experience in organizational leadership roles, and a strong belief in/understanding of the critical role played by PRSA's members. A background of operating successfully within another professional organization or association environment would be beneficial. A bachelor's degree is required, and an advanced degree is highly preferred.

In addition to the critical, externally focused competencies, the candidate must also possess outstanding leadership skills that will enable them to oversee the management of an organization with a talented staff and efficiently manage an appropriate budget. The successful candidate must be able to set strategic direction for PRSA, prioritize and define clear goals for staff and manage performance toward achievement of those goals. Further, the candidate must have the executive skills to partner with the Board in an effective manner.

Finally, the successful candidate will be a person of the highest ethics and integrity and have exceptional energy, drive and passion. The CEO must possess self-confidence but also be humble, gracious in manner and comfortable in any situation.

# Strategic Leader and Visionary Capability

*The successful candidate will...*

Be a **strategic thinker** who will work effectively with PRSA's Board, its members and leadership team to set strategic priorities and methods to reach those goals.

Have a **proven track record** of setting priorities and leading organizations or teams to success, effectively turning strategy into action.

Have experience **crafting new programs and services** that delivered increased value and enhanced relationships with customers/members.

Be able to **shape and articulate** the vision of the PRSA of the future and enhance its current platform to become an even stronger voice for the public relations profession more broadly.

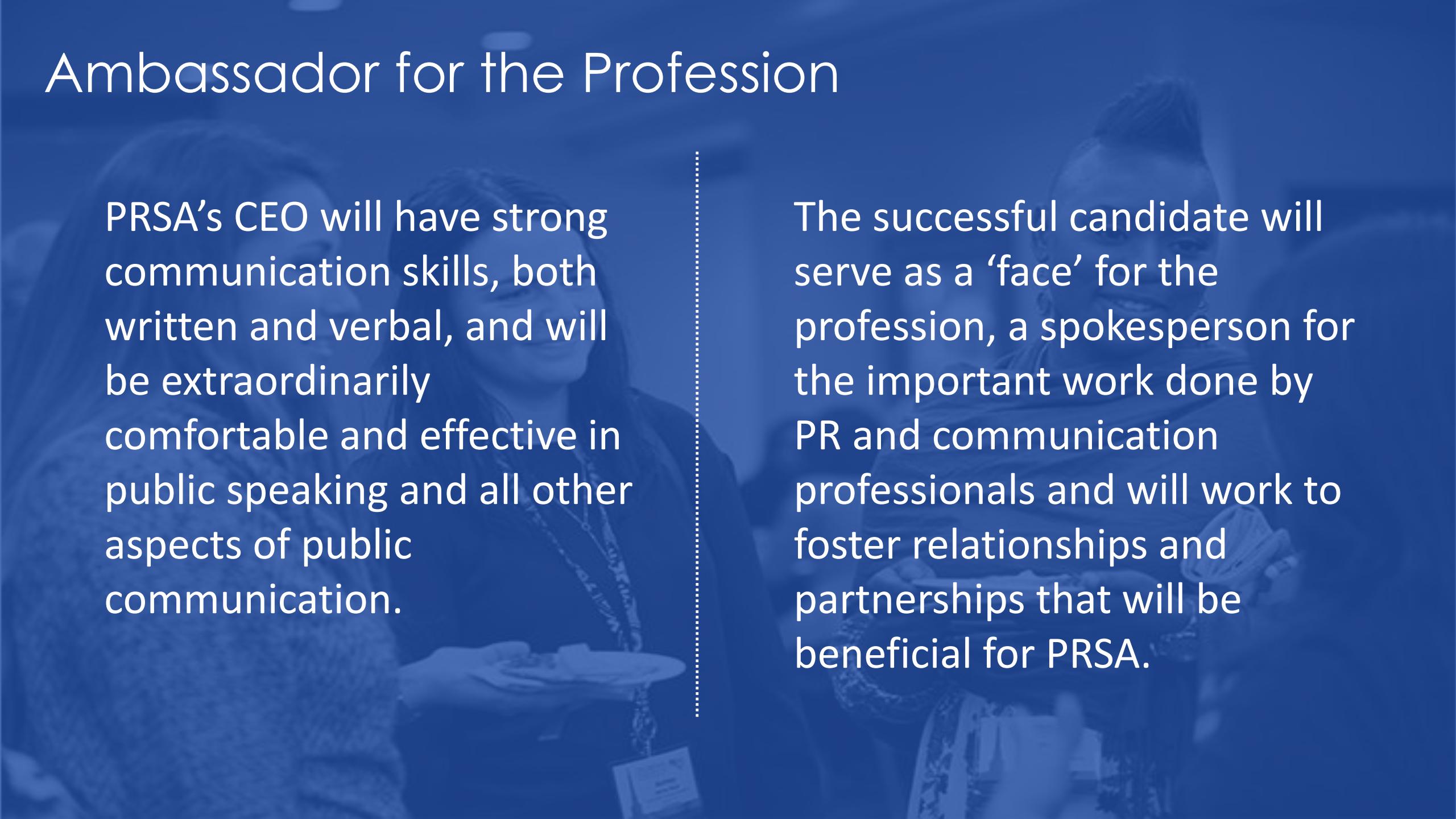
# Relationship Builder and Unifier

- The successful candidate will have a pedigree of proven success in motivating and inspiring key stakeholders of an organization, issue or industry.
- The successful candidate will be an excellent listener, demonstrating respect for others and, in turn, gaining their respect.
- Throughout their professional and personal lives, the successful candidate will have developed positive and productive relationships, decisively built consensus and engaged people in institutions in a variety of settings.

# Managing Teams and Budgets

- The candidate will have the **operational management skills** to effectively lead the organization from a business perspective, to ensure that PRSA's goals are met.
- The successful candidate will have a style that fosters a **culture of engagement and empowerment, openness and mutual respect** with both staff and members.
- The CEO will have successfully run complex organizations or large teams from a fiscal and personnel standpoint. A sense of **business acumen** will be required to effectively oversee the business services of the organization.
- In addition to their significant external roles, the successful candidate must be viewed, particularly by staff and members, as an individual who will “roll up their sleeves” and be a **hands-on leader**.
- The CEO will have a strong understanding of **organizational governance and best practices**, and the ability to work with the Board and staff to ensure PRSA is functioning as efficiently and effectively as possible, leveraging the expertise and talent of its stakeholders.

# Ambassador for the Profession

A person's hands are visible at the bottom of the frame, holding a silver trophy with a circular base and a central column. The background is a dark blue gradient.

PRSA's CEO will have strong communication skills, both written and verbal, and will be extraordinarily comfortable and effective in public speaking and all other aspects of public communication.

The successful candidate will serve as a 'face' for the profession, a spokesperson for the important work done by PR and communication professionals and will work to foster relationships and partnerships that will be beneficial for PRSA.

*Above and beyond the specific background and experience of the CEO, the successful candidate will be consistently described by current and former colleagues as follows...*

**Leadership:** A person who carries the mantle of leadership with dignity and humility, who is respectful, who embraces diversity and who remembers that everyone is important. The successful candidate is equally comfortable in the boardroom and the staff workplace and should be viewed as approachable and appreciative of the views of others. A person who accepts accountability and who delegates responsibility to empower the employees at all levels. A leader who inspires confidence, fosters performance excellence and generates energy and personal commitment to the organization's vision, mission and values. Finally, the CEO should have a demonstrated track record of successfully developing a team, creating succession opportunities across an organization.

**Intellectual Curiosity, Judgment and Action Orientation:** An executive experienced at making sense of ambiguity and in leading transformational change. A creative thinker and informed risk taker with business instincts and judgment, who quickly developed an understanding of the key success factors in the business. A leader who focuses time and attention on the most important issues and priorities, and who knows when to act and then has the will to act.

**Team Builder:** A leader who selects "A" players, is committed to performance reviews and promotes development of human capital throughout the organization. A person with a demonstrated commitment to succession planning. A leader who aligns the leadership team in a unified pursuit of the organization's vision and strategies.

**Results Oriented:** An executive who sets high standards and objectives personally, for the leadership team and for all of PRSA's employees, and who then delivers those results. A leader who knows that people are an organization's biggest asset and that engaging them appropriately will result in better business outcome results. A person who is outcomes-driven and measures performance through quality metrics.

**Outstanding Communicator:** A leader who possesses the ability to communicate PRSA's vision and strategies in a manner that promotes a broad base of understanding and support among internal and external stakeholders. A creative communicator, who can embrace all forms of communication. A person with a sense of proportion and a sense of humor with whom people want to work.

**Integrity:** Someone with unquestioned integrity and who is, or will be, respected in PRSA communities. A person who can be expected to do the right thing, and whose reputation will contribute to PRSA's reputation. An individual who projects confidence and builds trust and effective working relationships with internal and external stakeholders.

# Interested in Applying?

- Candidates interested in applying should send their resume and cover letter to [HR@prsa.org](mailto:HR@prsa.org)
- Applications will be accepted through September 4, 2020

PRSA