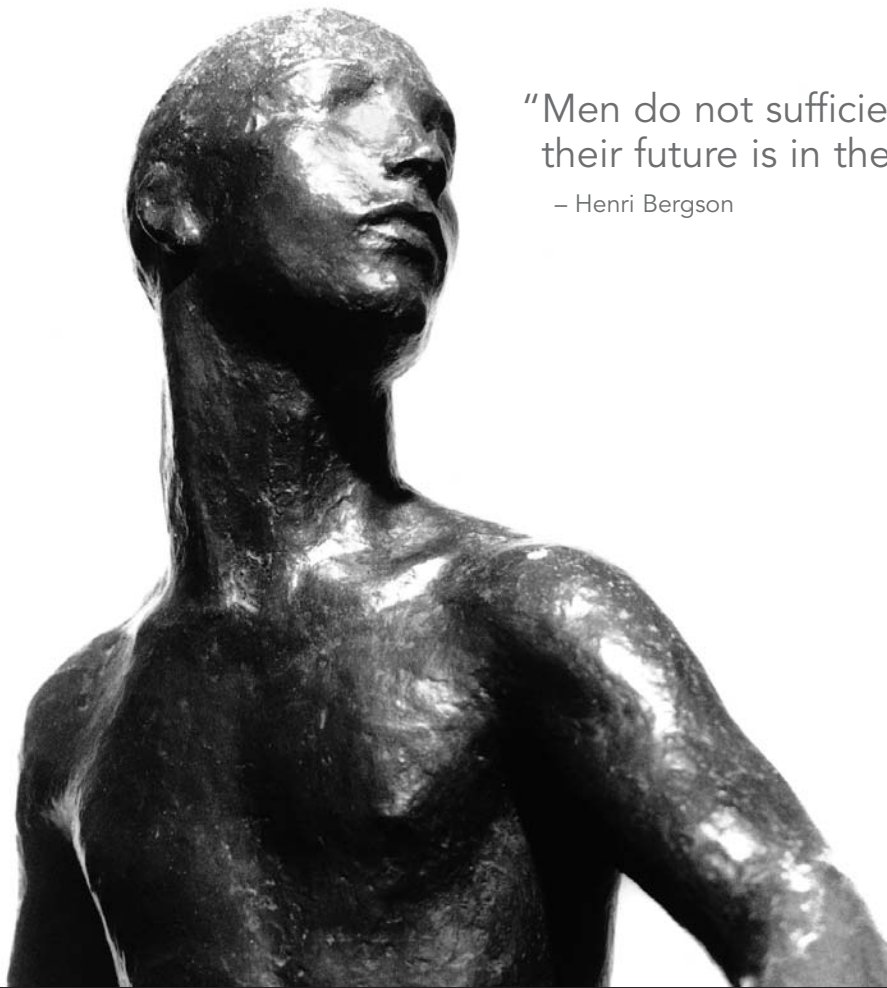




PUBLIC RELATIONS  
EXECUTIVE  
TRAINING  
PROGRAM





“Men do not sufficiently realize that  
their future is in their own hands.”

– Henri Bergson

Ruder Finn, Inc. has been leading the evolution of communications consulting for more than fifty years. Today, our reputation for impacting the world of public opinion and achieving positive change for our leading-edge clients has been extended around the globe and across cyberspace. Our insight and breadth of hands-on experience have created some of the most successful communications campaigns of the last few decades—for start-ups, as well as Fortune 500 companies, world organizations and cultural institutions.

We are one of the world's largest privately held agencies. Our independence affords us the opportunity to reinvest in our most profitable assets: our people and their knowledge. We are a dynamic and energetic group of communications professionals who place a high priority on using our problem-solving skills, ingenuity, and imagination to help clients achieve real business results. The Ruder Finn team is committed to the highest standard of professional excellence and integrity. While composed of industry-specific business units, we operate as an integrated Agency that calls upon the insight and experience of executives in relevant specialties.

“It is wrong to speak about the past if we don't act in the future.”

– Elie Wiesel



# THE EXECUTIVE TRAINING PROGRAM

Ruder Finn's paid Executive Training Program provides an opportunity to work and learn at one of the world's leading PR agencies. It is offered three times a year in our New York City headquarters. Begun in 1978, the Executive Training Program is well known throughout the public relations industry, and entry-level employees are rarely hired without having completed the program. The Agency hires many of the program's best graduates to fill assistant account executive positions; however, a full-time position is not guaranteed.

"The ET Program gave me the foundation and confidence to succeed."

– Account Executive, Healthcare (Former Executive Trainee)

"This program was a great segue from college into the working world. It introduced me to areas of PR that I wouldn't have had access to otherwise, including Tech PR, Travel, ePR and Global Issues."

– Senior Account Executive,  
Corporate Reputation and Responsibility  
(Former Executive Trainee)

## WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

Ruder Finn's Executive Training Program seeks recent college graduates with a passionate interest in developing a career in public relations. Many applicants have little to no prior experience in the field. Program applicants must have graduated from college before the session for which they are applying begins. Candidates with recent advanced degrees are also welcome to apply. ALL applicants must be authorized to work in the U.S.—no exceptions.

## PROGRAM DATES

There are three Executive Training sessions each year—fall, spring and summer. Deadlines for submission and program dates, along with a downloadable application form, can be found in the Career section on our Web site at [www.ruderfinn.com](http://www.ruderfinn.com).

## PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

As integral members of their account teams, Executive Trainees (ETs) gain exposure to various facets of the public relations business. Trainees learn about the fundamentals of public relations, e.g., writing, media monitoring, media relations, new media, event planning, budgeting and financial management, new business presentations, and more.

Executive Trainees are assigned to a specific Ruder Finn practice area. These include Arts & Communications Counselors, Branding, Corporate Reputation and Responsibility, Corporate Technology, Global Issues Communications, Healthcare, Interactive Innovation Studios, Consumer and Business-to-Business Marketing, Broadcast and Media Services, Travel and Economic Development, and Visual Technology. While efforts are made to place ETs with practice areas of interest, it is not always possible because not every practice accepts a Trainee each session.

The first week of the program involves an intensive orientation to help ETs understand the culture, heritage, philosophy and achievements of Ruder Finn. Weekly classes are held thereafter featuring lectures by staff experts and guests.

Executive Trainees work full time and are paid based on an annual salary of \$24,000, which is pro-rated for the four months of the Program. Trainees do not



receive benefits during this time. Program graduates hired as assistant account executives earn a competitive salary and are eligible to receive benefits.

Ruder Finn does not provide living quarters, but can suggest resources to help Trainees find housing and roommates. Participants receive a list of ETs in their session to enable them to connect with their classmates before arriving in New York.

## SELECTION PROCESS

Our Executive Training Program has been cited by the Princeton Review as one of the best internships in the U.S. It is a highly competitive program. The application form must be submitted with:

- 1) Three writing tests described in the downloadable application form
- 2) A current resume
- 3) One personal, business-appropriate writing sample, no longer than five pages, that exemplifies the applicant's best writing
- 4) An official college transcript, or unofficial college transcript, if completing school at the time of application
- 5) Two signed letters of recommendation from individuals who can comment on the applicant's capabilities and potential in the corporate world, e.g., former supervisor or employer, professor, advisor, etc. Letters should be on corporate or organizational letterhead with an original signature.

All materials must be submitted in one package—not piecemeal. Letters of recommendation and transcripts may be sent in individual, sealed envelopes attached to the application materials. Staples, folders or binders should not be used. Application guidelines should be followed carefully.

Each applicant will be contacted by phone, e-mail or letter about the status of his or her candidacy after the Executive Training Program staff has reviewed all applications—typically five to six weeks after application deadline. Those selected to move on in the process will be contacted for an interview, which can take place by phone or in person. Applicants who seem to be the best fit will then be asked to interview with Ruder Finn executives from specific practice areas—either by phone, or if possible in person. Applicants should be prepared to answer questions about their writing samples, experiences listed on their resume, and why they believe they would excel in the world of public relations. Questions are typical of those asked during an employment interview.

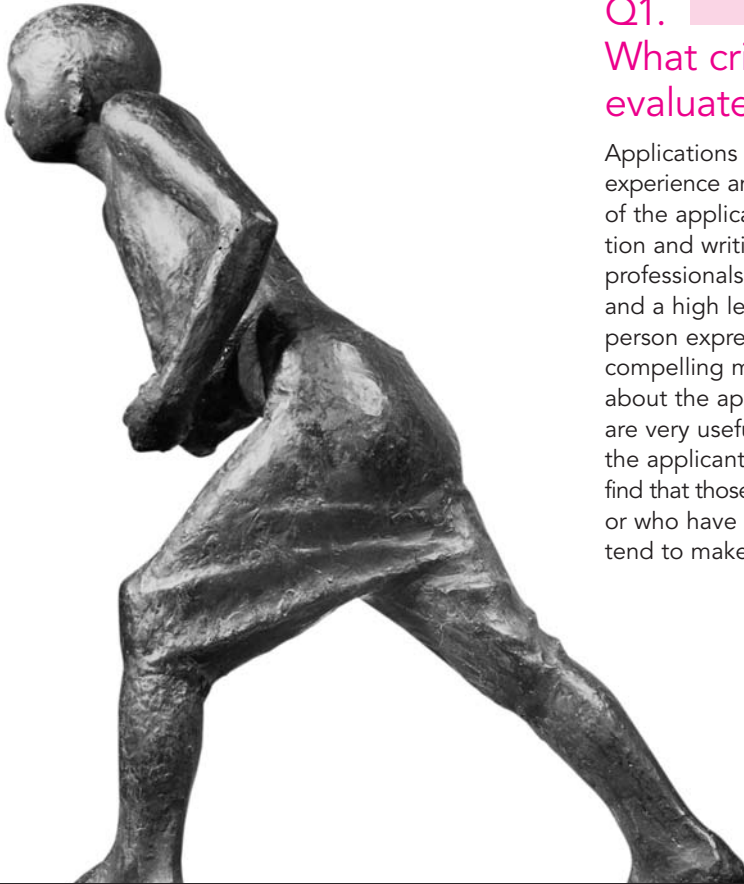
Following the interviews, candidates will be selected. There is no set number of Executive Trainees for each session. On average, class size numbers approximately eight or nine; some are larger, some smaller. The summer session is our most competitive. All applicants will be notified in writing about the final status of their application.

To learn more about Ruder Finn, Inc., visit [www.ruderfinn.com](http://www.ruderfinn.com). Please contact Ellen Schaplowsky at [schaplowskye@ruderfinn.com](mailto:schaplowskye@ruderfinn.com) or call (212) 593-6316 with questions regarding the program.

# FAQs

“I was given an unparalleled opportunity to learn PR from the inside out. Through hands-on account work to training sessions that sharpen writing and communications skills, it simply cannot be beat!”

– Senior Vice President, Arts & Communications Counselors  
(Former Executive Trainee)



Q1.

What criteria do you use to evaluate the applications?

Applications are evaluated on several criteria including experience and skills. One criterion is the technical quality of the application, including grammar, spelling, punctuation and writing skills. Ruder Finn is looking for young professionals with a genuine passion for communications and a high level of interest in PR. We'd like to see that person express his or her enthusiasm in a unique and compelling manner. We also look at what others say about the applicant, so the letters of recommendation are very useful. Lastly, the transcript helps us understand the applicant in terms of his or her academic career. We find that those who have worked in a business environment or who have interned in advertising, marketing, or PR tend to make a good transition into the Agency.

Q2.

## What is your selection process?

Every application is read and evaluated on the basis of an individual's potential to contribute to Ruder Finn. After the first reading, applications are sorted into categories: those who appear to be a great fit with our business, those who are "maybe's," and those whose applications do not meet our quality requirements. Practice groups receive three applications for each open position. Applicants who meet our criteria will be interviewed in person or by telephone. Some groups prefer to interview the candidate with all team members present; others prefer to schedule consecutive interviews with those who will be working with the ET. Each team chooses the candidate they feel would be the best match.

Q3.

## Can I apply more than once?

Sometimes. Applicants who are not selected receive one of two letters. The first simply states that the applicant was not chosen for the session. The second offers the applicant the opportunity to keep an application on file for consideration for the next session. On a case-by-case basis, Ruder Finn will contact the applicant individually to ask about interest in reapplying.

Q4.

## What are my chances of getting hired if I complete the program?

Hiring an Executive Trainee as permanent staff is a business decision. If the ET has done an outstanding job and the finances are there to support a new staff member, we are eager to accept new talent. Ruder Finn has a lengthy track record of hiring the majority of ETs from each class. To be sure each ET develops to his or her fullest potential, there is a formal mid-term evaluation as well as frequent contact with managers and the head of the ET Program.

Our goal is to train talented junior staff so that they can grow as young PR professionals and make a contribution to Ruder Finn. We are proud that so many of our ETs choose to remain with the Agency for years. Today, many former ETs continue to enrich the creative abilities and growth of Ruder Finn.

Q5.

## I've been told you place a heavy emphasis on writing skills?

Absolutely. Writing is a fundamental skill needed to practice public relations. Being articulate and skilled at crafting all forms of written communications—from e-mails to press releases—is critical. We are in the business of "communications," and technical excellence and creative writing ability are important assets for ETs, as well as for senior staff.

## Q6. What characteristics do you look for in an ET?

That's a difficult question. Each practice area at Ruder Finn has its own unique personality. While strong verbal and written communications skills are essential for each practice, it is equally vital to have the right personality and fit—not only for PR, but for a particular practice area, as well. Selecting an ET is a serious matter. Finding the appropriate balance between creative and technical skills as well as personality and chemistry with account team members is essential.

ETs tend to be high-energy, passionate, team-oriented individuals who have the ability to interact and communicate well with others in both personal and professional settings. Emotional intelligence is a vital asset for PR. ETs are generally goal-oriented, flexible and excellent multitaskers. They are enthusiastic, eager to learn, unafraid to ask challenging questions and have an abundance of stamina. Above all, they understand that public relations is a service business, in which there are no menial tasks and attitude is everything!

## Q7. Do you only select graduates who have majored in PR and/or journalism?

The ET program seeks young professionals with integrity, intelligence, skills, personality and insight. Over the years, we have chosen many college graduates with degrees in a broad range of subject areas. We look for individuals who can bring a unique background and experience to the Agency and express an interest, not just in PR, but also in the world as a whole. Graduates with advanced degrees also apply, with many having a degree in PR, marketing, journalism, or communications.

## Q8. How can I apply for a summer internship?

Currently summer interns are selected through the University of Dreams ([www.uofdreams.com](http://www.uofdreams.com)).

“I built a solid foundation for a steadily advancing career in my specialty area. I went from media monitoring and answering photo requests, to escorting press trips abroad and managing my own account!”

– Senior Account Executive, Travel & Economic Development  
(Former Executive Trainee)

Q9.

## In general, what kind of career path can I expect if I get hired?

If a team chooses to extend an offer to an ET, it will be for an assistant account executive position (AAE). The AAE then becomes a permanent Ruder Finn staff member with benefits who develops his or her PR skills in cooperation with a supervisor. Typically, individuals advance through the following positions: assistant account executive (AAE), account executive (AE), senior account executive (SAE), account supervisor (AS), senior account supervisor (SAS), vice president (VP), senior vice president (SVP), and executive vice president (EVP).

Q10.

## Does Ruder Finn offer additional training?

Yes. Ruder Finn feels that continual professional development not only benefits the individual, but also the company as a whole. For our permanent staff, we offer STEP (Strategic Training and Enrichment Program) on a regular basis to help employees cultivate various skills and learn more about our industry. STEP includes monthly computer brush-up classes on Word, Excel and PowerPoint. Past STEP offerings have included time management, writing, ethics in business, and presentation training, among others.

“This program gave me access to the Agency’s top management and best thinking. I became an integral team member right away.”

– Senior Account Executive,  
Branding (Former Executive Trainee)





## Q11. What advice do you have for applicants?

Keep in mind that Ruder Finn is primarily looking for ETs who are a good fit for our unique arts-influenced culture. Applicants are reminded to let their special personalities and best qualities shine through in their applications. Those who are honest about their interests and ideals are preferred over those who try to write what they think Ruder Finn wants to hear.

## Q12. What is the actual program like?

Ruder Finn conducts three four-month sessions at its New York City headquarters. The Executive Training Program has evolved over several decades, and is designed to acclimate participants to the working world and to public relations. ETs work full time as integral members of their teams. Weekly classes are held to introduce ETs to the fundamentals of PR that may or may not be encountered in their specific day-to-day account work.

Senior executives of the Agency as well as several outside professionals teach seminars. Subjects include press release writing, media pitching, understanding agency financing, how to build new business, etc. There are also various business and social outings to help foster camaraderie, including a two-day retreat out of the office where ETs work on teambuilding and presentation skills, as well as participate in a new business pitch. ETs are sometimes asked by teams outside their practice area to help out at high-profile events or with projects.

Q13.

## What are the typical duties of an ET?

The duties vary depending on the practice area and account needs. Responsibilities include media monitoring, developing editorial calendar and media lists, research, compiling and formatting client reports, drafting press materials, researching and pitching stories to reporters. Since each practice area is different, ETs may not be exposed to all these activities, while others may be asked to handle more. Generally, ETs are given a significant level of responsibility. Those who demonstrate unusual talent and drive are often given opportunities that exceed their title. Adaptability and flexibility are other qualities that we look for in ETs.

Q14.

## Do you provide housing for ETs?

Ruder Finn is unable to provide housing for ETs. We are happy to share information we have gathered to help ETs find housing. We have had ETs from all over the U.S. Some stay with college friends, or relatives; some look for housing in the less expensive suburbs of New York, and some room together.

“The ET Program taught me the basics of PR and set me on a high-speed course to a top position that I never would have reached with just a college education.”

– Senior Content Strategist, Interactive Group  
(Former Executive Trainee)

“This program had a profound impact on my career and professional development. It provided personalized interaction with senior executives and practices at Ruder Finn, allowing me to understand the ins and outs of PR and the role best-suited to my skills.”

– Research Manager  
(Former Executive Trainee)



“There is more to life than  
increasing its speed.”

– Gandhi

MAIL COMPLETED  
APPLICATIONS TO:

**Ellen Schaplowsky**

Executive Vice President

Director of Training

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New York, NY 10022

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Photographs by David Finn