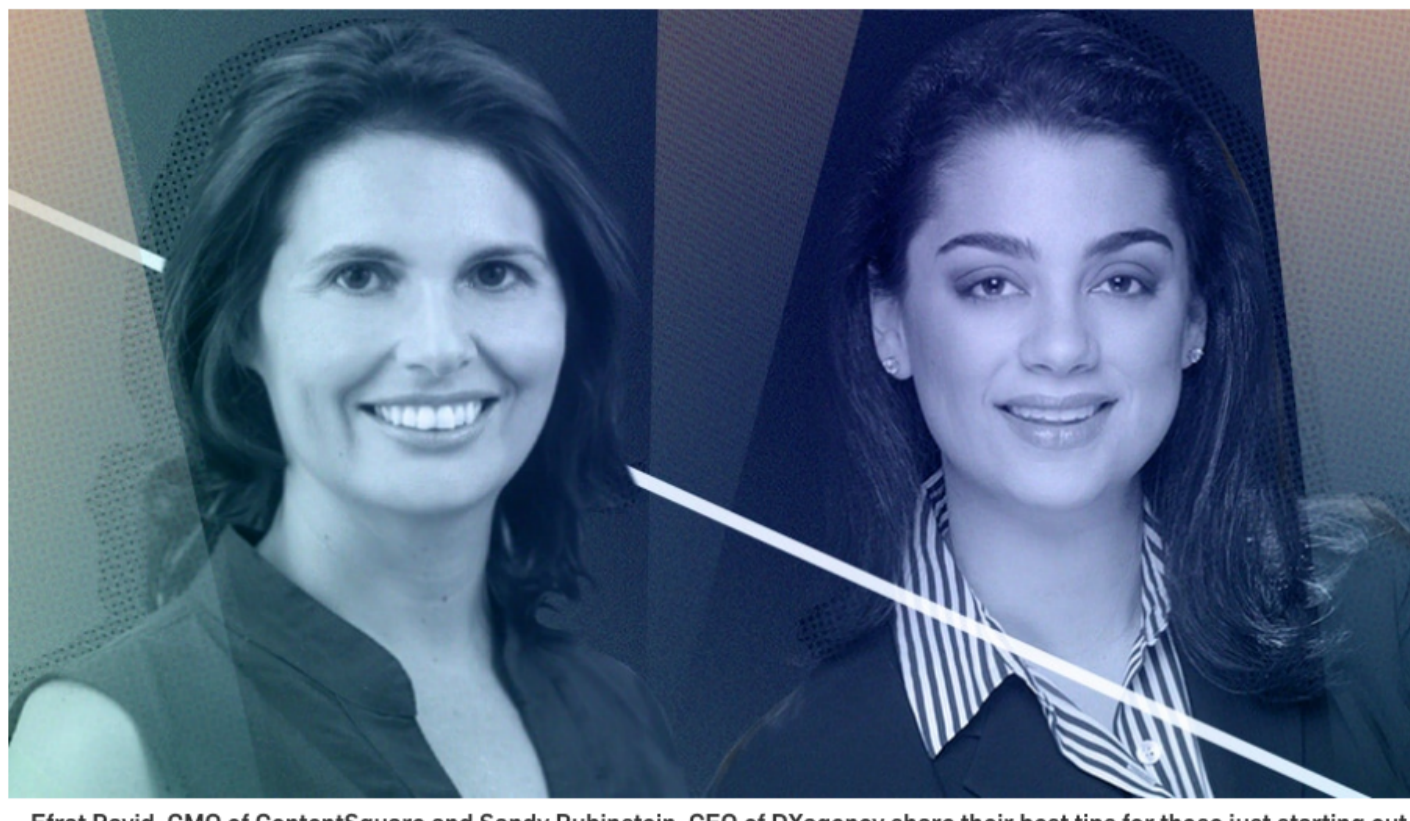


2 Marketing Execs Share Their Best Advice for New Grads

Stand out, add value and don't be afraid

By Diana Pearl | 1 day ago



Efrat Ravid, CMO of ContentSquare and Sandy Rubinstein, CEO of DXAgency share their best tips for those just starting out.

Courtesy of Efrat Ravid and Sandy Rubinstein

With years spent in the working world comes a whole lot of wisdom—knowledge that, in many cases, people wish they could go back and relay to their younger selves. Though that might not be possible, today's successful executives can do the next best thing: share their advice to those who are just embarking on their careers.

Adweek spoke to marketing executives Sandy Rubinstein, CEO of DXAgency, a digital marketing and advertising agency, and Efrat Ravid, CMO of ContentSquare, a UX analytics company, about their tips for the next generation of movers and shakers in the marketing and media world.

The Obvious:

Rubinstein said that one of the most important qualities a fresh-out-of-college employee can have is a willingness to work hard. And that goes beyond giving your all to the tasks you're assigned—you should be searching for other opportunities, too.

"You have to be aggressive, you have to be excited, you have to work as hard as you can," she said. "And when your regular work is done, you should be at the office, looking for ways to learn or stand out and to be engaged in different things and opportunities you may not have."

For Rubinstein early in her own career, that meant being available to her boss during off-hours. Since he frequently traveled to the West Coast while she remained on the East Coast, she often spent late nights at the office, she said.

Not only will this endear you to your superiors, Rubinstein said, it will open up doors for you along the way and expose you to new paths that you might not have taken otherwise. "It just makes you smarter and more well-rounded," she added. "As you grow in your career, you'll have so many different types of opportunities presented to you because you've had more experience and more insight."

However, Rubinstein said you must balance that eagerness with a knowledge that you're still early on in your career and likely at the bottom of the corporate totem pole. Don't act like there's a task that's beneath you, and yes, accept that occasionally late nights may happen. "You do what you've got to do to make it happen," she said. "Nobody's ever going to give you anything. If you expect that, you're going to be a failure."

The Not-So Obvious:

Add value

Ravid said that in her view the most important thing a marketer can bring to the table is not a great sense of creativity (though that too is important!)—it's added value.

"The main thing you need to think is: Did I add value?" she said. She also said new grads should look at every situation—a meeting, a project, their latest assignment or even ideas for a future campaign—and think about how their ideas would add value to the final product. "Not only what is unique about it, but what value do people get from it?" she added. "That's the most important thing in marketing."

As a young marketer, your priority should be understanding the customer, their needs and "what makes them tick," Ravid said. A client relationship will continue to blossom through open communication, she added. This will help to build trust between marketer and client, which fosters a longer-lasting professional relationship.

Ravid said: "The sooner you can start doing this in your career, the better."

Stand out

When searching for a job, you'll almost certainly be one of several resumés fighting for airtime at every position you apply for.

Going a different route than the standard, like sending an email, can set you apart from the pack. At the beginning of her own career, Rubinstein printed her resumé on a milk carton to separate herself from fellow applicants. In today's digital-heavy world, she recommends perhaps taking a different approach, even something as simple as sending a handwritten note. "If technology is the focal point now, then you have to go back to the basics," she said.

Personalization is key, too, Rubinstein added, saying that doing a little digging into the person you're trying to reach could help. Find out what they're interested in and ask them about it—particularly if there's a shared interest you can genuinely connect over.

And of course, speak up and reach out to the people you want to talk to in the first place—no one will notice you if you never put yourself out there. Rubinstein recommended reaching out to people in your chosen industry on LinkedIn, and said that more higher-ups will be willing to chat than you might think.

"Seasoned professionals love to impart their learnings and wisdom on others," she said.

Network, network, network

Getting to know people is important throughout your career, but especially so in its early stages, said to Rubinstein. These meetings should extend beyond your industry or sector as you never know where the future will take you (or introduce you to someone new!).

"Meet as many people as you can in a variety of different verticals," she said. "People that are exactly in the industry that you want to be in or peripheral to the industry that you want to be in—just meet everyone. Ask questions, listen and learn."

This means putting yourself out there, whether it's meeting everyone you can at your own company or attending industry events to mingle with people at other workplaces. When Rubinstein was interning—something she tried to do during every summer and winter break—she said, "I made it a point to set up conversations or have coffee with the various professionals in those companies and asked them to teach me about what they do, what guidance could they give and anyone they could introduce me to."

And once you meet these people, keep in touch—and keep these relationships genuine, Ravid said. "Saying 'Happy Holidays' at the end of the year isn't enough," she said. "Everyone does that."

To do this, she suggests keeping in regular communication with the people you truly care about, through occasional emails, calls and coffee dates to ask for advice, check in on how they're doing or congratulate someone on new accomplishments. "It can be hard with a big network, but the people that you really care about need to know that."

Don't be afraid

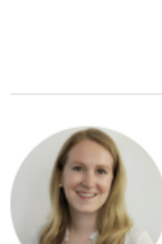
Ravid said that one of the best pieces of advice she's ever gotten in her own career came from one of her early bosses, and it's one she continues to relay to her own employees today. "Overall, you will make more good decisions than bad decisions," she shared. "So just make decisions and move on. Don't ask for permission, just go."

Doing so may take courage, but it not only can help endear you to your superiors, but it also can help you further identify what you want to do in your own career.

For Ravid, when she first started out as a developer, she asked her company's vp of product to be a part of the training for new product launches. "I wanted to learn from this experience by meeting our customers and seeing how they react to the product," she said.

Her supervisor sent her to Fiat and BMW, where she trained their simulation teams. These visits not only exposed her to a new side of the business, but helped her to realize that she preferred working with customers, rather than as a developer.

Part of the key to this fearlessness, she said, is remembering that the worst thing that can happen isn't actually that catastrophic. "The worst case, someone yells at you or it won't work. But just do it."



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