

THE STRATEGIC PLANNER



ETYMOLOGY

Common name: *Strategic planner*

Other Names: *Brand strategist, brand planners, comms planners, digital planners, social planners, channel planners, connections planners, media planners*

While distinction used to be made between HOMO STRATEGIS or HOMO DIGITUS STRATEGIS, most now agree they are the same species as they fundamentally share the same drive to deeply understand the motivations and influences of human beings



BEHAVIOUR

Primary observable behaviour is curiosity. Planners will happily spend the day immersed in consumer research, seeking ways to make emotional connections between people and brands. Successful planners do whatever they can to be useful. They have an instinctive drive to serve the creative work, by helping to make it better and therefore more effective. Planners are commonly observed at the boardroom table, asking the brave question that leads to the unexpected solution to a business problem.



SOCIAL LIFE & CULTURE

A highly social creature, planners work hard to bring out the best in other people. They love to get the right people around the table to collectively meet challenges. Good at presenting and sharing they often bring interesting new ways of looking at data. Born to serve, the best planners lack ego and are happy to help good ideas succeed, regardless of their provenance. Planners are always looking to develop a common ground and a common language for everyone – whether CEO, customer, creative, or technologist.



DIET

Planners who subsist solely on a diet of trend and research reports tend to diminish in health. Healthy planners will feed themselves with a wide range of content – the broader the better. They have been observed feasting on Harvard Business Review and The Economist as well as trash such as The Bachelor and the latest Netflix binge-fest. For a planner to flourish, they should aim to ingest the widest possible range of content.



COMMUNICATION

Generally planners love to communicate in the following ways: 1. By creating brand communications that solve real business problems in new ways, i.e. Tontine's 'use by date' pillows. 2. By developing communications that are a real conversation starter, i.e. MLA's Operation Boomerang. 3. By demonstrating real customer intimacy, tap into a zeitgeist and have the ability to change attitudes. i.e. Axe's 'Find Your Magic'.



NATURAL HABITAT

Away from the desk, interacting with real life non-ad-people, in their homes, in shops, observing people purchasing milk, hanging out with their kids, doing their laundry. Unfortunately, habitat destruction has meant that many planners are now forced into being desk jockeys, attempting to sift insights from Google and brand tracking reports.



PREDATORS

Planners are threatened by those who seek to exploit their services for free. Where planners have been used as a mere gateway to 'winning the work' rather than as an integral part of the process, the planners' ability to thrive will decline.

Do your bit to protect the planner. Book your place in our eight week **AdSchool Strategic Planning Core Skills** and equip yourself for life as a top planner.

Words by Hannah Muirhead of The Brand Agency.

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