

Of doers and criticisers

 By [James Wilson](#)

25 Aug 2016

A good friend and client of mine, a serious contender in the local airline industry, often tells the story of how he perceives the workplace. It goes something like this: "You get two types of people in the workplace, those that get stuck in and 'do' and those that sit on the sidelines, observe and then critique what has been done".

We see this trend in our workplaces all the time. One person puts her hand up and offers her services, only to be shot down by a colleague when she feeds the content or results back to the team. Interestingly, that same colleague, who obviously believes he could have done a better job, was nowhere to be seen when the call for volunteers was made.

We've also all seen the client, who fails to make the most out of a partnership by not giving adequate briefs and direction, and then vociferously criticises content, as if any other outcome were actually possible. It's the same strata of person that complains about elections and corruption in South Africa and then fails to vote on election day but continues to moan after the results. If you have an opportunity to voice your concern, or exercise your constitutional right and don't, then don't complain when nothing changes. I just don't get the logic.



Wilson at the PRISA Conference

Then, at the recent PRISA 2016 conference, hosted in Durban last week, robust discussions were had around various topics, including the challenges that face the PR industry, such as our credibility, a low barrier to entry and myriad other crises. What frustrated me, though was that the perpetual daily 'criticisers' within the PR industry were nowhere to be seen. This, after all, is their platform to showcase just how dynamic and strategic our industry is and to add value where it was needed most.

At this year's event, there was an abundance of great content, ranging from crisis communications to the implications of the soon-to-be-released King Report Four. But what taught me the most, were the illuminating questions asked by delegates in the audience. Besides evidence of some serious brains, the questions illustrated a hunger to learn and grow. This boosted my faith in our industry, one which I've watched evolve, grow and challenge over the last 17 years.

So, to the naysayers in our industry, who have become too important, cynical, opinionated (insert appropriate adjective here), this is my message to you: Get off your high horse and support the official industry body for public relations in South Africa, as well as other industry events, roundtables and surveys, that do help gradually move us up the credibility ladder, one strategic notch at a time.

ABOUT JAMES WILSON

James is a communications and marketing specialist with more than 17 years' experience. He has worked in agencies and in-house, giving him the full scope of agency and client life...

- Big banks don't cry - but new research shows maybe they should - 3 Dec 2018
- Lessons from Everest: Protecting your reputation doesn't have to be like climbing a mountain - 14 Dec 2016
- Stockholm Syndrome: alive and well in the PR industry - 14 Oct 2016
- Of doers and criticisers - 25 Aug 2016
- Make the circle bigger: Growing an agency with startup clients - 11 Aug 2016

[View my profile and articles...](#)

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>