

How agencies need to realign - 'The Suit Life'

 By [Craig Naicker](#)

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Times have changed and many companies are having to change the way in which they operate so that they can adapt. Below I talk about how agencies can realign their business to adapt to the times that we are currently living under.



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“The Swiss Army Knife Suit”

As we all adapt and move towards the ‘new normal’, I can’t help but cast my mind back to one of the first games in my junior cricket days. We were batting at the time and there was a bowler from the opposing team (tall and super-fast), who was just ripping into our batting line up.

I was next into bat and my coach came up to me and said, “Son you have a chance to do what none of the other batters has done, and that is to adapt to these conditions. If you don’t adapt, you are going to be out like the batters before you.” Fast forward to June 2020 and those words ring true for most businesses and people in the advertising industry – now more than ever.

Most agencies are having to realign their business to adapt to the current and future landscape; whether that means a bigger shift towards the digital world, forming new collaborative relationships or even acquiring other businesses that are currently not in their wheelhouse. So, what does all this change mean for a Suit?

Well, it is forcing us to think and act differently – to adapt, creating a new set of working tools like a Swiss Army Knife.



About bells, whistles, suits and ties

Pepe Marais 13 May 2010



A Suit pre Covid-19

The Suit had to maintain client relationships, take detailed briefs, brief the agency employees, manage deadlines, and

upsell the agency's services to clients.

A Suit during and post-Covid-19

In our new reality, it falls to the Suit to build and maintain strategic client relationships and meaningful connections. To stay on top of the game, they must also develop a strategic and creative mindset. Being proactive is extremely important.

We can't just wait for clients to brief us anymore. We need to hunt those briefs down and chase them up. Now is also the time to add more value for your clients, by upskilling in all areas of the agency (ATL, BTL, digital, media buying, PR).

A Suit is no longer seen as the buffer between agency and client but as the key to unlocking collaborations and solving client business challenges. Foster a collaborative environment internally. So, don't just focus on your clients. Try to help the other Suits in the agency come up with collective solutions that will keep the whole organisation profitable – because that is in everybody's best interests.



The Suit: The first time I cried in advertising

Jason Harrison, M&C Saatchi Abel 18 Apr 2019



Be the wingman

As Suits, we have told our clients many times that we see our agency as an extension of their business. Now more than ever, we need to start living by those words and adapt the way in which we provide services. We can do this by truly immersing ourselves in clients' operations and being their wingmen. Clients need to know that their Suit is always ready to assist them with any business challenge that they might face. Being a true wingman means that your client can be vulnerable in front of you and vice-versa. This is proof that you have a meaningful connection with your client, which is built on trust.

Hybrid mentality

Let us become Suits who are hybrids that have insights and understanding of strategy, creative, the digital world, planning, problem-solving and relationship management. Becoming a hybrid allows you to challenge internal agency thinking in order to deliver the best results for both the client and the agency.

So, the question you should be asking yourself right now is, Am I a Swiss Army Knife Suit?"

ABOUT CRAIG NAICKER

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