

Jo Varney

Ogilvy Healthworld UK



I am a medical learning and communications professional with more than 15 years' experience working for agencies in the creative and healthcare industries in London. I have experience in designing and delivering evidence-based learning and behaviour-change programmes on behalf of clients in the pharmaceutical industry. My career to date has encompassed a wide spectrum of healthcare-related work including medical learning, public relations, stakeholder engagement, patient support solutions and corporate communications.

I am an ardent believer in life-long learning. My first degree at Oxford was in a science-based subject but twelve years on from graduation I rekindled a love of drawing and took a degree in the History of Art and followed this with a Masters. My six years of part-time studying and working was an experience that substantially broadened my world-view and honed my critical-thinking and writing skills. This experience also opened my eyes to the benefits of cross-disciplinary thinking and practice; it heightened my awareness of how working life can often be siloed, with the knowledge of one discipline segregated from another. In my role today, I am keenly aware of the importance of leveraging evidence bases from disciplines such as health psychology, cognitive neurosciences, behavioural sciences and graphic design as well as those from adult learning sciences.

Education:

- BA (hons) Zoology, Biological Sciences, Hertford College, University of Oxford (1992—1995)
- BA History of Art (1st Class honours degree), Birkbeck College, University of London (2008—2012)
- MA History of Art and History and Theory of Photography (Distinction), Birkbeck College, University of London (2012—2014)

Professional experience:

Over 15 years' medical learning, public relations and corporate communications experience, working in agencies on behalf of blue-chip pharmaceutical clients such as AstraZeneca Plc, Boehringer Ingelheim GmbH, F. Hoffmann-La Roche Ltd, GlaxoSmithKline Plc and UCB Pharma.

Key competencies:

- **Learning and development:** I am an Associate Director at Ogilvy Healthworld UK, part of WPP Group; my role in our medical education team demands comprehensive knowledge of adult learning theories and learning sciences coupled with capabilities to apply theory into practice. My role requires me to translate evidence-based principles from adult learning and behavioural sciences into the research, design and application of learning programmes, with the goal to impact on physician performance and ultimately patient outcomes. Knowledge and use of instructional design models such as ADDIE are central to my role. Furthermore my job extends to embracing evidence from cognitive neuroscience as it relates to health data comprehension and clinical and shared decision making
- **People performance:** I have more than 10 years' line management experience and have benefited from excellent training and on-the-job learning to coach and mentor junior team members; I currently mentor several people within Ogilvy, which enables me to apply principles of learning sciences such as the power of feedback and encouraging self-reflection in others to improve performance. Furthermore

complex project work requires good stakeholder management, which is something I have learned to do in both my client work and internally across a large, multinational agency

- **Communications skills:** My role requires excellent communication skills to present new ideas to clients and pitching for new business; strong writing skills and an ability to tell a story are needed in my job, including tailoring content to different audiences. My writing skills have been sharpened by completing six years of part-time, adult education (BA and MA in History of Art)
- **Project management:** I am experienced in leading teams to deliver a range of projects from big-ticket events like symposia and press conferences, to smaller projects such as advisory board meetings and media campaigns. As team lead, my role involves objective setting, coordination of timelines and resources, stakeholder management and good financial skills in order to monitor a budget and plan and forecast expenditure. Meticulous attention to detail, organisational skills and ability to meet deadlines are key competencies needed in my role

Employment history:

November 2007 to current	Associate Director, Ogilvy Healthworld Medical Education, part of WPP Group	
November 2014 to current	Cultural and visual arts reviewer for CEEL.org.uk (Central and Eastern European life and news in London). http://ceel.org.uk/?s=Jo+Varney	
2005—2007	Cohn & Wolfe Public Relations, WPP Group: Healthcare public relations for pharmaceutical industry clients	
2001—2005	Ogilvy Healthworld PR, part of Ogilvy, WPP Group: Healthcare public relations for pharmaceutical industry clients	
2000—2001	Lowe Fusion Healthcare: Healthcare public relations for pharmaceutical industry clients	
1998—2000	Shire Hall International: junior role in healthcare public relations working; experience of writing press releases, media sell-ins and coordination of media campaigns	
1995—1998	Marie Stopes International: junior project manager assisting overseas aid projects in female reproductive health	

Interests and miscellany:

- Arts blogger and cultural reviewer: I am currently a freelance cultural reviewer for CEEL.org.uk, a magazine website aimed at people from Central and Eastern Europe who are living and working in London; I've also previously been a guest blogger for the V&A Museum in London <http://www.vam.ac.uk/blog/author/jo-varney>
- Oxford Blue: I gained a rowing blue from the Oxford University Women's Boat Club (OUWBC), rowing against Cambridge in the 1995 University Boat Race, and in the reserve crew, Osiris, in 1994