WILL CLEMENT

will@will-clement.com · linkedin.com/in/wclement · 704-661-1091

Deeply experienced communications leader adept in crisis communications planning, response, and resolution; public affairs; executive counsel; and reputation management. Thrives and leads in complex and regulated environments. Excels in helping organizations navigate tough business challenges, mitigate or avoid negative publicity, overcome reputation issues, tackle legislative mandates, contract disputes, lawsuits and solve for other critical issues through communications and managing trusted stakeholder relationships.

EXPERIENCE

SENIOR ADVISOR FOR STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS, UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE (JUL. 2024 – JAN. 2025)

- Led departmental communications for multiple USDA top-priority issues with significant animal and public health concerns, and/or reputational concerns; most notably highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) or bird flu.
- Developed and executed communications strategies regarding major announcements and emerging situations. Spearheaded and served as the main representative on topic-specific media relations efforts, coordinated and led communications strategies across a diverse set of USDA agencies, scientific experts, and communications teams. Participated in meetings directly with and drafted materials for the Secretary and senior leadership officials across the department.
- As part of the Biden-Harris administration, held significant responsibility for both advocating on behalf of USDA's work among and collaborating directly with senior communications officials at the White House and across relevant departments and agencies including CDC and FDA.

FREELANCE CONSULTANT, STRAIT INSIGHTS (FEB. 2023 – JUL. 2024)

Created, edited, and provided counsel on public relations and media strategies, crisis responses and
messaging, executive thought leadership content, marketing materials, client proposals and community
engagement strategy for clients including a global healthcare company, a major southeastern city, a
regional beverage company, and an acclaimed author and expert on personality in business.

ACCOUNT SUPERVISOR, HEALTH CRISIS & ISSUES, EDELMAN (AUG. 2021 – DEC. 2022)

- Led the development of issue-specific communications plans and playbooks for the world's largest medical device maker for issues such as product recalls, invitation-only FDA advisory panel presentations, FDA advisory committee hearings, and expose-style media coverage.
- Co-led agency support for issues and crisis communications and public affairs strategies for one of Atlanta's largest healthcare systems including insurer disputes, litigation, cyber-security issues and intense negative publicity concerning strategic business decisions, all in close coordination with its Government Affairs and Public Relations teams.
- Updated the Corporate Communications Crisis Playbook for a global vision care company to enable the company to deliver effective, timely and accurate communications during a crisis.

ACCOUNT SUPERVISOR, KETCHUM (JUL. 2021 – AUG. 2021) SENIOR ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE, KETCHUM (SEP. 2020 – JUL. 2021)

Provided support and leadership oversight of strategy development and execution of key reputation
protection projects and recovery for several multibillion-dollar companies and top healthcare clients,
including health payers, pharmaceutical companies, health tech and wellness brands.

- Led all agency communications and project work for supporting a critical piece of state legislation that allowed the top healthcare client to reorganize its operating structure as governed by state regulations, a highly visible issue for the CEO and leadership.
- Served as the rapid-response and issues point person across the agency's health insurance accounts and quickly developed POVs and counsel for clients on a range of issues.
- Ensured operation effectiveness of account teams that delivered, quality, on time and under budget responses.

ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE, KETCHUM (FEB. 2019 – SEP. 2020)

- Supported the development of COVID-19 rapid response campaigns aimed at educating and supporting customer needs for multiple large health insurance clients, overseeing the development of messaging and content for a variety of corporate channels and audiences.
- Led day-to-day oversight of a key client's corporate newsroom, a pillar of its reputation management strategy, including all content development, client communications and issues support.
- Played an integral role in the planning for and crisis management of a controversial product launch for a national health and wellness brand.

ASSISTANT ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE, KETCHUM (FEB. 2018 – JAN. 2019)

- Led and provided oversight for the development of key client deliverables across accounts, including legislator fact sheets, media materials, issues POVs, byline articles, client correspondence, press releases, speeches, blog posts, social media content, monitoring and analytics reports.

ACCOUNT COORDINATOR, KETCHUM (JUN. 2016 – JAN. 2018; FORMERLY CAPSTRAT)

- Helped lead strategic and crisis communications for a fully integrated paid media and public relations campaign over a 6 month long public contract dispute. The campaign won PR Daily's 2018 Content Marketing Award for Reputation Management.
- Supported the overhaul of a major corporate reputation initiative, owning day-to-day client communications and coordinating the development and execution of a series of fully-integrated paid media campaigns across social, digital, print, TV and radio. The campaigns delivered measurable improvement in brand favorability and corporate reputation metrics, winning the 2019 Drum Marketing Award U.S. for Best Digital Strategy.

FINANCE TEAM, ROY COOPER FOR NORTH CAROLINA (AUG. 2015 – JUN. 2016)

Advanced fundraising events with the then candidate; conducted donor research and outreach; organized production and distribution of regular mass mailings.

EDUCATION

BUSINESS ESSENTIALS CERTIFICATE, UNC-CH KENAN-FLAGLER BUSINESS SCHOOL JANUARY 2014

BACHELOR OF ARTS, PSYCHOLOGY, UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT CHAPEL HILLJANUARY 2013

ORGANIZATIONS

VP, Support, St. Anthony Association of North Carolina (SAANC)

Fundraising Committee, SAANC

Mar. 2024 – Present

Mar. 2023 – Present

OPEN Pride Global, OMNICOM GROUP Member 2019 – 2021

Eagle Scout Award, Boy Scouts of America JAN. 2006