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[DEBRA WALLACE](#) OCTOBER 26, 2020



Business 101: “How Female Entrepreneurs Have Successfully Pivoted During the Pandemic

Well-Regarded Publicists Sharla Feldscher and her daughter Hope Feldscher Horwitz]

Sharla Feldscher and Hope Feldscher Horwitz

Feldscher Horwitz Public Relations
Marlton, N.J.

Sharla Feldscher, President/Partner

Hope Feldscher Horwitz, Vice President/Partner

Years in business: 36 years

Links: [Facebook](#), [Linkedin](#), [Linkedin](#)

Publicist **Sharla Feldscher** was a kindergarten teacher who retired at the tender age of 25 to have a family. After both girls were born, she volunteered at Please Touch Museum, and, soon after, her volunteer work turned into a dynamic public relations business and passion that is not only going strong but has ebbed and flowed during this ever-changing landscape.

While volunteering at Philadelphia’s Please Touch Museum, she learned an entirely new field and loved it. In less than a year, she was hired as the museum’s first PR director. After four years, she was recruited to become the PR consultant for Sesame Place in Langhorne, PA., the nation’s only theme park based on *Sesame Street*, a position she held for 26 years.

“When I said ‘yes’ to Sesame Place it meant that I had to start a consulting business in 1984, an entirely new venture. While having a business was new to me, I was confident in my ability to publicize programs for children,” explains Feldscher.

Fast forward to 2020, Feldscher has the pleasure of working side-by-side with her daughter Hope Horwitz. This formidable team raises the profile of their clients, so they have more significance in the communities that matter to them, as well as increase their profitability by increased positive visibility.

Feldscher and Horwitz readily admit that their business has changed a great deal in the past five years, with a much larger focus on social media. For Feldscher, it has been fascinating to watch the changes in the field of public relations. “No more is a TV hit a one-time opportunity, and the same goes for print visibility,” she explained. “Everything is repurposed. Everything is placed on multiple outlets so that the life of a publicity hit is much longer and has so much more value.” There is a different strategy for social media, and we support clients by working with experts who have experience in engagement through social media.”

Watching her mother in action while Horwitz was growing up was always a high energy day, a great deal of fun, and is what led Horwitz to want to follow in her footsteps. Hope and her sister, Amy, worked at many of the events of which Horwitz has fond memories. “When school was out and my mom’s office was in Philadelphia, I would bring a friend with me and when we were old enough, we’d get a hot dog, pretzel, and a soda from the street vendors. We had a lot of fun back then. It’s a different world now.”

Horwitz worked for 15 years as an event planner and fundraiser and saw the importance of being able to give back to organizations in need. “As life progressed, I took a leap back into PR, and I felt like I was home. I enjoy the creativity, and I get to plan small events while working with clients. I can’t think of a better way to spend my day.”

What does this dynamic mother-daughter duo love about their business? “I love that I get to do a little bit of everything. I’m a partner with my clients and then use my creativity to find the newsworthy story to pitch,” Horwitz explained. “Following up with the press and working with them to coordinate stories allows me the opportunity to constantly meet new people and be a part of a team.”

Her mom added: “There are many things I love about doing public relations. Firstly, it’s very creative – we are always thinking about new ways to get press coverage. Secondly, I love working with clients – being part of their strategic team, being trusted by them to guide them in a way that always keeps their positive image in the forefront, and then, thirdly, I love making things happen! It is so rewarding when an idea we have works – and brings in revenue and builds constituencies for clients through publicity.”

While business owners near and far have been looking for innovative ways to pivot during COVID-19, these public relations experts quickly realized that their business could not only continue, but it could thrive. “Our work can be done remotely, with no problem, since we don’t need to see our clients in person to get the job done,” Feldscher says.

“I am sorry to say that we don’t have events, shows, or programs to attend right now. But, since our job is to communicate about clients’ stories, we can do that from anywhere. We can arrange zoom interviews and our clients are still available to be resources to the press. Most of our clients have publicity opportunities, just different than we originally expected,” she adds.

“In some cases, we’ve been put on “hold” especially if our clients are festivals that can’t take place, but we have filled in with others whose events and publicity-stories are virtual or timely related to COVID-19. We help to strategize their businesses and how they can move forward in alternative ways.”

Horwitz and Feldscher have discovered ‘Silver Linings’ both in their personal and professional lives during this global health pandemic. “I have really learned about what’s important in life and what’s not. And I will never take advantage of being able to hug someone again!” explains Horwitz.

Feldscher added: “I think I’ll always use Zoom. I have saved a lot of time and expense by doing remote, virtual interviews and some clients say that will continue. Most of our clients are either in Philadelphia or New Hope, PA, which is 30 to 60 minutes away, and now we meet with them more easily. Personally, like Hope, I value, even more, the close relationships I have, and I will never take them for granted.”

After several decades in the business, Feldscher says that what sets her company apart from others in PR is crystal clear to her and her clients. “Many have been colleagues for years and years. Many knew Hope when she was younger. These relationships are a real standout. In addition, Hope and I both have an excellent eye for detail, and we share a natural enthusiasm about life. We incorporated a sparkle in our logo and that “spark” seems to be clear to many people. I am very proud – and everyone knows it – to be working side by side with my daughter. I think people admire that and like being part of our PR team for that reason, too.”

The optimistic pair stays “creatively productive” and timing is key. “I was always planning to have another book published in late summer. I wrote it before the pandemic. With the pandemic now, I have had much more time to work on the publicity and marketing of [KIDFUN: 401 Easy Ideas for Play](#). I’ve been writing creative ideas to do with young children since I taught kindergarten, but now, more than ever, it’s so important. I love that I have this creative outlet now,” Feldscher says.

While Horwitz says she initially found the pandemic “trying and horrifying” since she is an outgoing and energetic person. She juggled work with homeschooling her seven and nine-year-old daughters, being someone who not only survived, but clearly thrived. “We have more family dinners now and so as a couple, my husband and I can demonstrate love and interest in others on a regular basis,” she explains. “It’s helpful to know that we are showing our kids that we can survive everything as long as we stick together.”

Feldscher loves having her daughter as her work partner and sees it as a clear advantage going forward. “Hope brings a whole new vitality to the business and thinks strategically about marketing us. She has the perspective of a younger generation and that is very important as we plan for our clients. I know our clients love getting both of our perspectives. The business is her future and its growth is as important to her as it to me. I am blessed!”

Says her appreciative daughter: “We are a family business and we often connect to our clients on a similar level. We enjoy getting to know the people who make up a company as much as we do the company. When we truly join their team, we’re able to succeed in a much higher and stronger capacity. We also have fun at work, and I think that shows through to our clients. We

smile and laugh as we work, whether it be together, with our clients, or with the media, we build relationships with.”