



# How to choose the right ambassador for your sports brand

# Select The Right Person For Your Brand

Here, The PHA Group provide a rundown of 10 questions which you should ask yourself before signing on the dotted line of an ambassador contract.

Who are you trying to reach?

What is the long term objective of this partnership?

What do you actually want them to do?

Are they newsworthy or a star of tomorrow?

Which brands are they already associated with?

Are they over-exposed?

Any negative exposure?

Is it believable?

Do they have the attributes you need?

Do they have a significant social reach?



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## 1. Who are you trying to reach?

It sounds obvious, but having the audience for this particular campaign clearly defined from the outset is crucial. Who are you actually looking to talk to? Consider age, gender, location, interests..... you need to be very clear on who your target audience is before you choose an individual to help you reach them.

## 2. What is the long term objective of this partnership?

What is the fundamental objective of the formation of this partnership? Are you looking for a quick win to help drive sales, or is there a broader long term goal in play? These questions will help you decide whether a short term (and therefore cheaper) relationship will fulfill your needs or if you should invest in a relationship (and contract) with longevity.

## 3. What do you actually want them to do?

It will help the process hugely if you are clear from the outset about what you actually want an ambassador to do. Do you want them involved in above the line marketing campaigns, or purely PR activity? How many hours of their time do you want/need? Do you want them to attend any events on your behalf? Will you need to do a photo shoot? How many social media mentions do you want? You need to establish these details at the start so that agents are clear on the level of commitment required and can advise on the fee accordingly. It also gives you bargaining power, as you can add or remove elements of the requested commitment to fit the budget available.

## 4. Are they newsworthy or a star of tomorrow?

Often, the timing of your approach can be as important as the person you are choosing to bring on board. Consider the events calendar and if you are embarking on a long term campaign, try to look several months down the line. Is this person about to be involved in an event, a competition or a campaign which may boost their reputation? Are they about to appear on a major TV show? Is it likely that they will win a coveted prize? Bringing that individual on board just before they reach a turning point in their career could be the key to securing your perfect brand ambassador, and in doing so at the right price!

## 5. Which brands are they already associated with?

When you have an individual in mind, you should find out which brands, if any, your potential ambassador is already associated with. It may be that there is a potential conflict of interest between your brand and those which this individual is associated with, or you may not feel comfortable with your brand sitting alongside that of another of the ambassador's partners. Conversely, it may be that your brand and the brands this individual already represents create a positive synergy.

## 6. Are they over-exposed?

When you appoint a brand ambassador, you want people to be interested in what they have to say on your behalf and for their involvement in your campaign to have an impact. If your ambassador of choice has fronted a number of campaigns recently and done every interview under the sun, then this will have a real impact on the level of interest from both media outlets and consumers. You also run the risk of confusing the consumer if an individual who is well known for fronting one campaign is now involved in another. Will people make the distinction? It may be worth carrying out some market research and/or a media audit to establish whether the individual you have in mind is in demand or not.

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## 7. Any negative exposure?

Ever heard the saying 'there's no such thing as bad publicity'? Well, we don't agree. You should therefore check whether the individual you have in mind has been involved in any negative or potentially damaging stories, or whether you think they could pose a risk for the future. Ultimately, this person is going to be representing your business, so in this situation we'd say 'better safe than sorry' is a more appropriate saying to abide by.

## 8. Is it believable?

It is very easy for a brand to cough up huge sums of money for a sports star to front a campaign, but if there isn't a believable connection between individual and brand, it will come across as disingenuous and therefore won't have the desired impact. Can you envisage this individual wearing your clothes, consuming your drink or using your equipment? If you can't, then you can bet that consumers will struggle to make the connection too.

You also need to do your research. Someone who has gone on the record as saying they 'hate exercise and don't like the gym' is clearly not going to be the right person to front a gym campaign. A celebrity who has discussed how she 'wears heels everywhere she goes, and wouldn't be seen dead in flat shoes' is not a believable advocate for your trainer brand. The connection should be real and honest; otherwise you have little more than a celebrity waving a product around in the air and hoping that someone will pay attention.

## 9. Do they have the attributes you need?

If you are going to require your ambassador to talk about a particular subject or product, will they do it justice? Do they already have a level of relevant knowledge that they can apply? Are they articulate? Of course you can provide media training and briefing sessions, but a natural ability to communicate will be a big help in this instance. Likewise, if they need to wear a particular product, will they model it well? Again, this goes back to clearly defining the parameters of any campaign at the start so that you can be sure you are choosing an ambassador who fits the brief and is up to all aspects of the job.

## 10. Do they have a significant social reach?

This is an increasingly important factor when looking for a brand ambassador, and celebrities who don't have active social media channels are putting themselves at a disadvantage when it comes to securing endorsement deals. But it isn't all about the numbers of fans or followers. The important thing to consider here is whether your potential ambassador is reaching the right people through their social channels. It's all very well having millions of fans, but if they are predominantly teenage girls and you are looking to promote or sell a men's nutrition product, then the real, business impact of any social media activity from your ambassador is likely to fall flat.

**For advice on appointing the right ambassador for your brand, contact  
The PHA Group's Sport and Leisure team:**

info@thephagroup.com  
0207 0251 350