

HYPN\$TIC WRERS

DAVE ELMAN INDUCTION

Good, Pause There, You're Doing Great

VIDEO LINK:

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DAVE ELMAN INDUCTION Good, Pause There, You're Doing Great

JASON LINETT:

I will share with you two frames going into this. The first is that, for the first pass in terms of discussion and practice, again, we will assume an absolutely ideal client who does everything right, which I will openly tell you because I go into my sessions with that expectation and convey this mindset of "Yeah, we got this, let's do this", I get the ideal result from nearly 95% plus of the clients that I work with. Now, of course there will be questions that may pop into your mind of, "Well what if we say relax the eyelids so they won't open, and they let the eyelids open? What if I'm going to pick up the arm and they're completely helping me out? What if I'm doing the count backwards lose the numbers, and they're so goal oriented they want to go down to zero?"

Well, after we do this first pass of dealing with the ideal situation, which is the most likely of scenarios in my experience, then the loving terminology is that that's when we get to then workshop the "client from hell". Who does every step of the process entirely wrong, and yet still at the end of it, you still succeed, because, again remember, the filter, "You don't get to pass this hurdle until you've done this one". These are steps. These are disguised tests inside of the process and until you move forward.

There's a slightly inappropriate story to share which will set the right framework for this. I was a production stage manager, so my job was to make all the creative environment people get along. I was also the hub of all communication; when the designer did something I would get the first round of the drafts, my team would have to make copies of it, we would then distribute it to all the other designers, all the different shops.

It would actually be our responsibility to check in with the various costume shops, set design, lighting, make sure all the builds, make sure everything is happening on time. Because also, as part of your job as the stage manager was that if anything ever went wrong, it was your fault and your responsibility to solve it. So, that being said, there were some times in these little moments of communication that the technical final rehearsals would be the slowest, most painful thing possible. Where you would have these twelve hour days and in the course of twelve hours you only accomplish getting through five pages of a hundred page script. It takes a long time.



And it's laborious and it's this whole "We have to keep the energy of everyone excited, we have to keep everybody happy, but we got to keep moving". So there's moments where you would sometimes have to shortcut someone's creativity and, "Hey Luke, the lighting designer, I know you are still working on that but we've got everybody on call right now so can you design that tomorrow morning and then we'll run the scene tomorrow, we just simply don't have the time to wait for you to program everything right now, is that okay?". "Okay, great," and then we'd catch up. So I would have to respectfully shortcut people to go, "Yeah, we don't have that costume piece yet, there's no need running this transition that involves a quick change but we'll come back and we'll rehearse this first thing tomorrow," and I've got to play that game.

You need rules, required coffee be made, that's why I'm an expert at keeping coffee for nine people, required cough drops be set up, I still stock the same Rahkola, can't get over the old habits, tissues be set up; they're in every room; old habits die hard. And then also general upkeep of the space. So the equity stage manager, which is what I was, was not allowed by union rules to take out the trash or mop the stage. Awesome! So I had interns, I had staff, and here was Eric who would do the sweep and the mop before the show began. Which is even more fun with plays that involve a lot of stage blood because then you've got to really scrub. We did a production of King Lear where the set began completely white and by the end of it, it was nearly all red drenched in stage blood. 8 shows a week, sweep and mop, yeah...he hated us. I broke union rules and I helped because I'm not a jerk.

So I mention this because show time is at 8, the house opens at 7:30, actor call is typically only a half hour, so they show up at the same time the audience is showing up, unless it's, "Here's this character who has a lot of special effects makeup," and then we back up the call. Most of the actors would actually show up upwards of 75 minutes early. So very often no issue. So I mention this because now it's 6:30, and the mop bucket is on stage, Eric just finished mopping, and he's cleaning the mop backstage and now he's going to come back and get the bucket.

Lighting designer walks by, "Hey Jason, the mop bucket is still out on stage," which I have to filter and be respectful because this is Don Holter, this is the guy who did the lights for Rent, for Lion King, this guy has got a bunch of Tonies because it's basically the same six lighting designers that are working nonstop. And he says, "Hey Jason, the mop bucket's on stage" and what is said out loud, and this is a theatrical line that if you're ever around people of that background, they'll know this statement. "Oh, thank you for bringing that to my attention." Let me give you the official paraphrase of what that actually means "fuck yourself, I know that, it's 6:30, the show doesn't start for another hour and a half, yeah, I know, do your lights Don." "Thank you for bringing that to my attention" is the common phrase and it's kind of now officially known in the theatrical community.

There's a guy who has a bit about the crime scene shows on TV about, "Here take this sample down to the lab and scan it to find if you can get any DNA." I had a pathologist as a client and he brought this up and he goes, "You know, how that scene would really play out in my lab?



Yeah, I know, that's my job, that's what I do here. That's what you hired...that's what I do all day, I scan things for DNA. Yeah, I'll go the lab and, oh, DNA is that what I was supposed to find?'"

Why do I tell you these things? Because when introducing you to a phrase that I want you to understand is phrased positively they will understand our meaning of it. "Good, pause there, you're doing great". Translation: "You could not have done that more incorrectly but I'm going to praise you anyway and I'm now going to modify my language to help you to do it even better." "Good, pause there, you're doing great." Translation: "Thank you for bringing that to my attention." So, we are going to have that in play especially when we get into the troubleshooting moments. Let that arm be loose, limp, and relaxed then they hold it out like that. "Good, sit down, pause there, you're doing great". "We'll do that again, and this time notice what's different". So I want to plant that seed because again, we'll come back to this segment in a few moments but for the first sake of discussion, ideal client, everything's going to go as it should.