

PRO ACTION ITEM OF THE MONTH

DO THIS 10 MINUTE EXERCISE BEFORE YOU RAISE MONEY

As I wrote about in *Raise It*, the key to a successful raise is everything you do before you start raising money. (Ever take a ballet class? A pirouette is all about the prep before you turn. Do everything else right and the turn just happens.)

But sometimes you don't have months or years to prepare for the raise. Sometimes a show lands in your lap, a theater lands in your lap, and you've got to hit the ground sprinting (raising the capitalization for *Spring Awakening* in 86 days comes to mind).

If you've got limited time to put together your prep for your raise, here's a ten minute exercise that you must do before you ask anyone for money. It's simple but super effective.

All you need to make your raise easier is to channel your inner David Letterman and write a list of "Top 10 Reasons Why Someone Should Invest In Your Show."

And be hard on yourself. When I do this exercise, I often substitute the "someone" for me. "Top 10 Reasons Why I Should Invest In My Show." If I can convince myself to do it, then I know I can convince other people. In just a few minutes you'll have a long list of powerful reasons why your investment is a good one.

SOME OF YOUR TOP 10'S COULD BE

- A Tony Award-winning Director
- A subject that appeals to the traditional Broadway audience (44 years old and female)
- An author on the rise who you expect to be the next David Mamet, and you want to support now
- A show that should have tremendous appeal in the subsidiary market (regional, high school, international)
- You! (I believe and will tell folks that I am going to have a *Wicked* someday, I just don't know exactly when that will be.)
- A name actor

And so on and so on.



THE DIGGING YOU DO NOW WILL HELP YOU SO MUCH WHEN YOU'RE PITCHING

The digging you do now will help you so much when you're pitching. This exercise is especially valuable for those of you with riskier projects (and with rational minds), because it forces you to convince yourself why you're doing what you're doing, and you'll help start to build your marketing campaign at the same time! (Those top 10 reasons why someone should invest, often are the same as the top 10 reasons why someone would buy a ticket – which is an investment of a different kind.)

Look, I know most of you don't have Hugh Jackman as your star, or an Andrew Lloyd Webber score, but you can still find ten reasons why your show is a good investment. And those ten don't have to be only ROI-based reasons. "Because it's important to get this message out to the world," might be enough, depending on what that message is

And if you can't find ten reasons why your show is a good investment? Don't produce it. Because if you can't prove it to yourself, you'll never prove it to anyone else.