

5 TIPS TO GETTING A JOB ON BROADWAY

I get a lot of emails from folks telling me that it's their dream to work on Broadway. Some want to be General Managers. Some want to be Casting Directors. Some don't have a clue as to what they want to do, but they know they want...well...to be a part of it, New York, New York.

Some have finished school. Some have even been through graduate school. And quite a few through law school, actually. Some haven't even finished high school. But they all know they want to do what I have been so blessed to have been able to do—work in an industry that they love.

Since I was one of those people who dreamed about working on Broadway, I've come up with some tips for folks looking to land that theater job—and keep it. And while, sure, these tips are focused on the NY scene, they are easily applied to wherever you may be.

So if you're looking to work on the Broadway, here are five tips to help you out:

1. GOT AN INTERVIEW? GET TICKETS.

One of the first questions I ask people who sit in front of me looking for a job is, “What shows have you seen lately?” And then I ask, “*Have you seen mine?*” I can't tell you how many people say no.

Does it count them out? Not 100%. But the people that say yes? Oooohhh, they vault to the top of the leader board. It's not about kissing a\$\$ or putting some bucks in my till. It's about a gesture that says, “*I'm interested in seeing the work that goes on here, so I can show you how I can contribute to making it even better.*”

I know, theater tickets are expensive. But they'll be a lot easier to pay for if you have a job that pays you a salary. Make an investment in your search, and people will invest in you.

2. GET IN THE RIGHT ROOM.

There's no question that Broadway is a very closed-door industry. And it's hard to get that door open, no matter how hard you knock. Here's the good news. Once you do get the door open and you get in the room, the door usually shuts and we don't let you out. You're ours! Bahahahahaha.

Jobs are the best way to get entry into the room, but there's the catch 22, right? So how else can you get potential employers to know who you are? Emails rarely work. Cold phone calls? Forget it. So, attend Galas. Go to conferences (like my annual Super Conference!). Get to opening nights. Intern (I've hired MANY interns!). Volunteer for industry events. Invest. Do whatever you can do to put your face in front employers. I've hired at least three people who grabbed me for an intro after listening to me speak on a panel.

A face-to-face intro is a zillion times more “impressive” than an electronic one.



3. BE PREPARED TO START AT THE BOTTOM.

I have a lot of respect for people who have earned MBA's, JD's, MD's, or any advanced degree that cost six figures and took several years. But that doesn't mean you get to start at the middle.

Broadway is a niche industry which requires a lot of specialized knowledge that isn't taught in any curriculum (except maybe on The Producer's Perspective PRO). So that means anyone looking to get a job in the biz has to start where everyone else does...at the bottom. Fortunately, the bottom is a little better now than when I first started out in this industry 20 years ago!

It means having a "can-do" attitude! My staff knows that no task is too small (we have spring cleaning each year and everyone pitches in), and no project too large. It's all about teamwork, collaboration and a positive attitude. Do what's required with a smile on your face, and you'll rise to the top quicker than you can say "I went to graduate school for this?"

4. WE DON'T PUNCH CLOCKS.

At the end of every interview I always ask if the job candidate has any questions. (**Tip:** Have a question or two...it'll keep you in the room longer and create a stronger impression.) The questions they ask me teach me more about their personality than any other part of the interview. And the one question I hate the most? "What are the hours?"

This is indicative that they aren't prepared for #3 above.

Office hours maybe 10am-6pm, but everyone does the work for the love of it. If you love what you do, then you won't be watching the clock. And I only want to work with people who truly love what they do. Need an example of these type of employees? Stop by my office some time and meet anyone on my staff.

5. REMEMBER JFK.

I've saved my favorite tip for last...

When going in for an interview, remember these words: "Ask not what your company can do for you, ask what you can do for your company." Remembering that mantra will get you in the perfect frame of mind to seem like the perfect employee.

Working on Broadway isn't for everyone. And if there is any other industry you're interested in, you should probably do that. But if you must work on Broadway, you will. Passionate people who persevere don't stay idle long. And if you're one of those people, make sure you send me your resume (ken@theproducersperspective.com).



Good luck in your search! If you're looking for a fast leg up in the industry, I encourage you to join The Producer's Perspective PRO today!

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