

THE PRODUCER'S PERSPECTIVE

GETTING YOU TO THE NEXT STAGE.



Hello Pros!

Happy Monday and for those celebrating today, let me say, shanah tovah!

I've got a big ol' tip this week that I stumbled upon from Hollywood mega producer, Brian Grazer all about pitching your projects. And since that's so much of what we ALL have to do . . . you, me and even Brian (as you'll read), I thought you'd like to hear the Brian Grazer Perspective. :-)

So let's get to it. Read how Brian answered this question from [Tim "Four Hour Work Week" Ferris](#) about how he dealt with failing, and how he learned from that 'failure' and changed up his approach and got to a yes.

How has a failure, or apparent failure, set you up for later success? Do you have a “favorite failure” of yours?

At the start of my career, in my early twenties, I had early success as a television producer — two shows in particular: a miniseries based on the Ten Commandments and a made-for-TV movie called *Zuma Beach*, both of which were very successful — but I wanted to be a movie producer. I wrote a script called *Splash*, which was based on my own personal, fruitless search for true love in LA. I realized all of my romantic relationships had been superficial — I was a young producer and could go out with beautiful girls, but there was never any truth or substance to it. I just couldn't find true love! Meanwhile, I was just starting to write up stories, though I had no formal training.

I decided to write a movie called *Splash*, which is the story of a young man who was on the path to succeeding at many things, except for love. He falls in love with a woman named Madison, who is everything he ever wished for; however, we the audience learn she's a mermaid, which he later learns as well. As I developed the characters, I kept defining and redefining what would be the perfect girl for me. I decided to make the story even more romantic and mythical by making her a mermaid, which naturally made her more unattainable.

I started to pitch the movie, studio by studio. And everyone, and I mean everyone, said no. Not only did they reject my script, but they felt they had to further humiliate me, saying things like, “This is the dumbest idea I've ever heard.” I must have been rejected hundreds of times on *Splash*. I felt ashamed, yet something in me wouldn't give up.

Seven years into it, I realized I needed to shift gears on my approach. When I was first pitching *Splash*, I was painting it as a “mermaid movie.” Well, of course, the studios — all of which are risk-averse in nature — were going to say no to that. It's a pretty crazy idea. But one day a friend asked me what the story was really about. I said I wrote *Splash* because I was looking for true love. That was really the theme of the movie. So then it hit me — this isn't a movie about a mermaid; this is a story about the value and meaning of true love! So I went back to the studios and started pitching it as a love story. The executives started to listen. Because who doesn't root for love? When I finally sold *Splash* to Disney in 1983, I realized the importance of universal, human themes in connecting with any person or audience. Whether you're in Hollywood, Silicon Valley, on Wall Street — it is crucial to find the heartbeat of why what you're selling matters and why it should exist. To this day, I still start every pitch by first describing the underlying, universal theme. *Friday Night Lights*, *8 Mile*, and *American Gangster* are all about

self-actualization. At first glance, you might think *American Gangster* is a “gangster movie,” but it’s not. It’s about talent, resourcefulness, and gaining respect — that’s why we root for Frank Lucas even though he’s a cut-throat killer.

Pretty good, right? If your pitch isn't working, shake it up a bit. Practice. Do it for friends. Don't think about why YOU love your show. Think about why your PROSPECT will love your show. It's not about you. It's about them. They're the ones who have to buy, right? This week's homework is to polish your pitch.

Go get 'em.

Best,

Ken

P.S. If you want me to analyze your pitch for you, just [click here](#) and I'll give you tips from my perspective and have you pitching much more effectively.

P.P.S. Only 47 days until the [conference](#)! Got your ticket yet???

The Song of the Week is . . .

"Could We Have Been in Love?"

From: *The Piper*

Lyrics by Inner Circle Member, Roger Griffin

[Click Here](#) to listen.

[Click Here](#) for the website.

[This Week on the PRO Facebook Group.](#)

Here are just a few of the things that are being chatted about on the Facebook Group!

- Tips for recording an "audio drama"
- Acquiring rights from big name companies

[Come join the discussion!](#)

And here's some more fun and educational stuff we posted for you last week!

- [Three reasons why NOT to start that show, project, or business.](#)
- [Podcast Episode 195 – Broadway Group Sales Agent Stephanie Lee](#)