

MAD Drama Presents

*How to Succeed in  
Business Without  
Really Trying*

Performances: April 30, May 1st, May 2nd; 2020  
Strike: May 4th

Directed by Mr. Marshall Henderson  
Technical Direction: Mr. Matt Torres  
Vocal Direction by Mr. Kerry Wilkerson  
Orchestral Direction by Mr. Andrew Wilkins

*How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying* is presented through special  
arrangement with Music Theatre International, 423 West 55th Street Second Floor  
New York, NY 10019

## HOW TO STAGE AUDITION FOR HOW TO SUCCEED IN BUSINESS WITHOUT REALLY TRYING

There are no "set in stone" rules for auditioning for a director, a set of directors and/or producers for a production. Common sense and courtesy are your best guidelines. That said, here are many lessons that I and others have learned over many years that may help you in your quest for the role you're looking for. If there's something here you don't understand, ask Mr. Henderson. Remember, these are only guidelines, suggestions -- but they are time-tested.

Here is something you should very much be aware of: We are looking for TEAM PLAYERS. You can enlarge and feed your ego in many other venues. Don't do it on our time.

The best advice is to simply show up to the auditions and have fun! People who don't audition don't get cast -- that's the one thing I *can* guarantee.

### **ACTING (MONOLOGUE) SUGGESTIONS**

#### *MATERIAL*

Choose material (a monologue) that you are comfortable with. Choose something that will allow you to create a character on stage that comes alive for those few minutes you have on stage. Libraries, including the one at Madison, are packed with plays on the shelves that can provide you with monologues. *Don't choose a monologue from the play you are auditioning for.* If you find a section of a play's text that doesn't seem *\*quite\** long enough (say, 1 to 2 minutes), then consider simply cutting out the interrupting dialogue of the other character(s) and see if it still works and remains logical and playable. Ready for some work? Read the ENTIRE play. Sounds like work? It's not. Take the time for yourself to read it. Many full-length plays can be read in about an hour and a half at one sitting. Reading good plays is an amazing experience. It's really the only way to truly understand the character you are playing and how he/she fits into the world of the play.

#### *INTERNET-FOUND/SELF-WRITTEN/"SYNTHETIC"/CHARACTERLESS MONOLOGUES*

You know what we're talking about. That stuff that comes up when you Google "monologues for men" or "monologues for women." You may use a "generic" monologue or one that you have located via the internet or one that you have written yourself. However, it is recommended that you locate a monologue from an actual published play. Many "internet" monologues end up sounding like "stand up" routines that a comic might use. That may be fine, but it NEVER shows off your ability to create an actual character with emotions, thoughts and dreams. Unless you're shooting for the character of "stand up comic" or "generic person" avoid generic "internet" monologues.

#### *MOVIE MONOLOGUES*

The popularity of this idea comes and goes but it's usually a bad idea to choose a monologue from a movie. Why? Well, if it's a good movie, then you're not the only one who has seen that movie. And unless you are attempting to perform the monologue better than the professional actor who performed it in the movie, why set yourself up for a direct comparison? You may love that movie, that actor, that moment in the story, etc. but that role, dialogue and moment were set up for that actor to be filmed in that perfect moment with perfect delivery, perfect lighting, etc. You're unlikely to capture that same moment on stage during an audition. Instead, choose something from the world of plays or musicals that will show your ability to perform something from a character's moment you have created -- not your ability to imitate a favorite moment from a favorite actor in a beloved movie.

#### *RESUME/HEADSHOT*

If you have them, bring them. You can always develop this material as you go.

#### *APPROPRIATENESS*

Avoid, at all costs, monologues that are filled with vulgarity or reckless hate. It's perfectly fine if a monologue is *\*dramatic\** but not at the expense of you and your character appearing bigoted, violent or sexually inappropriate. Such monologues work in the *\*context\** of the plays in which they appear and are legitimate in that framework, but they are distracting and useless in attempting to audition for a production.

#### *DRAMATIC TONE*

If you are auditioning for a comedy or a light or romantic musical, find something upbeat or clever. You don't have to try to be hysterically funny, but find something light and breezy you can work with. If auditioning for a drama, feel free to choose something that allows you to explore a range of dramatic emotions.



control, and if you don't get cast, it's not because you are a bad actor. MAD Drama is filled with talented performers like yourself and roles are very, very hard to come by. If you were not cast, don't get upset with anyone. It's perfectly fine and even expected for you to feel sad and extremely disappointed but do not succumb to the emotional sensation of "rejection". Casting is based on "acceptance" and is never based on a "rejection." If you are not cast, this is no time to start blaming anyone for anything, including yourself. Remember, you will likely spend hours preparing, auditioning and going through a grueling call back process and still not get cast. That is the very nature of theatre and this process. Don't let it throw you into an emotional ditch. Proudly work on the production in any of the other thousands of ways you can contribute and get ready for next time.

Cast or not cast, after the cast list is posted, it's perfectly fine to arrange a time to speak to Mr. Henderson about your audition. If you are cast in the show, congratulations! Be considerate of others who might not have been cast for a particular production. Find the time to sincerely congratulate those who were cast.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT AUDITIONING FOR MAD DRAMA

*Q. Who can audition?*

A. Any James Madison student can audition.

*Q. Are any roles "precast"?*

A. Never. All roles are wide open at the time of the auditions to be filled by any actor who best suits the role.

*Q. Does it help to be a Senior?*

A. Nope. But Seniors have been at it for four years and have often acquired a lot of skills that allow them to audition very smoothly and impressively. If you are an underclassman, you simply need to figure out how to out-shine them. If an upperclassman is a reliable performer, they will also have built up a lot of "street cred" which is a reflection of their work ethic. This can also work against upperclassmen, of course, if they have been less than reliable in the past. Regardless, no one is cast based on what grade they are in: they are cast entirely on the strength of their audition, what roles the script calls for, and who seems best suited to play them.

*Do you have to be in Mr. Henderson's Drama classes or the International Thespian Honor Society?*

A. No. However, we don't have a lot of time to teach you the things you need to know "on the fly" if you aren't in a class. Acting skills, how to take direction, audition techniques and much more are taught in these classes and you can join the International Thespian Society only by being in or working on shows. Also, if two students both fit a role equally, the role will go to the Madison drama student. If you are a non-drama student cast in a large role, consider taking a Madison drama class at your next opportunity since the offer of a large role will likely not come around again.

*Q. This sounds cool. How do I sign up to audition?*

A. Sign up for an audition time on the list on the Sign Up sheet(s) outside the Black Box Theatre or online (usually [signupgenius.com](http://signupgenius.com)). FILL THE EARLIEST SLOTS FIRST, WE WILL NOT WAIT ON LATE PAIRS OR SINGLES AT THE END OF THE DAY.

*Q. What happens when I come to the audition?*

A. You will be asked to fill out an audition sheet (it's at the end of this packet). Give it to the Stage Manager (the one taking all the sheets). You will also need to know all of your "conflict" dates -- days when you know ahead of time that you cannot attend a rehearsal or a portion of a rehearsal. HAVING CONFLICTS DOESN'T MEAN YOU CAN'T OR WON'T BE CAST. When it's time for your slot, you will be called. Go to the stage, introduce yourself clearly, and do your prepared piece or ask for instructions.

*Q. What are you looking for at the audition?*

A. A general impression of YOU, particularly how your voice carries, how comfortable you look on stage, and a range of movement and emotion. I want to see what you look like, what you sound like, and how well you come across to the audience.

*Q. OK, OK, what are you REALLY looking for?*

A. Who seems to fit the roles available in the script. Also, who seems to fit well with the other people who seem to fit the roles available in the script (matching).

*Q. What should I remember while auditioning?*

A. ENJOY YOURSELF! Show us you like performing on the stage! Move with clarity and confidence, with purpose.



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### *AGE APPROPRIATENESS*

Choose material that matches the age range that you can comfortably play. Since we are in high school, you may be shooting for an older or younger character that won't be filled by actors in those ranges. In that case, it's OK to try something with a different age from yourself but don't try to specialize too much or you might limit yourself.

### *DRAMATIC TONE*

Find material that is positive in nature rather than offensive or cynical. Keep away from hate songs, suicide songs, sexual-orientation songs, and parodies, because you may never know who you may insult (or frighten). Choose a song that you really love singing and that shows off a positive aspect of your personality.

### *LENGTH*

16-bars, or about 60 seconds (whichever comes first) is pretty standard. Try to stay away from complex "narrative story" songs that would be hard to summarize in 16 bars; you might end up with a joke with no punchline or a punchline with no joke. Often, you won't go the full 16-bars nor 60 seconds but have it prepared in all cases.

### *REPETITION*

Avoid songs with repetitive melody lines. It might be a waste of your time to demonstrate the same 3 or 4 notes over and over in your 16-bar cut!

### *SIGNATURE SONGS*

This is similar to the problem with pop tunes. Think twice about songs that are too connected to a specific star performer. The song *People*, for example, is forever associated with Barbara Streisand. It's going to be hard to "out compete" a star performer in the mind of a director listening to you.

### *CLOTHING*

Don't try to "look" like anything other than yourself. However, some tips are:  
don't wear clothing with writing on it; it's distracting; clothes that don't distract from \*you\* are the best.  
don't wear ripped, torn, or overly sloppy clothing. It just makes you look careless and sloppy.  
wear something comfortable, something you can breathe in without any issues.

## **DANCING SUGGESTIONS FOR MUSICALS**

### *THE CHOREOGRAPHERS TEACH YOU*

You don't have to show up knowing anything. For dance auditions, we simply need to see how you move and how quickly you can pick up some steps and/or some moves as they are being taught to you. We're also observing how well you listen and take instruction. If you pay respectful attention to and try out the steps the choreographer is giving to you, you will likely do well in a dance audition.

### *WORKSHOPS*

Take advantage of any workshops that MAD Drama may offer \*before\* the dance auditions. They will help you get that little edge before you go into the real thing.

### *CLOTHING*

Avoid clothing with large writing on it as always. Comfort is the key here. Sweats, t-shirts, and very comfortable shoes are what you want. Avoid jewelry. If you bring a spare set of clothes you may not have to go home or spend the rest of the day in sweaty dance clothes.

## **AFTER THE AUDITIONS AND CALL-BACKS**

### *POST AUDITION*

This is probably the toughest part of the audition, even more so than monologue hunting. This is the time when you feel most helpless - your fate, at least for this one production - is now out of your hands. Before you leave, make sure you know where the callback list will be posted. Once home, don't stress about the audition. Most times, actors post-audition will psych themselves out by analyzing each and every part of the audition, then agonizing until they see the cast list. One word: DON'T. Sometimes there will be a day or two in between auditions and final casting.

If you are called back, then be prepared to work with other actors in scenes from the play, and possibly even read for characters you don't want the roles for. But whatever you do before the cast list goes up, don't stress out. It's out of your

## LENGTH

MAD Drama monologues are 1 to 2 minutes in length.

## PROPS/CHAIRS

Avoid any monologue that would require you to use a lot of props. One or two simple things might be ok, such as a handkerchief or something your character is expected to handle or use while speaking. However, avoid props if you can. You won't have the time to set up an entire scene or deal with a lot of props. You will be provided with an optional chair if your character is going to sit during any part of or all of your monologue. You can certainly sit on the floor if your characterization requires it. Be careful of lying down fully, however; it's very hard to project your voice while lying down without some practice and, of course, your face is hard to see. Lying down isn't against any "rule" but be certain that your characterization really, really requires it before you try it.

## YOUR SCRIPT

Don't bring it on stage. \*Become\* the character by having your monologue fully memorized days, weeks or months in advance. If you \*must\* bring your script on stage out of fear of forgetting, then do so, but avoid doing so to the best of your ability.

## CLOTHING

Don't try to "look" like the character in your monologue or one from the play you are auditioning from. Be yourself. However, some tips are:

- don't wear clothing with writing on it; it's distracting; clothes that don't distract from \*you\* are the best.
- don't wear ripped, torn, or overly sloppy clothing. It just makes you look careless and sloppy.
- wear something comfortable, something you can move in without any issues.
- girls: keep the jewelry to almost zero.
- girls: wear low heels.

## SLATING

If you want to look like a real pro, "slate" yourself. It works like this. Just before you start your monologue, say:

Good morning/afternoon/evening.  
My name is...  
I will be performing the role of 'Tom' from *The Glass Menagerie* by Tennessee Williams."

If you don't know the name of your character, the name of the play and the name of the author, then you haven't done any research on the monologue you are about to perform.

## SINGING SUGGESTIONS FOR MUSICALS

### VOCAL SURETY

Choose a song that shows off the strongest and most secure parts of your vocal range, not one that stretches your voice to its limits.

### MATERIAL

Try to find a song from a Broadway musical. Go for an upbeat, up tempo (Broadway) number for a comedic musical, perhaps try a more moody (Broadway) ballad for a musical with darker dramatic tones. *Don't choose a song from the musical you are auditioning for.*

### AVOID POP SONGS

Reasons? Where do we start? Some include: pop songs are poor for "acting out" or playing a character as you sing. Pop songs almost always have a different sound and purpose from Broadway songs. The sound of the recording artist is as locked into the head of the casting director as it is for you, so it's hard to out-sing the pop star who made it famous, etc. and you might end up sounding like a poor cover band singer.

### DON'T JUST STAND THERE

Many actors focus so much on their singing during a vocal audition that they forget that a song from a musical is very much a sung monologue. Almost every character singing a Broadway song is \*expressing\* something. Show that expression in your body, face and voice. Avoid standing frozen and glassy-eyed while you try to perfect your notes. It's more interesting to see a performer really expressing the song with some minor vocal imperfections than to hear a perfect voice sing an emotionless tune.



- PROGRAM AND T-SHIRTS CREW
- PROPERTIES CREW;
- PUBLICITY AND FUNDRAISING CREW;
- SOUND CREW;
- STAGE MANAGEMENT CREW

#### TECHNICAL CREW CHIEF POSITIONS

These positions are filled by Mr. Henderson in advance, often the year before or during the summer.

### FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT TECH CREWS IN MAD DRAMA

*Q. Who can sign up for a MAD Drama Technical Crew?*

A. Any James Madison high school student can sign up. However, certain crews only require certain amounts of people to crew them. The larger crews are usually BUILD, PAINT, PUBLICITY and HOUSE MANAGEMENT. Smaller crews are often LIGHTS, SOUND, and STAGE MANAGEMENT. The DECK CREW can be huge or very, very small depending on the show. COSTUMES, PROPERTIES, and HAIR/MAKEUP can vary in size depending on the needs of the production. Madison Theatre Arts students often fill these positions first but any James Madison student in good standing with the school can join a crew if there is still space available.

*Q. I want to be on a technical crew but I might like to do an acting audition as well. Can I audition and still be on a technical crew if I'm not part of the stage cast?*

A. Of course. Sign up to be a part of a technical crew right away. That way, if you are not cast, then you are set with your tech crew and ready to go. If you are cast, then you can balance your time between scheduled acting/dancing/singing rehearsals with crew activities.

*Q. Do I truly need to already know "tech stuff" to be a part of a crew?*

A. Not at first, no. You'll be shown safety procedures that go along with your crew. However, if you are inexperienced otherwise, you will learn by doing like others on the crew. The Crew Chief will be your main person you will work with during the production. There will almost always be other more experienced students who you will be working with who help you as you help them.

*Q. How often do these crews meet?*

A. It depends on the crew. The BUILD CREW meets at a minimum every Saturday from 8am - 2pm. Other crews meet at different times depending on what their production schedule requires. Some crews meet at people's houses to work (COSTUME CREW) or head out shopping for gear together after school (PROPERTIES, COSTUMES, LIGHTS, SOUND, BUILD).

*Q. Can Crew Chiefs and crew members win awards or get recognition for their work?*

A. You mean aside from the thunderous applause each night at the performances? Sure. Mr. Henderson awards DEUS EX MACHINA trophies for outstanding technical work at the annual Drama Banquet near the end of the year. The CAPPIES offer opportunities for awards and recognition for technical achievement at the Kennedy Center at the end of each school year. Also, don't forget to photograph and document your work to become a part of your technical portfolio.

*Q. Can I be inducted into the International Thespian Honor Society by working on a crew or crews?*

A. Basically, yes. There are very specific requirements for joining this society. However, working on various technical crews with honor will eventually make you eligible for induction.

### SYNOPSIS:

*How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying*, the Pulitzer Prize and Tony Award-winning musical, is a story about the triumph of the common man amid the buffoonery of big business. When a restless, creative, and ambitious window washer named J. Pierrepont Finch happens upon a book entitled 'How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying', he decides to begin his rise up the corporate ladder. With the book's instructions and a dose of his own cleverness, Finch starts by landing a job in the mailroom at the World Wide Wicket Company, before quickly gaining promotions and outsmarting his scheming, sniveling rival, Frump - who also happens to be the boss's nephew-- until finally reaching the very top of the organization. From the very beginning, Finch has had the love and support of Rosemary, a co-worker who recognizes Finch's potential, and finds his innocent demeanour endearing. But in his single-minded pursuit of the top job, Finch is in danger of discounting Rosemary's love. In a moment of crisis, Finch's manual to success can no longer help him: he must rely on his own wits, and ultimately, his heart, to save the day. The standout score by Frank Loesser

features such classics as the surreal and funny "Coffee Break", the rousing "Brotherhood of Man", and the melodious tongue-in-cheek ballad, "I Believe In You", while the immensely clever book by Abe Burrows, Jack Weinstock, and Willie Gilbert, won the Pulitzer Prize in 1962 for Best Drama.

## **CHARACTER DESCRIPTIONS:**

### **J.B. Biggley**

Male; Adult, Mature Adult; Lead; Dancing; Mover

Voice: Baritone; High Note A4; Low Note C3

Tags: boss executive president corporation businessman powerful gruff cranky secretive foolish lovelorn selfish proud commanding

Core: Biggley is a self-important blowhard. He is the head of the company, and makes sure everyone knows it. However, he is ultimately intimidated by the women in his life.

### **Rosemary Pilkington**

Female; Young Adult, Adult; Lead; Mover

Voice: Mezzo-Soprano; High Note B4; Low Note A3

Tags: romantic lead secretary office worker loving lovelorn sympathetic caretaker good listener

Core: The heroine. A young secretary of above-average qualifications who quickly sees the real person behind Finch's persona.

### **J. Pierrepont Finch**

Male; Late Teen, Young Adult, Adult; Lead; Dancer; Mover

Voice: Tenor; High Note: F#4/Gb4; Low Note: C3

Tags: bold mischievous lead protagonist ambitious clever daring creative charismatic endearing innocent crafty manipulative single-minded youthful passionate

Core: A young man whose meteoric progress from window cleaner to company chairman owes little to his qualifications and much to his wits, single-mindedness and the aid of a good instruction manual.

### **Miss Jones**

Female; Adult, Mature Adult; Supporting; Dancing; Mover

Voice: Soprano; High Note F#5/Gb5; Low Note: A#3/Bb3; operatic, Legit

Tags: secretary head secretary working woman strong commanding tough formidable fair supportive clear-headed discreet intelligent intimidating

Core: Miss Jones is the extremely gruff executive secretary to the head of the company. She is the one that keeps Biggley in line, and all of the employees try to stay out of her way. She breaks this mold late in the show with an upbeat solo. This character should be a belter.

### **Milt Gatch**

Male; Adult, Mature Adult; Supporting; Dancing; Mover

Voice: Spoken

executive sleazy ladies' man lusty sexual harassment self-important businessman careless dubious grandiose

Core: Gatch is a confident and handsome junior executive who fancies himself as a ladies man.

### **Smitty**

Female; Young Adult, Adult; Supporting; Dancing; Mover

Voice: Mezzo-Soprano, Alto; High Note: G5; Low Note: A#3/Bb3

Tags: secretary office worker friend supportive sassy cynical smart wry

Core: Smitty is the friend and confidant of Rosemary. She is less idealistic than Rosemary and encourages her in her efforts.

### **Bert Bratt**

Male; Adult, Mature Adult; Supporting; Dancing; Mover

Voice: Baritone; Rap

Tags: executive businessman hr personnel powerful important responsible affable territorial

Core: Harried executive that does a quality job. Bratt is central to the hirings and firings that move the plot along, and is one of the only executives who seems to do his job.



**Hedy LaRue**

Female; Young Adult, Adult; Supporting; Dancing; Mover

Voice: Mezzo-Soprano; High Note: D#5/Eb5; Low Note: C4 (middle C)

Tags: bombshell beauty showgirl performer dignified wily secretary social climber

Core: Hedy is the bombshell who is having an affair with Biggley. She knows how to use her looks to succeed in the company. She later appears as the star in the company "treasure hunt" TV ad.

**Bud Frump**

Male; Late Teen, Young Adult, Adult; Supporting; Dancing; Mover

Voice: Bass-Baritone; High Note: F4; Low Note: C3

Tags: whiny arrogant idle sneaky entitled privileged blackmailer schemer antagonist nemesis annoying sycophant

Core: Frump is a lazy weasel who expects to succeed in the company through nepotism (he's Mr. Biggley's nephew). He appears to have everything put together, but the people who know him, know the truth.

**Mr. Twimble**

Male; Adult, Mature Adult, Elderly; Supporting; Dancing; Mover

Voice: Baritone; High Note: E4; Low Note: C#3/Db3

Tags: mailroom clerk employee company man conservative cautious safe kindly yes-man

Core: Hardworking low-level executive who has been beaten down by working in the mailroom for too many years. He is a genuinely likeable guy.

**Miss Krumholtz**

Female; Young Adult, Adult; Featured; Dancing; Mover

Voice: Mezzo-Soprano

Tags: secretary office employee ensemble supportive hard-working annoyed

Core: Miss Krumholtz is the professional secretary that is completely loyal to the executive she is assigned to that day.

**Wally Womper**

Male; Mature Adult; Supporting; Dancing; Mover

Voice: Baritone; High Note: E4; Low Note: D3

Tags: executive chairman important top dog powerful down to earth humble rich

Core: Womper is a grumpy looking man who is largely silent. When he does speak, he is revealed to be a gruff but charming man who is proud of his blue-collar background.

**Ovington**

Male; Adult, Mature Adult; Featured; Non Dancer

Voice: Spoken

Tags: businessman executive new hire advertising ad-man glib crude unlucky fired undermined

Core: Ovington is the golden boy. Handsome, athletic and smart. He is hired to head up the advertising department.

**Book Voice**

Finch's unseen guide.

**Employees:**

Jenkins; Tackaberry; Peterson; Toynbee; Matthews; Johnson; Davis; Police; Janitors; Ensemble

