

THE THEATERMAKERS STUDIO

Hello, TheaterMakers!!

I'm going to tell you one of the most crucial pieces of advice I would give to any Writer. Ready for it?

Build a producing skillset.

I'm not just saying this because I'm a self-producing coach for the TheaterMakers Studio (though yes, that is my whole M.O.). I'm also saying this because if I hadn't built up a producing skillset as a Writer, I wouldn't be talking to you right now. I wouldn't have a show I wrote playing in theaters around the world. I wouldn't have the confidence I do now that my future writing projects can and will come to life. As a Writer, when I took time to build a producing skillset, everything changed for me.

You're probably wondering what I mean by "producing skillset". Let's dive in.

A producing skillset encompasses a variety of producorial concepts, but most importantly, it is centered around an understanding of the structure and nuances of the industry you're bringing your show into. For instance, you might have a show that you want to see produced, but you don't know the right stage to pursue. Having a proper producing skillset means knowing the unique nature of the industry you're entering into - whether it's Off-Broadway, Broadway, West End, regional, educational, or festival - which helps you prepare for the opportunities and challenges ahead of you on your show's development path. Learning how show budgets are built, how various union rules are structured, and how productions develop a financial plan helps you better conceptualize the right scope, scale, and strategy for your show. Widening your understanding of the theatrical ecosystem you are working in helps you recognize the interplay between your show and other theaters, productions, audiences, and current events in your area.

There are so many different ways to build this skillset. You might build this skillset through online programs like The Theatermakers Studio, which offers tons of resources, webinars, and personal mentorship to help you learn all the various aspects of producing. You might consider working or volunteering behind the scenes at your local theater, or joining the board of a theatrical organization. You might also learn much from reading articles and blogs about the business of theater, or grabbing coffee with a friend or mentor who works in this part of the industry and can explain their work in detail. Or, you might just start doing the thing, and asking a lot of questions while learning along the way (like I did!).

But what if you don't want to be a Producer of your own work?

Remember that in the early stages, you are your show's best advocate. In every show's development, it's the Authors who must convince the Producers and Collaborators to come on board to bring the show to life. In those early stages, you truly are your show's best advocate; you are the only one who knows your show

best, and you are the one who is going to convince others to catch your vision.

For early career Writers, that first step of getting your show on its feet can be especially daunting, as there is a lot of competition and limited resources for festivals and development programs. Having a producing skillset means knowing how to make your own opportunities even when opportunities aren't handed to you. It means being able to present a low-cost public reading or concert, which puts your show in front of audiences that could potentially become your future Producers, Collaborators, Investors, or fans. It means not sitting on your hands and waiting for someone to take your show to the stage, but claiming your own agency in taking the right steps to get your show into the world.

That's right. A producing skillset gives you agency. *Education begets activation.*

Having a producing skillset means that you can write pieces of theater knowing that you actually have the ability to see it through to the stage. It means you can pitch your show to other potential Investors/Producers with clarity and confidence. It means that you are a Writer who understands how the whole machine of the theater industry works, and you are willing to work collaboratively with other parties to make something incredible.

Want to start building that producing skillset for yourself? Consider joining our Mentorship Mastermind group, where we meet weekly to discuss all things producing, marketing, and writing on three individual coaching calls. Speaking from my own journey, I promise that you're going to become so much more confident in yourself as a TheaterMaker once you build that producing skillset. Because when you gain the ability to make your own opportunities, the whole world becomes full of possibilities!

Come join our group and see how building a producing skillset can change the game for you and your show in 2024! [Click here to join us.](#)

See you next week!

- Jonathan



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