

Facilitator/Educator’s Guide

The Gospel According to Josh: Creating and Maintaining a Career in Show Business.

By Josh Rivedal

CONTENTS:

Background and History.....2

Using *The Gospel According to Josh* on your Campus.....3

Suggested post play/talkback discussion topics.....7

Frequently Asked Questions.....8

Background and History

In 2009, Josh Rivedal wrote and developed the play ***The Gospel According to Josh***, a 15 character, 7 song comedic one man show, about a small town boy who follows his dreams to Hollywood despite the tempestuous relationship with his pious father.

Along the way he must navigate his religious upbringing, an escape to New York, his starring roles in reality TV, and ultimately a final showdown with his dad.

The play was originally intended for a traditional theatre-going audience, but after speaking with talented colleagues in show business and young performers fresh out of college who were quitting the business because they were tired of living as “starving artists” or having to take numerous side jobs so they could just scrape by, Josh felt compelled to shorten the show, pair it with a seminar on how to create and maintain a career in show business and then bring it to high schools and colleges.

Josh is a playwright, producer, actor, an NYU trained career and business coach, as well as a personal brand consultant, educator, and public speaker. Each piece of his business is arts based and set up for multiple revenue streams so he can create as much art and revenue as possible.

The aim of the play is to present a piece of quality entertainment and the aim of the seminar is to present a forum where students learn from a working actor, producer, and playwright on how to create a long and fulfilling career in the arts, and how to treat their career as a business while maintaining their integrity as an artist.

The Gospel According to Josh in schools is designed to be used as an educational tool to achieve several specific goals related to helping college students creating and maintaining a career in show business.

1. Develop students who have a better understanding on how one begins and maintains a career in the field of entertainment and performing arts by:
 - a. Showing students the importance of having a personal brand and how to leverage that brand to have successful career.
 - b. Conveying the need to have multiple revenue streams in the

entertainment business.

c. Providing students with resources to aid their transition from college to NY/LA/CHI.

The messages conveyed in the play and talkback include the following:

- Show business is a business.
- Artists need to understand some basic business principles to succeed such as:
 - Personal branding
 - Marketing and careful self promotion
 - Networking
 - The need for continued learning about the art and business of their craft.
- Artists must conduct their artistic career as a small business by:
 - Knowing exactly what kind of work they want to be doing.
 - Knowing exactly who their audience is (or which customers they're selling themselves to).
 - Utilizing social media (Twitter, FB, LinkedIn, blogging etc) to build and create a buzz around their brand and their career.
 - Reaching out to a mentor in the business and by becoming a mentor to someone else in the business.
 - Seeking out the small business resources that can help you build your career (Fractured Atlas, AEA, SAG, SBA.gov etc.)
- There are countless employment opportunities in show business other than the traditional singer, actor, writer, director, techie etc.

Using ***The Gospel According to Josh*** in Performing Arts Colleges

Suggested showing of the play include:

- As a compliment to Arts Management majors
- Any B.F.A. or M.F.A. university degree programs
- Career advisement for pre-graduating B.F.A. or M.F.A. students
- Master class setting

Showing the play

1. Schedule about 35 minutes for the for the introduction and the viewing of the play and about another 25 minutes for Josh to do his talkback and then another 15 minutes (or preferably more) for discussion and questions with Josh. It is important for the audience to have an opportunity to talk about what they have seen and heard and be able to respond to it.
2. Whenever possible, offer your viewers an opportunity to speak to a career counselor or someone in your college's business department in an effort to support your viewers in any additional business or career questions they have after the play and talkback.

Frequently Asked Questions:

Q: What are some things a student in the arts can do to prepare for a career in the arts?

A: Other than train in your field and get good at what you do, you should start by researching arts professionals that do what you want to be doing. Think about the specific kind of work you'd like to be doing and the people you want to be working with. Set specific, measurable, and time sensitive goals surrounding your new career (Setting goals should be happening all throughout your career). Get into class even after you graduate college. Most careers require continuing education for its professionals and the arts is no different. Continuing education ensures that you stay sharp in your craft and allows you to meet new people in the business and to gain new skills or to enhance existing skills. Lastly, a student should start thinking about developing their personal brand (see next question).

Q: What is personal branding?

A: It is the process by which individuals differentiate themselves and stand out from a crowd by identifying and articulating what it is that they do that makes them unique. The individual then leverages their unique qualiti(ies) across multiple platforms (auditioning, writing, blogging, Facebook, business cards etc.) with a consistent message and image to achieve a specific goal. This way, the individual can enhance their recognition as an expert in their field, establish reputation and credibility, **advance their career**, and build self confidence.

Q: What is marketing?

A: Technically it's the act of promoting or selling products, services, or events. As an arts professional you are your own product and marketing your product is not limited to a single activity but a continual process of making yourself known to your industry and audience. Your marketing should never stop.

Q: What good can social media (Facebook and Twitter etc.) do for one's career in the arts?

A: Social media is another way to establish your brand and image in a consistent way. It can create a greater awareness around you or your product, but one has to provide something of value (using your unique qualities/personal brand) through social media by providing quality written content, beneficial information, customer service, or fan interaction.

Q: What is networking?

A: The short answer is it's the process of establishing a mutually beneficial relationship with other business people and/or potential clients and customers. Networking is about the relationship you establish with the other person. An effective networker is a good listener and looks to find ways to help the person or people he is networking with.

Q: What are some effective ways to network to enhance one's career in the arts?

A: Get into class. Go on auditions. Go to a show's opening night party. Go to galas and fundraisers. Find out where the movers and shakers in your industry hang out and go there. Seek out a mentor. Offer to be a mentor. Go to networking functions and seek out organizations designed for networking. Serve on the advisory board for a charity or theatre/dance/production company. Get involved in your local community. The list goes on and on and networking within the arts is of course crucial but so is networking outside the arts. We as artists can learn much from the business sector and can also gain them as new audience members for our work.

Q: What exactly are "multiple revenue streams" and why should an arts professional be working toward having this?

A: Multiple revenue streams is when one draws income from more than one source so they are not putting all their eggs in one basket. Having multiple incomes ensures a stead(ier) flow of income even when times are slow. Essentially artists when beginning their career complain frequently about having to have a "day job" when their career in the arts is not paying their bills. This day job often times becomes a distraction and the artist is unable to gain traction in their chosen field and is unable to create art as

often as they'd like or they end up dropping the arts completely. Having more than one income in the arts ensures that an artist stays within the arts and ideally will utilize most if not all of the strengths and skills of the artist while enhancing their overall personal brand. Many successful artists are a combination of educators, writers, voice-over artists, producers, directors etc.