Master of Science in Organizational Dynamics Theses

Organizational Dynamics Programs

5-3-2016

Taking Center Stage: Making Sense of the Middle Manager's Muddle by Applying Creative Techniques of the Theater Director

Samuel J. Frenkel
University pf Pennsylvania, sfrenkel516@gmail.com

Submitted to the Program of Organizational Dynamics, College of Liberal Studies, in the School of Arts and Sciences in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Science in Organizational Dynamics at the University of Pennsylvania

Taking Center Stage: Making Sense of the Middle Manager's Muddle by Applying Creative Techniques of the Theater Director

Abstract

The purpose of this capstone is to show the link between the middle manager within the business organization and the theater organization's director. The roles of middle manager and theater director will be clearly defined so that one may examine the middle manager through the lens of the theater director. Using five techniques of the theater – production teams, casting, scripting, scene staging and blocking, and rehearsing – ideas and examples will be shared so that middle managers are better able to make sense of their "muddle" and become more successful and efficient in their roles.

Techniques will be defined in the sense of the theater organization and then through the lens of the business organization using the theater organization as a metaphor for this reflection. Examples and models for implementation will be shared along with the value and need for the connection between the two fields.

Keywords

middle manager, theater director, "muddle", organization as theater

Comments

TAKING CENTER STAGE: MAKING SENSE OF THE MIDDLE MANAGER'S

MUDDLE BY APPLYING CREATIVE TECHNIQUES OF THE THEATER

DIRECTOR

by

Samuel J. Frenkel

Submitted to the Program of Organizational Dynamics,
College of Liberal Studies, in the School of Arts and Sciences
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Science in Organizational Dynamics at the
University of Pennsylvania

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

2016

TAKING CENTER STAGE: MAKING SENSE OF THE MIDDLE MANAGER'S

MUDDLE BY APPLYING CREATIVE TECHNIQUES OF THE THEATER

DIRECTOR

Approved by:

_____
Janet L. Greco, Ph.D., Advisor

_____
Charline S. Russo, Ed.D., Reader

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this capstone is to show the link between the middle manager within the business organization and the theater organization's director. The roles of middle manager and theater director will be clearly defined so that one may examine the middle manager through the lens of the theater director. Using five techniques of the theater – production teams, casting, scripting, scene staging and blocking, and rehearsing – ideas and examples will be shared so that middle managers are better able to make sense of their "muddle" and become more successful and efficient in their roles.

Techniques will be defined in the sense of the theater organization and then through the lens of the business organization using the theater organization as a metaphor for this reflection. Examples and models for implementation will be shared along with the value and need for the connection between the two fields.

Keywords: middle manager, theater director, "muddle", organization as theater

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PROLOGUE

A vignette: A typical Friday morning in Suite 1100

It's so quiet. The loudest noise is the sound of a key unlocking the side entrance to suite 1100 with a big clang. Bundled up from the cold, I enter the office and make my way to my cubicle. I pass by Gail who doesn't even mutter a morning greeting to me until I initiate it first. Even then, it's hard to hear her over the irritating talk show blaring through her headphones. Gail and I hardly exchange any words and we both dive into our to-do lists for the day. Being grumpy and cold after a long and arduous commute into work, after sitting in traffic for close to a half-hour, I am not thrilled to be isolated and starting my day off poorly (not to mention being ignored by Gail). I see that my email inbox is filled with messages, unread and requiring follow up. I breathe a heavy sigh and trudge over to the kitchenette to make a comforting cup of coffee, only to find that someone had jammed a k-cup incorrectly into the machine and a big note was taped to the touch-screen stating: OUT OF ORDER – MAINTAINENCE REQUIRED; TECH WILL BE OUT NEXT WEDNESDAY. Even more frustrated, I head back to my desk, slam my body onto my desk chair, and start to tackle the massive amount of pending emails.

As I continue to work, Gail is singing off key and laughing along with her morning radio program. I politely make my way to her desk and ask her to quiet

down, but she doesn't hear me as she is glued to her computer screen processing purchase order requests. I head to my desk, click on Pandora radio, and turn my monitor speakers up loud enough to drown her out.

As I review work-related junk email, I read that a big training project I had been gearing up for has been shot down by the C-suite of the department. I was enraged and decided to make it known to my boss, Alicia, via e-mail. She was running late, as usual, and wanted to be sure she talked to me when she came in.

I have time, so I decide to run over to the café for coffee, or at least that's what they call it, and on the way, I run right into Marjorie and Karen, my colleagues, who are arriving together, giggling over something silly they encountered on their carpooling commute to the office. They see me and immediately turn stone-faced and explain that they have been meaning to talk to me. They share that my computer speakers are blaring music and that it's interfering with their work. They sharply dismiss me, head to their offices, settle in and leave their doors only slightly ajar so as not to be disturbed. They didn't even give me a chance to explain myself, my morning, or my (lack of) encounter with Gail. Trying not to let my emotions get the best of me, I run over to the café to clear my head and to get a morning buzz of caffeine.

As I return to the office, Alicia has arrived and is summoning me to her office to discuss my heated email. In the midst of my anger, I hear Marjorie blasting music from her computer and singing along as she plows through emails and phone messages, further fueling my rage. I gargle down some coffee and

make my way to Alicia's office. Instead of hearing me out and taking the time to understand the situation, Alicia immediately closes the door and addresses me directly, explaining how my reply was atrocious and that my reaction to the creative project being shot down by the "powers that be" was not professional. She didn't have my back, didn't support me, and caved to the decisions of the executives of the department. After being berated for close to ten minutes, I am dismissed and walk sullenly back to my cubicle with my lukewarm coffee, trying to hold back tears.

CHAPTER 1

CHARACTER STUDY: WHO AM I?

At times, it is hard for me not to think of the fresh-faced character of Paul San Marco from *A Chorus Line* or Jean Valjean, the protagonist and misguided convict, from *Les Miserables*, and pose the question: **who am I?** Both of these strong and powerful men have flaws that easily break them down. The weight of the flaws is enough for them to consistently ponder how to overcome them.

> *Who am I anyway?*
> *Am I my resume?*
> *That is a picture of a person I don't know.*
>
> *What does he want from me?*
> *What should I try to be?*
> *So many faces all around*, and here we go.
>
> I Hope I Get It , *A Chorus Line*
> (Hamlisch & Kleban, 1975)
> —————————
> *Who am I?*
> *Can I conceal myself for evermore?*
> *Pretend I'm not the man I was before?*
>
> Who am I?, *Les Miserables*
> (Boubil and Schonberg, 1987)

As San Marco timidly sings the lyrics noted above at the end of the opening number in the smash Broadway musical, *A Chorus Line*, he tries to come to terms with being gay, his future as an actor and dancer, and whether or not his actual printed resume will be what dictates his future. Hamlisch and Kleban's (1975) lyrics inspire me to find out who middle managers really are as I hold the mirror of my work in theater up to my management experiences. While the lyrics are quite simple, they further mirror the role of the middle manager who often focuses on others' priorities while accomplishing his own duties second. In lyrics from *A Chorus Line*, the later part of the opening song references "so many faces all around…and here we go…" (Hamlisch & Kleban, 1975). These words can further suggest, via the metaphor of theater, that the middle manager's focus is not inwardly reflective of his own wants,

needs and duties, but more so shaped by those "around" and most closely involved with the middle manager.

Similarly, Jean Valjean sings the heart-wrenching lyrics noted at the beginning of this section in the opening of the highly-praised musical, *Les Misérables* (Boubil and Schonberg, 1987), when he is trying to figure out how to break through the muddle of his life. He is faced with a choice when wanting to move ahead in his life: should he give in to the accusatory authorities as a condemned prisoner or choose to be a free man, outcast by society, given a fresh start to reshape his life, rejecting who he was in the past? Valjean's dilemma parallels in metaphor the responsibilities of the middle manager because more often than not, the manager's own personal goals and suggestions on improvement and innovation are often overlooked and ignored due to his placement in the hierarchal structure. The manager's true self is concealed without having a chance to better showcase his role in changing the organization or its personnel to better enable success and efficiency. While this dilemma is a substantial problem, it isn't the only issue that managers face.

The lyrics shared here help to set the stage for an in-depth look into the potential of the linkages between a director of a drama production and a middle manager in a business organization. As one who plays both roles concurrently in my professional life, it is easy for me to see how these two different organizational roles are closely related. On their own, these roles can be very difficult to define. The director is one who oversees the entire process of a dramatic production. He is able to engage teams within the theater hierarchy to

work together to achieve a stunning, cohesive work of art. The middle manager, on the other hand, is one who constantly and consistently has to manage up, down and across the hierarchy, catering to the needs of the CEOs and others in the C-suite, peers and professional administrative staff that he manages directly, along with client-serving, customer service team members. Both the manager and the director constantly ask the question of "who am I?;" however, more weight is given to the question as posed by the manager during his sense-making journey of navigating the "muddle."

Throughout this study, I will be using the word "muddle" to refer to the many facets and responsibilities of management within the middle manager's role. This ambiguity can ultimately lead to the creation of the "muddle": when a manager is unsure of his definitive role and reach, a hectic, chaotic and, at times, confusing, comingling of duties exists.

For example, a middle manager may have a set agenda for a day (or even a week), but that plan of action is quickly diverted when a direct report calls out sick with the flu, customers are complaining because the company website isn't working properly, the boss has suddenly asked for assistance in three two-hour team meetings, all while there are forty unread urgent email messages in the manager's mailbox and the unending "messages waiting" light on the phone console constantly blinks. Just getting through the steps to prioritize this "muddle" is a task in itself. A skilled manager will be able to wade through this sea of competing priorities and tackle them in due course. The goal of this paper will be to provide ways in which the "muddle" can be made more lucid by applying the

techniques of a director within the business organization and thus, perhaps, provide ways to make better sense – and great effectiveness – of the middle manager's role.

With my own theatrical experiences as a source, I will also be able to use my current role as a business manager in a large non-profit, higher education organization to envision how some of the techniques used in theater leadership can be a benefit. I am a strong example of one who manages various types of "muddle" in my business manager role, which can be summed up as one who manages the projects and programs of others while interacting daily up and down the hierarchical framework to ensure that the goals of these projects and programs are successfully met. In my experience, the nature of the manager's work is always the same – mundane and routine – and doesn't usually allow for change when the field is constantly changing to keep up with the latest trends in creativity and innovation.

In my other professional career, I am heavily involved in community theater organizations, holding leadership and management roles. Working for these small-scale non-profit groups has allowed me to flex my "creative muscles" as both music director and director of many productions. Within my community theater roles, I have had much more creative flexibility when managing the "muddle" of the theater organization – answering to the president, producer, and board while catering to the needs of the ensemble to ensure scenes are staged and music is learned. In this freer environment, I am given full authority to set my own parameters when running rehearsals and meetings. Unlike the business

organization that is governed by policies, procedures and unaccommodating guidelines, the theater organization sets just enough rules so as not to stifle the creative energy of the company. Gareth Morgan's (1986) principle of *minimum critical specification* can be directly applied here. He states that "managers and organizations designers should primarily adopt a facilitating or orchestrating role, creating 'enabling conditions' that allow a system to find its own form" (Morgan, 1986, p. 101). Morgan's principle aids the theater organization in creating a space for openness, vetting all ideas, even if some may be considered off-topic or negative. Morgan further explains that this minimum critical specification principle should aid in focusing on what is absolutely necessary to keep the organization's system moving forward.

Within the manager's role, ideas need to be vetted and adopted by all involved. The process can be long and arduous, but within the theater format, creative ideas are openly welcomed, and experimented upon, and the organic nature of the organization incorporates, uses or edits based on how the changes fit, feel and play to an audience.

In my attempt to expound on the linkages between the theater director (also referenced as director) in the realm of the artistic organization and a middle manager (also referenced as manager) in the non-profit sector, I tend to ask the same question: **who am I?**

My hypothesis, when linking the manager and director, is that each role could benefit from the other; however, I plan to focus on the manager role's benefiting from the director role. In choosing this comparison, it is my goal to

demonstrate how to resourcefully infuse latitude into a career that can, at times, be held to a stringent structure without space for creativity and change.

It is important to mention that in these two roles, the job is not equal to the role itself meaning that both of these roles function as a result of working primarily with all stakeholders (an individual, on any level within the hierarchy) within an organization, all with differing expectations about how the "job" is carried out. It is important to note that not everything about the director's role is positive and, when applied to the manager's purview, the outcome will not always be successfully adapted.

The idea of staging a production in the theater is a constant recycling of an originally creative idea -- the script stays the same, but it is open to interpretation of the director and can be learned, displayed and staged in many different ways. When these techniques are introduced into the business organization, some will be directly applicable and accepted while others won't work or will need to be tweaked in hopes of acceptance. The roles aren't viewed through only one lens or perspective and these types of roles (especially the director's) are not necessarily found in other organizations. It is difficult to define one true, all-encompassing responsibility or job outline for each. Most often, the manager and the director are stretched and shaped by the needs of those around them. Job descriptions written on paper, while inclusive of the typical role's expectation, usually do not reflect the real-time duties these two positions carry out on a day-to-day basis.

When looking at each role on its own, however, there is an expected way to act and conduct business within each. My formal role as a manager is unique in that while I only directly manage one employee and co-manage (coach) a few others, I myself am managed by one supervisor. My responsibilities, however, have a larger reach – ranging up to the top of the hierarchical structure, to the vice dean of our organization, and down to the customers and clients that we serve on a daily basis. It is my hope that the techniques presented in the chapters ahead will be easily understood so that other managers can readily adopt them. Utilizing theater techniques in my managerial roles have afforded me great success in understanding and working through the "muddle".

<u>Who am I Really? Use of Self as Single Case Study</u>

In addition to his work on non-hierarchical forms of organizational structure, Herbst (1970) is the thought leader on the idea of the single case study as it applies to research methodologies. P.G. Herbst (1972) explains that:

"Both the relationships between behaviour variables and the measurement scales on which behaviour is based are found to differ from case to case. Every person and every group therefore has to be looked at as a behavioral universe with its own laws and measurement scales." (1972, p. 106)

Herbst takes a very broad concept and puts it into applicable terms above. While the theater organization is unique and can be structured in many ways, there is a need for one single unit of analysis to make my argument in this paper. I plan to adopt his methodology and use my experiences in various theater

organizations as a means for identifying the ways in which middle managers in organizations can use theater director's principles and techniques to better their success. Herbst believes that every person, as a result of his aim-directed behavior, builds a behavioral universe and the laws and terms in which it operates. To expand on Herbst's idea is to say that when one immerses himself into a specific world – in this case theater – he is pushing to achieve success (personal or organizational) while understanding and interpreting the structure and governing rules to make sense of how to achieve that success. This format is compatible with the aims of this paper to present a personal hypothesis that suggests practical relevance and perhaps further empirical study.

As an avid lover of the arts, I grew up engrossed in theater from a young age. This engagement started with having my parents sing me show tunes as lullabies, going to see regional full musical productions by the age of eight, performing in school choirs, auditioning for the high school and college musicals, and ultimately joining a community theater in my local town. In reflecting on my experiences, I never was actually taught (through a formal method) the principles and basics of theater musical performance. All of the skills I learned were through observing, doing, and making sense of the parameters through my own interpretation – like the ideas of Herbst's (1970) theory. I followed others who were like me and built upon their examples of doing "right" and "wrong" within the theater setting. These observations allowed me to create a mental "rulebook" that I could build upon and recall at a moment's notice in order to correctly and appropriately solve various problems as well as address the concerns of the

stakeholders. Gareth Morgan speaks to organizations "enacting" their environments in *Creative Organizational Theory* (1989). He explains that "one's environment is an enacted or socially constructed domain that is as much the consequence of the language, ideas and concepts through which people attempt to make sense of the wider world as it is of the "reality" to which these social constructions relate." (Morgan, 1989, p. 91) I was constructing my own reality based on the environment in which I was immersed. This is an organic process that doesn't happen through direct teaching methods.

We can support the argument of the single case study through the work of Johannes Lehner. Lehner (2008) conducted a study in which he directly compared the staging of a play to the ideas surrounding the foundation of project management. He argues that the lifecycle of all projects and tasks can fit within the parameters of theater through the Staging Model. The Staging Model has four criteria: play-director-actor fit (as a criteria for selecting projects), text interpretation, rehearsals and the "premiere". Using Lehner's model, one can begin to see how the use of my experiences as a single case study can play into my understanding of responsibilities in both organizations.

Within my roles as a director and manager, I am constantly vetting new projects, programs and ideas and how these new endeavors will fit within the organization. Some of the factors that help to make a decision on actual implementation and usage are based on the teams and support I have, the interest of the work as gauged by my teams or actors and the actual need for implementation as determined by all stakeholders. After being selected, I work

with my teams to find meaning and interpretation that makes sense to all involved. Rehearsals are the way in which Lehner says that work is carried out, maintained and polished throughout the process and we finally reach the "premiere" when we evaluate our success in whether or not our goals have been met.

Putting Lehner's (2008) ideas into action and continuously constructing and understanding this set reality of the theater paid off immensely when I was given the opportunity to music direct and, most recently, direct full productions for a local theater troupe. My role of director covered all facets of the organization including managing all stakeholders, as well as the producer, the scenic design team, and all the way down to the youngest member of the chorus. I understood the goals and needs of the group and interpreted them to create a "bigger picture" in real world and real time understanding.

In contrast to my sense-making journey, it is important to note that this particular theater group, while creative and ever-changing, still follows the framework of the typically rigid organized bureaucracy. While the theater organization may seem strictly bureaucratic in nature, the organization also lends itself to being flexible within these confines – the opinions and suggestions of the cast are often heard and acted upon and the director(s) are given full liberty to stage a production as per his own concept and design. An example of this duality would be the planning meetings that I hold alongside my producer, president, and assistant director prior to sharing the vision with the cast. This would be the opportunity for me to effectively use Nickerson's (2014) CoSTS model to gain the

idea of "agree-in" from the planning team. This is a time for me, as director, to share my wants, needs, and overall vision for the production. My ideas are accepted, expanded upon, or re-formatted to fit better in line with the entire committee. As another example, I further use Nickerson's (2014) model during the rehearsal process, when I invite the cast to share ideas and visions for the show. Most often, during scene work, if a stakeholder has an idea that fits with the setting of the show, I will, more often than not, try out their suggestion and, along with that particular cast member, make a final decision to include it in the final production.

This theater group is one example of many theater organizations. I have been involved with numerous groups; however, this one provided the most consistency as to rules, procedures and relies heavily on my involvement as board member, director and actor. It is important to note that there is a small governing board, a president and a producer, which oversees the major decisions, set the by-laws and engage production staff (including the director and music director) as well as sit on the panel for auditions and membership.

With the ideas that Cornelissen (2004) presents, the model of Lehner's (2008) study and the personal experiences of my single case study as mentioned above, it appears that there is much to learn from the director of a theater organization. A direct correlation that would expand the further thinking on the above-mentioned points is that the middle manager of the business organization could easily adopt principles from the director of a theater organization to become more successful.

<u>I am What I am, but Why? A Case for the Value and Need</u>

In the heart of this paper, I intend to show the need for and the value of the manager's usage of the director's techniques to better his success and efficiency. By aligning with the principles and theories from the theater, the manager will have a new set of strategies and tools to use when infusing his baseline responsibilities with a more innovative and creative mindset. It is my hope that this alignment will engage teams more often and more successfully, while taking the full responsibility off of the manager and projecting it onto the team. By having a more creative and team-centered approach, various learning and working styles can be better engaged for better efficiency and more successful work production.

Pinball

Sometimes life in the organizations feels like a game of pinball,

and we're the little metal ball

We start each day launched into a mysterious world of

bumpers

lights

bells

and whistles.

Lights flash on

and off.

Buzzers sound.

Gates open

and close,

sometimes propelling us at high speed to some other center

of the action,

and sometimes letting us drop quickly

into a hole.

Barry Oshry

(*Seeing Systems*, 2007, p. 2)

CHAPTER 2

WHO ARE THEY AND WHERE DO THEY BELONG?

In the chapter ahead, I plan to fully dive into the role of the manager and the director as they fit into their respective organizations. I will be building upon the ideas of the director and manager roles and their comparison by using literature on organizational structures, stakeholder groups and their influence, middle management, competing values and the corresponding framework, as well as new ideas on managing from within (oneself) and ever-changing and ever-growing creative and robust definitions of the director.

The Manager in the Business Organization

When one thinks of a manager, the vision that often comes to mind is one within any bureaucratic organization. A bureaucratic organization is a highly structured entity, driven by procedures and rules in which decisions are made by a definitive rigid and organized process. Each department of the organization is a working unit for the greater good of the whole company. Traditional organizational structure models the "one man, one boss" (Morgan, 1986, p. 27) theory whereby each department's representative has only one individual as his boss and the pattern repeats continuously to the top of the hierarchal pyramid. Procedures and policies are usually followed quite closely and any introduction of change or adaptation can cause unrest.

A true cog in the gears of this framework is the manager, most often found directly in the middle of an organization's hierarchy. A common issue for this

position, as researched by Jackson Nickerson (2014), is that when leaders of the organization task their managers with carrying out a new idea or project, the work trickles down to the managers who have to start a new process without room for flexibility under the structures of the bureaucracy. Nickerson tells us "tasks [in this scenario] would consist of curtailing, changing or creating capabilities that span multiple activities and units across the organization."

With that being said, it takes a truly skilled manager to navigate a new project or assignment, while engaging multiple stakeholders and teams throughout the organization. Managers in this situation may achieve success in leading from the middle, but will mostly likely find that it is difficult to please everyone while keeping the project on time and task. Barry Oshry (2007) illustrates:

"Middle managers [are] "torn middles". [This "title"] assumes that most middle managers feel *torn* by the system [or organizational framework] – they feel weak, confused and powerless. They are pulled between the often conflicting needs, requests, demands and priorities of those above them and those below them...loaners in the system – not connected with Tops (top executives) or Bottoms (those reporting to middle managers), and not really connected with one another." (p. 66)

In order to counteract situations like those described by Oshry, Nickerson shares a possible and probable solution through his CoSTS model approach – *communications, strategies, tactics, and sequencing of action* – and how each of these focused areas can be directly applied to each stakeholder group. He takes

into consideration the feelings of all stakeholders, their methods of trying to avoid the possibilities of change and ways to prevent progress from being stunted.

He splits an organization's stakeholders into four groups: Superordinates, Subordinates, Complementors (or Blockers) and Customers.

The first group is anyone situated higher than the manager on the organizational chart. Superordinates can be a boss, supervisor, director or a governing body that oversees the organization. Subordinates are people who report to the manager directly or those assigned to the manager's unit or team. Complementors are those who are "in line" with the manager, but who hold some sort of decision-making power that the manager will need to engage during the timeline of the project. Nickerson (2014) explains these roles as a means to an end – for example, enlisting the finance team for purchasing needed materials or advising on budgetary constraints. While people in these positions can seem quite complementary, their ability to "block" the needs of the manager can change the course of the project, sometimes even stopping it in its tracks so that fulfillment isn't realized. Finally, he explains the role of the customer as stakeholder. This role is very straightforward in that the customer is the one who uses the company's services or products – the "end user." These roles have equal value as they relate to the middle manager. It is up to him or her to find the appropriate way to balance all stakeholders, while meeting all needs, ensuring timelines and staying sane and on task.

For the Superordinates, the manager should strive to gain their approval and support for carrying out the task through the permitted realm of operations. Nickerson (2014) details that this method of carrying out a task usually involves a plan of action to enact and enable room for change down the hierarchy of the organization. The Superordinates are key stakeholders who give their blessings for all aspects of the project. The manager represents his own leadership and having them "agree-in" ensures that everyone is on the same page. For the Subordinates, Nickerson introduces the idea of "bee-in." The subordinates are the "worker bees" who will be running or delivering the end product or goal. This "bee-in" group allows the middle manager to empower and engage those direct reports and teams by setting up the challenge of completing the task at hand while enlisting their help. For the Complementors (Blockers), we refer to the idea of "allow-in." By working with these stakeholders, the manager must allow them in when appropriate for specific engagement or time frames so as not to turn them into blockers. Finally, and simply put, the terminology applied to the CoSTS for the Customers is "buy-in." There is a perception and reputation of the company's work and this through-line of engaging and encouraging the Customer is a viable option to test the success of the work being done. As the end-user, this group will evaluate and provide feedback.

Table 1. Nickerson's Stakeholder Groups and Applicable Engagement Methods

Stakeholder Group	Method of Engagement
Superordinates	Agree-in
Subordinates	Bee-in
Complementors (Blockers)	Allow-in
Customers	Buy-in

Using these roles and their correlating method of engagement can seem simple, but Nickerson (2014) explains that it is hard to engage a stakeholder without playing to, or catering to, the emotions tied to the actions. He specifically speaks to four specific emotions, noted as the DEAF model - disrespect, envy, anger and fear. Each of these emotions directly relates back to the middle manager's relationship with each of the stakeholders. Nickerson specifically introduced this acronym so that stakeholders do not become "DEAF to the [manager's] request for help and assistance." (Nickerson, 2014, p. 17) Any or all of these emotions can come into play when they start to delay the project plan, causing the manager and his team to lose sight of the goal.

To further expand the role of the middle manager, we can take into consideration the *Competing Values Framework* (Quinn et al, 2011). To be a successful manager, Quinn and his colleagues explain that managers "need to have good interpersonal skills and a high level of self-awareness." (Quinn et al., 2011, p. 20) If managers are able to work through and balance these competencies, they will be more effective. The model, made up of quadrants, expounds on the following four values – *collaboration, control, competition and creativity.* These values will be explained below in the context of working through the muddle.

Mastering the action of collaboration is essential to creating and promoting commitment and cohesion across the organization and within teams. This mastering allows lines of communication to be open and transparent. Working within a collaborative organization leads the stakeholders to be more mentors and leaders, versus followers, putting the ownership on groups of people instead of one leader. Within a purely collaborative environment, conflict is handled openly and with the type of criticism that builds colleagues up instead of breaking them down.

The idea of control is based on the idea of creating an environment of constancy and continuity versus the controlling of others. Managers in this quadrant ensure that the team or organization is following procedures and meeting deadlines accordingly. This competency is especially important for managers as they need to know what is going on in their own teams as well as across the organization overall. They need to handle this step with ease and

grace while focusing in on being effective and efficient, providing feedback in real time.

In continuing our exploration of the Competing Values Framework, we delve into the idea of competition. Within this framework, competition resides with internal and external stakeholders. They need to be versed in the mission and branding of their company as well as knowing their place and role within the organization. The manager is essential to convey the mission and brand to those whom he oversees. Managers have to perform competitively to "model strong work ethic and the ability to take quick decisive action characterized by having high interest, motivation, energy and personal drive." (Quinn et al., 2011, p. 19) The focus is on accomplishing both personal and organization-wide goals.

Finally, we look to the quadrant of creativity. While a manager needs to be constantly creative and thinking outside-of-the-box, this idea of creativity becomes part of the role he takes on when it comes to adapting to change and knowing when additional external help and support are needed. Staying well-versed and up-to-date on the latest trends, changes within the environment, and implementation of innovative ideas, managers need to become quite skilled at building a strong foundation of power and negotiation skills within their teams and within organizations overall. This idea of having all stakeholders "on board" with them leads to them taking action in a highly effective way.

While Nickerson's (2014) theory works well in the business organization framework, it doesn't directly carry forward as it is explained within the theater organization. With the work of Quinn and his team (2011), we begin to see how

some of the higher level thinking behind the manager's foundation could possibly

be applied to the director's role. As we begin to explore this role, it is not a direct

match, but we can see how these ideas can be interchanged between the

manager to the director and vice versa. In order to better align these two roles,

the director role within the theater organization will be explained in the following

section. Then this role will be compared and contrasted with the business

organization, its managers and stakeholders. Before a thorough analysis is

completed within the two types of organizations, it is necessary to pinpoint the

issues that managers face daily within their roles, teams and organizations.

Leading from the Middle: What makes the muddle?

Within the business organization, the ownership of responsibilities and

processes has to be shared by manager and all organizational stakeholders.

They all need to be constantly aware of the vision, mission, organizational wants,

needs and changes in order to provide the best outcomes. Having all

stakeholders involved and invested in the organization from the start allows

managers to have better control and involvement with their colleagues and

teammates as well as producing work that is more meaningful and valued. Oshry

and Schlesinger (1984) share that managers face the most muddle when they

can't make sense of the workers they manage, when they lose power as the

teams around them increase their own influence and power, and when they

aren't able to understand how to best use their influence. Oshry and Schlesinger

also found that the muddle was exacerbated when managers "lose control over

information and resources and find themselves bypassed in the process of

increasing employee involvement" (Oshry and Schlesinger, 1984, p. 7) There is a great contradiction here in that most organizations put the majority of the responsibility and power within their middle management teams simply because they are physically located in the muddled middle of the organization. However, this doesn't always mean that they are well-suited for the role and for using the appropriate tools and resources to be successful. The success of the organization is dependent on the cooperation and function of all teams that envelop the manager. Without this key dynamic, the muddle is often too much for the manager to navigate on his own.

Driven by the wants and needs of the organization and feeling pressure from the top-down and bottom-up, there isn't much room for the manager to try something new. The pace of the work is often hectic – they are carrying out the demands of the top-level executives and dispersing the information to the workforce and returning the results and information to the top-level when appropriate, while concurrently working on their own tasks and goals. Procedures and methodologies are rote and repetitious. The manager is synonymous with "the middle man." With that, they are most often held accountable for the work performed by teams they oversee whether successfully or poorly. Oshry and Schlesinger (1984) state the manager is tasked with doing whatever he can to successfully meet the project requirements or completion. At times, this action may mean betraying the trust and working relationships with subordinates, i.e., when managers duplicate work of their own team to ensure the work is completed successfully without reviewing, using or even showing appreciation of

the work of others. This happens simply because the manager wants to receive the praise and recognition of the work being done when it should be a shared success across the team. In my experience, the manager is given the least recognition and praise when it comes to his own work product. In addition, I have seen this lack of recognition as a result of the managers being perceived as not being directly involved with the work at hand. The manager exists between the two groups primarily – the top-line executives and the workforce. This lack of importance is a key factor in the decline of continued success for the manager. Without being recognized, they feel that going the extra mile or working to encourage and empower their teams isn't needed when they won't be lauded for it in the long run. Praise and empowerment of the manager is essential as a function of the most valued linchpin of an organization.

In a role where the manager can feel quite lonely, Oshry and Schlesinger (1984) also suggest that he band together with other middle management within the organization to share strategies, combat issues and set up a plan that enables success across functional teams and throughout the organization as a whole.

The Director in the Theater Organization

Before delving into the director role within the theater organization, it is important to mention the type of organization in which the theater can be described. Gareth Morgan (1986) speaks to theater as a political system. Similar to other non-profit organizations and organizations that function with a complex hierarchy, in this type of system, the relationship between interests, conflicts, and

power of the stakeholders plays a very important role. Those who make up a theater organization have a very complex set of goals, values, desires, and expectations that shape how the theater is managed. Conflict also plays a role when any of the interests is challenged and stakeholders have varying ideas that differ from the majority. Finally, we can explore power as a means to resolve conflict. Simply put, power influences change. While power can reside with anyone in the theater organization's hierarchy, in my experience and training, the director is usually the person who effectively uses that power for the good of the whole. This role of the director isn't situated at the top of the organization, but more so in the middle of the hierarchy. Much change is enacted from the middle, using the director as a pivotal role.

Barry Oshry (2007) might call the director a "manager of the heart." (p. 4) He focuses on the intangible qualities of managers, pinpointing their abilities to empathize and emotionally connect with their employees. While there are many responsibilities for the director, not unlike those of the manager, theater directors' roles are mostly based in the feeling of the work at hand and the relationships of those around them.

In his book *Audition*, Michael Shurtleff (1978) states:

"A good Director shares, not tells. He creates an environment that enables the writer and the actor to work. His job is to explore the play with the actors, find out what they know and lead them to know more, sense what they feel and get them to express their feelings. The rehearsal process is the actor's time to experiment, to indulge in trial and error, so the

commitment of error is just as important in the process as the discovery of what's right. How is an actor to know what is right for him if he hasn't gone through being wrong? A good Director encourages actors to find themselves in the roles, knows that the channels of communication between him and the actor and between him and the playwright must remain clear and open. He works hardest to achieve that." (p. 232-233)

O'Connor and Peterson (1997) additionally define the role of the theater director as "the link between the performance and the audience [as well as the one with] responsibility to the play and to the actors." (p. 127) They go on to align the role of the director with that of a shepherd, guiding the actors (and other stakeholders) through the process of putting a show "on its feet" and the elements that make it successful – from producing, marketing, preparation, rehearsals, staging and blocking, and gearing up for opening night and performances.

Carra and Dean (1989) actually suggest that the actor and director are working towards the same goal with the idea that the road to staging a production should be looked upon as an adventure, complete with experimentation through methods of trial and error. The director is responsible for setting discipline and tone for the company. He ultimately sets the tone of production as well. Since the director most likely reports to the producer, design team, theater management, and boards of directors, he is tasked with being prepared, organized, and researched so time is used wisely and purposefully. This preparative nature sets the stage (pun intended) for the stage management, music director, crew,

musicians, and actors. A well-prepped director is equivalent to a well-prepped production. A director's role is to introduce the work to be performed and any overarching ideas and setting for the piece.

Carra and Dean (1989), however, explain the director should not dictate personal interpretation and the effects on the work at hand. These should be left to the actors for their own inspiration and understanding. Allowing this creative process will move the ownership of the production solely from the director to the actors, thus creating a sense of unity. Setting the foundation for an actor to take risks and to step out of his comfort zone will ultimately lead to successful interpretation of the material. Given the medium in which all of these stakeholders are working, the ability to take risks and make changes is a welcomed process. Not all of those involved are agreeable in every instance of change, but the structure is more flexible as compared to a business organization to allow for these types of changes. Morgan (1986) explains that within the image of organizations as political systems, theater allows for interpretation and symbolism. He goes on to note that "situations often speak louder than words and do much to express and reproduce [power] relations existing within an organization." (Morgan, p. 177). While Morgan may be speaking to the business organization, we can see that the world of the theater is comprised of symbolism and interpretation. Much can be said and conveyed to the audience without saying a word. Whether shared through facial expression, body language, dance, movement, or staggering silence, the meaning and interpretation are up to the viewer. When one thing is presented in one way, observers most often have

different reactions as they make sense of the material. The director is the one who allows for more expression to take place and the better he can evoke actors to make this happen organically within the stakeholders of a production, the more successful the management style.

We can summarize the role of the director as "achieving [theater] organizational unity and cohesiveness behind a vision or a set of goals, while at the same time giving free rein to the multiple, individual and unique talents of the people." (Dunham and Freeman, 2000, p. 108) While Morgan may or may not agree, the theater organization can be defined as a team-based organization within the confines of a political system. There is an on-going re-envisioning of symbols and meaning from one artistic piece to the next, each time, with a new group of actors, staff and supporters. Yet, while the hierarchy isn't as complex as that of the large-scale organization, a formal structure of roles, responsibilities, and expectations does exist. It is significant to say that there is collaboration and cross-team functionality that drives the way the work is done successfully.

As a final thought, I am able to surmise that the theater organization could also be generally characterized as a Network Organization as explained by P.G. Herbst (1976). It is true that within a theater organization there are overlapping competencies among all members of the cast. Some have a wealth of knowledge when it comes to acting, scenic design, music, and general know-how while others may be performing onstage or with a group for the first time. Herbst (1976) shared that within this network there is interdependence where groups within the theater and the production staff must rely on each other to achieve goals. This is

the case when actors need the musicians to support their songs and vice versa. Essentially, we can also validate this interdependent, networked relationship by saying that the director is the one who shares the vision and ideas and then lets the actors take the material and run with it. He sets the long-term goal and allows room for actors to interpret meaning for themselves. When it comes to the structure of the network organization, size has to be kept relatively small to account for cohesion of the cast, but, from my experience, working with groups of about 60-80 members is definitely feasible, but any more could cause issues, as it relates to space on stage, relationships with the director and with other cast members. Herbst (1978) concludes the final descriptor of this organization in the frame of a sustainable environment. Simply put, without the directors sharing their overarching vision with the actors, the actors owning their roles and interpreting the materials, and the additional production groups (musicians, crew, sound technicians, lighting design team and financial backers) giving their unending support, there would be no production.

Organization as Theater: Aligning the Roles of Manager and Director

To begin this exploration, it would be useful to frame the manager of an organization through the lens of theater. Joep P. Cornelissen (2004) effectively explores this metaphor. Nickerson (2014) details of the business organization as rigid and highly structured; there isn't much room for creativity, innovation, shared ownership of responsibilities, or the ability to break away from the expected norms. A big piece of the Cornelissen (2004) study shows the need for reflection and recognizing the importance of one's self and his role within the

organization. The emphasis isn't on tiered levels of the hierarchy, but simply put, the organization is regarded like theater where more of the "soft skills" are used to map out the organization's values and goals.

Cornelissen (2004) shares that a manager's success is not defined by promotion, but by how well he uses improvisational techniques and extends freedom (to a degree) to his direct reports to enable success. He shares this idea as "emergent meaning structure" (Cornelissen, 2004) whereby employees are responsible for identifying and writing their own personal scripts for their roles and are held accountable for their choices. This structure allows managers in business to take a step outside of the organization itself so that he can realize how their decisions play into their real-world experiences outside of the office structure. This idea of organization as theater is more focused on the importance of the engaged interactions with others and the personal journey one is making for him or herself.

Quinn et al (2011), explains that when employees are genuinely engaged, there is less cause for burnout. By being more intimately involved in the work at hand, they have a renewed sense of self, exuding "energy, involvement, efficacy, vigor and dedication" (Quinn et all, 2011, p. 213). In any type of organization, all stakeholders should be interacting with others in the organization, but in the theater metaphor, the use of interacting with others is quite different. Nickerson (2014) would add that interactions with others, up, down and across the hierarchy are key to achieving your goals through "buy-in", "bee-in", etc, and while this parallel could be found in Cornelissen's work, these interactions are on

a more personal level. One isn't simply carrying out a task or responsibility, but is embarking on a personal journey of discovery to achieve results. He writes that "organizational life [is] essentially a creative affair in which organizational members enact 'roles', interpret 'scripts', work in 'scenes' and address an 'audience'." (Cornelissen, 2004, p. 715)

He believes that organizational members are truly individual 'characters' and that, while they do follow the traditional 'script' of their roles, they improvise using their creative and innovative skillsets at particular times to achieve success within their jobs and responsibilities. Cornelissen (2004) concludes his writing by stating that while theater principles and metaphors "fit" within the context of the organization, there have been no drastic results proving the usefulness and success of the combination of these two fields.

It is my hope to expand on Cornelissen's thinking and provide that missing idea of the value and need for linking the theater organization with that of business. I believe there is a true need for thinking outside of the structured framework in an organization. Much like Cornelissen (2004), I contend, that by assuming more of a theatrical approach to understanding the work at hand, a manager's sense of pride is much greater when he can personally connect with, and find meaning in day-to-day and long-term tasks. It is of great value for a manager to model his organization as theater metaphor in order to motivate and encourage colleagues up, down, and across the hierarchy to employ a new method of thinking into their daily routine. The more common the practice of

modeling and using this framework, the more widely accepted and successful it will be.

The manager has to realize that colleagues can operate and function differently when it comes to different aspects of their responsibilities. For example, thinking in the way of a theater professional – through production teams, casting, scripting, scene work and rehearsing -- can add a great deal of depth to a manager or stakeholder's understanding of his part in the larger picture of the organization and in society. By providing the framework to incorporate the director's principles and principles presented by Cornelissen, managers can construct a space where creativity and divergent thinking can emerge. The combination of linking theater and business can help to alleviate some of the fear within organizations. Setting up an environment where these steps are natural sets up all people for success while enabling key players to take more risks.

<u>Who can they become?</u>

In the following sections, I will be using a standard set of theater principles and terminology to directly link the manager with the director. The focus will be the use of the director's techniques to build upon an "organization as theater" metaphor and to show how the manager can be more flexible, creative, and innovative within the confines of his job duties.

When looking through the lens of the director, I will be using these techniques that follow the framework or lifecycle of a theater production –

creating production teams, casting, scripting, scene work (or blocking) and

rehearsing (Pine and Gilmore, 2011). While these terms are large and all

encompassing, there are specific techniques within each that can be adapted for

the manager's use. These will be explained in detail within the coming chapters.

Definitions are based on the work of Pine and Gilmore (2011), but expanded to fit

within my experiences of working in local community theater groups.

It important to define the lifecycle attributes mentioned above so that a

clear understanding is given for the particulars as they relate to any director, and

so that then the reader can make sense of their definitions and correlation. It is

the responsibility of the director to create a harmonized whole (Pine and Gilmore,

2011, p. 217). In keeping with this frame of reference, terms for use in this paper

are defined as follows, using my own interpretation as well as examples from my

experiences:

Production Team

Inclusive of the director, a production team involves all of the technical

roles for a production. Production teams include the set (or scenic) designer,

lighting designer, costume designer, stage management, house and box office

management, board members, producer, production assistant, music director,

and choreographer.

Casting

This is the process by which actors (and even some of the technical staff)

are selected for roles. Casting can range from being a very professional and

formal experience to one that is relaxed and informal. Directors and production teams use the audition process to gauge the actors' experience in the theater and their backgrounds. They also use this casting process to tap into creativity, imagination, and improvisational skills. The casting process allows the actor to showcase his talents through dance, song, and monologue (reading personally selected solo parts of the scripts either on-the-spot or rehearsed). While this part of casting allows candidates to stand out from the rest, the production team must consider cohesiveness of the cast of characters and the ensemble throughout the entire process.

Scripting

This is the process by which the director does his evaluation of the work at hand. By pre-reading the script, the director creates a vision in his head of how the production should be presented. Using this vision, the casting process begins and once completed and assigned, the real work begins. Reviewing the script as a whole cohesive cast is important to the director so that he gets a sense of flow of the dialogue, timing, delivery and the ensemble's understanding of the script overall. The director uses the script to introduce dialects and accents, to explain foreign or unknown text, and also to cast visions for scenes and songs. The director sets himself up as a middle man between the actors and the script itself – simply relaying information back and forth as each pertains to the other.

Scene work (or blocking)

Most commonly known in theater terminology as staging or blocking, this is the process by which the show is no longer the reading of written word on a page; the story comes to life and each scene is staged so that the director and actors can make meaning of the scene "on its feet." The director will go over stage directions and entrances and exits. The director will also use this process to ensure the seamless transfer of the story from the actors to the audience. The way in which the dialogue and relationships between the actors are expressed, is key to the audience's interpretation of the story and their ability to make sense of the ideas being presented. This point in the scene work process is also the time when songs come to life on stage through blocking and dance. Full musical production numbers are staged through scene work as well.

Rehearsing

This is the repetitious process through which productions are created. Once scenes and songs are blocked, they are put into the flow (or order) of the show as it is meant to be. The repetitious running of all scenes in order from start to finish is important for two main reasons: first, so the actors know their place at any given time in the production, and secondly, so the director and the production team have time to ensure seamless transitions, understanding and overall interpretation as it is to be presented to the audience. It is important to note that the rehearsal structure is a process, and not meant to be perfection. Actors are taking cues from directors, learning lines and checking, correcting and understanding blocking. The process allows the cast to form that needed unity while working to own the space, own the show, and own their characters. During

this time, it is just as important to focus on the actor individually as it is to focus on others those who interact with the actors. Ensemble (or chorus "extras") parts play a big role in this process.

Though each of these functions is important in its place to the greater production itself, the *relationship* that is built between the actors and the directors throughout the process is one that takes time to fully develop (Joep P. Cornelissen, 2004). While not part of the life cycle, this bonding is an important term to define as it relates to the other techniques. Through this bond, trust is created and the space to take risks, allowing one to step out of his comfort zone, as well as when the idea to try something outlandish, lavish, or insanely creative is shaped. The script or music takes a backseat to the relationships developed as a result of interpreting the work at hand. A prime example of this building of relationships through rehearsal is working on a production scene by scene, asking only principal characters to attend rehearsals to stage their scenes and nothing more. Large amounts of rehearsal time can be set aside for even the shortest scene of dialogue, but these smaller instances of engagement are still relevant and important as they create a "safe space" for the work to come to life. Reading lines from a script is a simple task, but bringing character, motivation, and a back-story into the line reading, is when the piece takes on a new persona. As presented earlier, a good director leads. During rehearsal, the director is able to craft a more intimate relationship with his actors. Having a joint process, shared by the actors and director collaboratively, helps to create true art.

As I align the methodologies of the director with those of the manager, the following chapters will explain these lifecycle techniques in great detail. As explained above, the techniques, as interpreted in the theater organization were introduced along with their meaning and how each specific piece aids in creating an environment that allows for creativity and betterment of the people involved. Next, the techniques will be further explained using examples from my own directorial experiences to expand the role of the director. Following those sections, the theater techniques will be paired with an aspect of the manager in the business organization's job. The typical responsibilities from the business organization will be presented and then adjusted to incorporate the ideas used by the theater director. A chart will be shared as a summative point to show the direct correlations between both fields and also so that it may be used as a resource for quick reference. In conclusion, findings will be shared as well as implications for further study will be noted.

What is jazz?

If you have to ask what jazz is, you will never know.

<div style="text-align: right">

Louis Armstrong
(Bartlett's Familiar Quotations, 1968, p. 1046)

</div>

CHAPTER 3

WHAT MAKES THEM SUCCESSFUL? TECHNIQUES AND TERMS
APPLICABLE TO THE DIRECTOR

Previously, these techniques and terms were defined in a sense of the

general theater organization. In this chapter, I will explain how the director plays

a part in, and uses, each technique effectively by giving specific examples from

my theater-based experiences in order to further illuminate in greater depth how

the director functions within the theater organization:

Production Teams

Through my experiences, it is important to note that the director, based on

artistic residencies, contracts, or placement, is often the newest member of any

production team and is being welcomed into a group of long-standing

professionals in the field who have been with the same theater organization for

many years. It is the director's utmost responsibility to get to know the team

members (made up of the producer, president, scenic designer, lighting and

sound designer, et al.), both personally and professionally, before sharing

visions, ideas, and the flow of the production at hand. Directors usually require a

"second in command" and may bring in their own assistant director or stage

manager. This is a pivotal role as it is usually someone who can relate to and

work closely with the members of the production team when the director may not

be available or have time, especially since creating a production causes a hectic

schedule.

When starting a new production, the director should hold a series of production meetings where the ideas of scene, sound, dance, and flow come together. These meetings are run and shared in leadership by the entire production team; this ensures that everyone can start from the same point, monitor progress, pinpoint and solve issues, and arrive a fully thought out production, ready for the viewing audience at the end. The director is also responsible for sharing his visions and needs early on in these meetings. By having the full team around the table, participating and offering feedback and suggestions on the director's ideas allows changes to the visions to be made in real time so that implications are addressed out in the open and that changes are agreed upon by all involved.

The production team is the heart of the production itself. With the director spearheading the group, each member from her respective area owns that area and is the main contact and problem solver, should anyone from the entire company have a question or issue. This team is also formed to support and assist the company or cast. Whether a person holds a principal role (in acting, singing or dance) or is an ensemble member, all company members look to the production team for vision and guidance. The production team also serves in a logistical function by keeping things on schedule, taking adequate breaks, following union rules, and ensuring the safety and well-being of all those involved.

As a director, I constantly rely on my production staff to assist me. The people cast in these roles are the "eyes and ears" of the theater organization and

are keen on spotting and making me aware of any set or prop issues, issues within the cast, and/or concerns of the overall crew. Since there is usually only one director and many production team members, the relationship between this team and the director must be strong, effective and efficient.

Casting

Once the work is selected and the production team confirmed and working collaboratively to put the vision on the stage, the cast is ready to be selected. The cast includes principals (or named characters, often referred to as "leads"), chorus (ensemble-only singers), and the ensemble (most often made up of dancers). A cast can be vetted through various methods. The most common ways to cast a show are through open call and appointment-only/casting agent auditions.

In open call casting, actors/dancers/singers of any background, schooling and union affiliation are welcomed to spend the better part of a one-day audition for any and all roles of a production. The times aren't scheduled and those auditioning typically plan a full day's commitment to the production team. During these types of calls for audition, the team will see dancers and singers in groups and ask performers to stay based on vocal ability, dance ability and overall looks (typecasting). Often, vocalists won't get to present more than eight measures of music, let alone share a monologue or prepared dance solo. The others will be dismissed on the spot. The group gets continuously narrowed down until the remaining actors are deemed a fit for the productions either in speaking, signing, or dancing roles.

In appointment-only/casting agent auditions, casting agents, along with the production team, see individuals based on appearance, previous experience in voice, acting and dance, resumes, and word of mouth recommendations. Individuals who audition in this way are most likely brought in to sing a requested song, share a rehearsed monologue, and dance a specific routine based on their ability levels and experience in the field. If one is asked to come in for a casting call like this one, they are most likely up for a featured or starring role. Production teams, and especially the director, look to the fit with the others in mind for the leading parts when casting someone by this method. It takes more than just pure talents to be offered a substantial part; leads of production often interact with a love interest, protagonist, or antagonist, and their presence on stage and in presenting the material, plays a large part in the casting of a show.

Most of the auditions that I have held with my community theater groups have been in the style of the open call auditions. We have a large window of time where we reserve space in a local church or school and hold our open auditions. Generally, I ask those auditioning to prepare a complete song that fits into the time period and style of the show. Due to time constraints, I only can listen to about sixteen bars of music at the most. In other instances, when I feel that a song choice doesn't showcase vocal quality or the part of the music selected doesn't highlight ability, I will ask them to sing additional musical phrases or another song in their repertoire. Putting the actors on the spot in this moment also allows me to see how they will work under pressure. After the musical portion, I try to gauge their acting and "reading" ability, so I will ask them to

present a short monologue they have prepared or read a short side (small excerpt) from the script. This part of the audition is also very truth-telling in how they perform, interpret the lines and their meaning, and how well they interact with other actors (mainly those on the audition committee).

Once we see everyone in this fashion, I meet with my creative team to go over all of the auditions briefly to decide on whom we would like to see again for specific roles and who we will ask to be part of the ensemble Usually during this process, those asked to come back are given a song from the score to perform along with specific line leadings from the script. Those auditioning in this step know which parts they are up for, based on the song and script selections. From this "call back" group, final casting decisions are made. Those not getting a principal part are asked to join the larger chorus and could very well be highlighted with a featured solo, song, or speaking role.

Scripting

Now that a director has his cast confirmed and invested in the production, the real work of sharing and communicating his vision of the show takes place. Usually, a full read-through and technical walk-through of the production take place. This read-through allows the assigned cast members to read through their specific parts in the context of the setting of the production. The director uses this space and time to influence delivery and meaning behind the text. This process also allows the cast to reflect on their characters and to build a back-story or history of their theatrical selves. Being able to know and live these characters will enable to cast to be more cohesive and supportive when risks are taken and

deviations explored from the rote script. Actors greatly benefit from this process as they begin to take in and memorize their characters and parts during each scene. They begin to create relationships through the text and know what specifics of the production will require more time and skill to master. While most of the production team has worked together previously in this situation, most of the cast members have not; thus, not everyone knows innate working styles, acting styles, and the history of performances. Scripting allows these strategies for interactions to take shape among cast members.

At this point, the focus is on the language and text. The director takes the lead in introducing unknown or foreign texts and their importance and proper usage for the product overall. The focus is simply on the language during the scripting process. Vision on stage and use of scenic elements come next in the process.

I am usually seen as a guide for my actors during this process. I expect them to come to rehearsals and read-through sessions knowing about character history, placement in the script and the obstacles or challenges their characters must overcome or make the audience aware of. I do not spend a great deal of time on making sure the lines are recited word for word. Instead, I use the actor's time to make sure his inner voice is coming through loud and clear so that the audience can identify with the character. In the next technique explained, the process mentioned above is explained in greater detail.

Scene Work (or blocking)

Through the process of staging and blocking of scenes, the director first works with leading players to begin to move the spoken word onto the stage, complete with movements and usage of the full space, entrances and exits through specified positions, set pieces and logistical flow of the production overall. The director is tasked with working with small groups of actors, concentrating on their scene work and movement in the space noted in the piece. The director also uses this process to ensure that dialogue, singing, and dance all contribute to the over-arching vision of the production. A skilled director will constantly ask clarifying questions to make sure actors understand their motivations and reasons for taking actions, making movements, and speaking the lines that are theirs. As part of the character development from the previous techniques, the actors can align their research and personal character decisions with those of the director.

Following the work done with individuals on scenes, the larger ensemble and chorus members are invited to partake in the scene work process. This is the time when ensembles are worked into large group scenes, placed in positions for dance numbers, and are invited to sing or deliver lines from specific placement on the stage. Patterns of entrances of actors, set pieces, and scenery on the fly system are discussed and mapped out to ensure the safety of all involved, so that when a "traffic jam" arises, the forward flow of the production isn't lost or compromised.

A key factor in the blocking process is to have actors set their patterns and beginning to associate scenes, songs, and dialogue to specific moments on the stage with specific members of the cast. The routineness of this process will allow cast members to rely less on the script and help from the director, and more on feeling, motivation and memorization. When actors have their hands free of the script and notes, the flow of the production becomes more innate and meaningful and second nature. One's role becomes his own. Again, I want my actors to see me (as director) in a guiding role. I am involved in the process that helps make connections from the script to the stage and to ensure that character choices and dialogue presentation fit the setting and the show. I may ask the actors to think about their choices in the context of a scene or song. Helping them to arrive at these connective pieces should be innate and organic.

Rehearsing

Rehearsing is a key component to the full success of a production. This is when the piece comes to life and the director, cast, and production team can see their vision and hard work come to life on stage. At this point, the actors have solidified their characters. Movements, entrances, and exits are fully committed and the production begins to stand alone. A director uses this process to observe and ensure that his vision is being conveyed to the audience, flow is seamless, and timing and pace of scenes and songs are well thought out. The director also uses this time to take notes on changes and updates that contribute to making the production better. Directors often refer to this as "polishing" and "cleaning." The director takes a step back and fully gives the production over to those

involved. By working as the middle-person between script and stage, the director can relax into being a skilled observer while seeing true ownership come through the actors on stage.

Once a production is running on its own and audiences are coming to partake in the magic and "warm glow" of live theater, the rehearsing process doesn't end. Based on public feedback or confusion, a director can use this time to tweak scenes, musical numbers or dances, by working with the production team to add, remove or edit as he sees fit. Changes are to be expected so long as they convey the vision, story and meaning in a clearer way. Sometimes, new songs, dances, or dialogue are added. Often times, the actors have very little leeway in learning and staging new additions or changes. These changes can be made from day-to-day and cast members are expected to present in a polished fashion sometimes less than twenty-four hours later as if they have been rehearsing them for weeks.

More often than not, I will hold a scheduled feedback session for my entire cast. After running through the full production in the rehearsal process, many directors like me will jot notes and ideas specific to actors, dancers, or groups of each. Notes are often also given to members of the crew, musicians, production staff, and dancers. These notes are shared in an open forum with all cast members present. This process is not meant to chastise or publicly embarrass the actors, but more to bring to light issues that could ultimately affect the whole cast during the production. Some of the notes could be simple changes such as movement on stage, or it can be more complex, such as reevaluating the

intention of the delivery of lines or restructuring a scene or creating new traffic patterns. The way in which these notes are shared comes down to the working relationship the director sets up with his teams and cast early on in the process. This relationship is a key factor in allowing these life-cycle techniques to be shared openly, truthfully, and respectfully.

Once I have a production "on its feet" and the cast is comfortable from start to finish, I hold additional informal meetings for notes (feedback on cast performances) right on stage at the end of the show while the cast is still in costume and in the performance mode. Watching the show from the audience gives me good insight to see how things will look and play to the audience. I keep a large notepad and pen with me to jot down notes in the order they happen within the show. I usually write down key words and character names so that when I go back through the notes, I know who exactly to pinpoint and what they need to tweak. It is with utmost respect and responsibility that I expect those changes to be accepted and fixed for the next time the show is performed in full. While some actors might not agree with me on the proposed changes, the notes session is not a time for them to start arguments with me or anyone from my team. If there is a further issue, I remind cast members to find me before or after the rehearsal process so that we can have a private conversation.

When the relationship between the director and all others involved is carefully thought out, presented, and shared, the work and reciprocity are of much more value and appreciation. I am sure to always be aware and engaged with the relationships with my cast and teams. The presence of this relationship

allows for risks to be taken and for all involved to be pushed out of their comfort zones. This process only works if the trust from all team members gained is at the beginning of the process. The trust that the cast has in the director and vice versa allows the vision of the director to be much more easily adopted because this investment makes the structure more "flat" (non-hierarchical) and inclusive. By starting on the same level, the production isn't managed by the director, but it is shared in ownership by the full cast. This is something that I hold in the highest regard. By understanding, working with, and appreciating all involved, all teams can reach success, not only in presenting the work at hand, but through the process of getting to that point together.

CHAPTER 4
CREATIVE CONNECTIONS I – LINKAGES TO THE DIRECTOR

What is missing to mend the muddle?

Given the many ambiguous and ambivalent challenges facing the manager, it is important for him or her to bring the focus back to the personal level. Just as with the directors and actors in the "safe space" of rehearsal, the manager needs to develop a relationship with his colleagues. Oshry and Schlesinger (1984) speak to the idea that the manager is constantly trying to find his sense of power and influence. They speak to what the manager should do, but do not provide steps and techniques in order to make the manager more successful. In order to enhance the path to success, based on my experiences directing, I suggest it may be best to start by re-focusing the structure of the organization to foster a shift in thinking and behavior so that the influence is changed from top-down (and even bottom-up) to stemming from the middle out with the managers who are on the front lines running the production.

The director is given authority from the inception to be creative. Within the confines and rules set by those who oversee the company, directors exercise freedom and interpretation without the fear of being wrong, failing, or letting down the organization. Trust is established here from the start and the understanding that the director is the middle management influence is expected. Everyone is in the process and creative mindset together with the director at the helm. These simple, but specific, ideas are the missing link that Oshry and Schlesinger build upon, but do not fully play out within their writing.

Applying a theatrical lens to the business organization may lead to top executives of businesses using the middle management workforce to evaluate the organization's overall success. This relationship needs to be rooted in trust. Continuing further inward into the organization, managers can the solicit concerns, issues, successes and accolades from any stakeholder in the organization, which can then ultimately aid them by shifting the weight of responsibilities to more of a shared environment. In this structure, critical but appropriate feedback is expected from all levels when things are going right and also when they are on the verge of failure. When working towards this shift, the organization's stakeholders are the driving force – they have now become part of the change process. The burden is not carried by the manager alone.

According to Oshry and Schlesinger (1984), one way to enable the adoption of this shift in framework is to highlight the promotion and reward systems within the organization. This is an area in which they provide a possible solution to the success of managers. With a clear understanding of job track and performance as set by the overall organization vision, all managers can start from a level playing field, making it rather simple to track and monitor progress.

In all of these ideas presented by Oshry and Schlesinger (1984), it is important to note that when issues arise, they are viewed by all stakeholders as opportunities make an organization better. Moving away from placing blame and looking upon inefficiencies as problems can be a huge factor in greater organizational success. This is a huge shift in thinking from that of the typical bureaucratic organization setting and the stigmas that come with what we know

them to be historically. By contrast, in the theater organization, problems and changes are handled by the whole as opportunities to improve the work (or production) overall – the chorus or ensemble's input is valued just as much (or even more) than that of the president of the organization or the producer. Feedback is expected as part of the theater member's role, and the same can be paralleled in the workplace. Having a voice within the theater is a huge asset. At times, by having this open format, members of the company may tend to overshare or over-suggest. Again, these instances aren't looked upon as negatives, but much more as positives, and are often handled with humor, laughs and the incorporating of ideas into many different scenarios that can be played out safely in rehearsal space for evaluation by all. The same can be true of the manager's team in the organization. Not as easily avoided, the path to inclusion will ultimately take more time and effort by all involved as it is not a familiar norm. The presence of humor and laughter may be beneficial here, although it may not be readily accepted. In summary, it is ultimately the director or the manager who determines what suggestions or ideas are to be implemented, but he stresses that input is always shared. This creates a true relationship of trust.

Diane M. Martin (2004) writes on the topic of women in middle management and the usage of humor when navigating the organizational structure. While she is strictly researching the practice of women in organizations, I feel that her ideas can easily be expanded to both genders of the middle management workforce because her theory applies to the relationships of all stakeholders (men *and* women) up, down and across the organizational

hierarchy. Martin shares many scenarios, but through all of them, she relates

humor as a means to negotiate with superiors, engaging them in "playful

discourse on serious topics" (Martin, 2004, p. 156). Opening the lines of

communication to foster humor and playfulness also has parallels with the role of

director. Being able to step outside of one's self to highlight the soft skills

(emotions, feelings, etc.) and how they can be applicable to understanding an

issue at hand, is another way the director's theater techniques begin to merge

with those of the manager. Martin is quick to share the problems of humor and its

use within a male-dominant organization, but she doesn't highlight the positives

that can come of this. Using some of her ideas as a framework can certainly

support the connection I am trying to make. She summarizes her point, saying

"women in middle management positions appear to construct and experience

humor with respect for appropriateness, enjoying playful, light humor" (Martin,

2004, p.162).

This point helps me to suggest that there is, in fact, a proper way to infuse

creativity (i.e. humor, etc.) into the middle management mindset. Organizations

shouldn't make a mockery of its managers, but if they merge the ideas with those

of the director and those ideas of Martin, emotional discussion and humor can be

quite successful and enjoyable for those involved. Humor and playfulness can

add to the creative and innovative spark within organizational relationships. In the

more formal setting, Martin's (2004) ideas would most likely be rejected. In

pairing Oshry and Schlesinger's (1984) ideas for change with those of Diane

Martin (2004), we see a similarity in that each of these authors speaks to the

rewarding side of input. By having these systems in place and by having the notion of humor and creativity as an expected norm, respectful and more open contributions will become widely more accepted and expected.

What makes this alignment successful?

Stating how to view the manager through the lens of the director and actually providing steps to enable this practice are two different tasks, and of the three authors mentioned in this chapter, none has shared how to do so. From my experience, it is important to be in the moment of applying techniques and working through them as a whole. Simply speaking about these techniques theoretically doesn't work. In my theater company, we work on scenes and songs as an ensemble, actively using and incorporating the input of all involved. It would be most problematic if the director (me) were to dictate how to act every line, musical phrase and scene. Having a rigid "top-down" structure in the hierarchy is not an effective methodology.

When we think of the director, he sets the vision to engage all involved parties and to make them excited about the work at hand. This can be true of the manager. Managers should get away from the mindset that failure is imminently problematic. Ultimately, failure can be looked upon as an opportunity for growth. In addition to Martin's ideas in the previous section, we can further frame this perspective through the work of Rath and Conchie's (2008) Strengths Based Leadership study. They explain that managers can ultimately become more successful when they build trust, show compassion, provide stability and create hope for their teams. Stakeholders will follow and lead by example. Adopting

theater techniques -- through production teams, casting, scripting, scene work and rehearsing – can allow the manager and teams to continuously reinvent and recreate themselves and their processes. They can learn from failures and continuously put new practices into place.

In addition, we can further re-envision the manager's role through the lens of the director by turning to the idea of *Satchmo's Paradox* as explained by Peter B. Vaill (1989). The paradox is defined as "the problem of how one who possesses complex, sophisticated knowledge ever does explain to a lay person just what it is that the knowledge consists of and how it works." (Vaill, 1989, p. 88) Expanding this idea further, I believe that Vaill shares this paradoxical idea to explain that without the overall understanding of any topic or idea, those not regularly involved or interacting with the material at hand will have a harder time making meaning of the work being done without proper education and foundational support. This paradoxical process is carried out most commonly and consistently with the director and translates well for a manager's use to set the overall vision of a production and to encourage all stakeholders to become actively involved by giving input and suggestions throughout the process. With this help, stakeholders in the sense-making process can move past the hindrances explained by Vaill's theory. Managers can be successful by providing history and a plan of action when trying to implement something new or enacting change. William Bridges (2009) further substantiates this idea by explaining that change and transitions begin with addressing all stakeholders on a personal level, being sure to specifically explain who and what will be changing versus

being general and vague and remaining at the level of the whole. Bridges also gives support to holding managers responsible for talking about and talking through the process and not just delineating the results or the outcomes. He suggests that the outcome should be specified first but the steps to achieving that outcome are where the true work begins. This parallels the work of a director as he regularly allows for the input of all actors to achieve a goal or overcome a production issue. The director's providing of an outcome can ultimately be looked upon as a hindrance to the process.

Vaill (1989) coins the phrase "managing as a performing art" in his book of the same title. He speaks to the manager's setting a model of being a "whole person in a whole environment." (Vaill, 1989, p. 115) Knowing the emotional intricacies and the foundational building blocks of the organization together can ultimately lead the manager and his colleagues to ultimate success.

In looking for techniques to structure a managerial practice that would encompass these changes – incorporating the usage of production teams, casting, scripting, scene work and rehearsing – we can turn to Jolanta Jagiello's (2002) use of the Organisational Theatre of Professional Practice's Forum Theatre Technique (see Table 2) and Liz Lerman's (2003) Critical Response Process (see Table 3).

Jagiello's justifications behind the usage of the Forum Theatre Technique is one where the audience – in our case, all members of the organization involved in a specific issue or problem – is expected to contribute to the resolution. One person assumes the responsibility as the problem-owner and

oversees the process. The problem-owner works with a team of actors (of his own choosing) from different functioning areas of the workforce to write scripts that play out the issue with different facets of resolution and the expected interpretations and outcomes. In the process of sharing these scenarios with the larger population, the action is stopped in the moment and ideas and suggestions are shared to continue to push the current plot further or to change directions with another scenario. After playing out all possibilities and ideas, the one (or few) that are adopted and vetted by the stakeholders involved is the one that gets implemented to enact the change.

The process helps to first identify present issues (or activities) and how to address them. Following the practice steps (see Table 2) in procedural order employs theater-like activities when handling a problem within an organization – stakeholders are asked to brainstorm possible solutions and write their own scripts of dialogue and action, complete with various interventions or scenarios, to help resolve problems. This process works well when all parties are open to feedback no matter how minute or grandiose. When drilling down further into Step 3, Jagiello uses the Forum Theatre style as a method of acting out the script dictating the issue at hand. The process further involves the audience and their reactions to the stakeholder-written scripts. Unlike traditional theater, this process opens up live interpretation of the immediate audience. The audience is critical in providing real-time feedback on what works and what needs further tweaking.

Table 2. Organisational Theatre of Professionals Practice Steps

Steps in the Process	Activity
Step 1	Identify an organisational problem
Step 2	Produce a script with predicted interventions
Step 3	Act out the script in the Forum Theater Style: Step 1 Choose a problem Step 2 Organise a team of actors to write a script Step 3 Identify problem-owner's criteria of acceptance Step 4 Perform the current scenario Step 5 Audience intervenes with suggested solutions to the problem Step 6 Implement the action into reality
Step 4	Record the actual interventions made
Step 5	Reflect on the similarities/differences between predicted and actual interventions

Like Jagiello (2002), Lerman (2003) has a similar process in which she puts the problem-owner in control; only she refers to this role as the "artist." The artist looks to a set group of stakeholders for feedback on virtually anything. For

the sake of my argument, we will assume the artist is the manager and is exploring successes and failures within his own team. The team shares positive statements for things that are working well. This step helps to align meaning for the stakeholders and allows the artist to prepare for step two, in which they ask for feedback in the form of neutral (non-biased or judgmental) questions. The process continues in which the team gathered asks permission of the artist to share opinions for feedback. This process allows the problem-owner to allow or deny this next step. Here, we have the platform to share feedback only if desired and able to be used or taken in productively. This is a little more structured than the Forum Theatre Technique. It is important to note that this step may cause those involved to shut down during the process if the artist is not willing to hear their suggestions, although they are prepared for the artist's complete independence before they agree to serve in the session. Using this set up may seem superficial, but setting up the permission to share opinions is critical in gauging or steering responses for ideas that are most meaningful and beneficial to the group and to the manager with the presenting issue. While this process is meant for feedback on artistic bodies of work, it can be applied as a problem-solving method in the organization. Creating a sense of openness and trust is a key factor in the acceptance and successful usage of Lerman's process.

able 3. Liz Lerman's Critical Response Process – Steps & Sequence

Liz Lerman's Critical Response Process – Steps & Sequence		
Process Steps	**What does it look like?**	**Preparations to Move Forward**
Step 1: Statements of Meaning	Participants state what was most interesting and appealing to them.	Confirmations from Problem-Owner, Clearer understanding of communication; Participants begin to craft response to lead to deeper discussions
Step 2: Artist Asks the Questions	Problem-owner asks questions and the participants respond genuinely	Two-way dialogue, start to focus enegry and solutions on one specific need; bring all concerns out into the open – address everything.
Step 3: Neutral Questions from the Responders	Participants ask questions, phrased neutrally (no weight to questions; non-judgemental)	Provide deeper contexts for more complex dialogue, allowing for the introduction of supported opinions
Step 4: Responders Ask Permission of Artist	If the problem-owner accepts, the participants give opinions on the matter at hand	Problem-owner chooses what he would like to hear; engages all participants, holds a dialogue that is effective and helpful throughout the process

CHAPTER 5
CREATIVE CONNECTIONS II – LINKAGES TO THE MANAGER

Director Techniques and Terms Applicable to the Manager

Now that the techniques and terms relevant to the director role have been set forth, I will share their relationship and use for the manager in the business organization. Using the definitions as explained in the previous sections, I will reframe their meanings and purposes to be readily used by managers, once again using my experiences as the case and data in this application.

Production Teams

The idea of developing and maintaining a relationship with the manager's production team is key in being successful in any business. Whether the manager is new to an organization or needs to refresh the interactions with colleagues with whom he has been working for a long time, the idea of teaming is very important. Since the manager is ultimately responsible for ensuring that the team carries out their assigned duties, he is able to make a conscious effort to get to know the team members personally. This technique doesn't mean that managers need to become overly involved in the personal lives of the team, but showing interest in a personal aspect of a direct report can help to build trust and create a strong foundation for a relationship to thrive when dealing with work responsibilities.

Gareth Morgan (1993) speaks to the concept of trust within teams, calling on the individual to play to his best qualities and skills to benefit the team as a whole. Like directors, managers must be keen on sharing visions, ideas, and

structure of the organization as well as any personal interpretations of the team and organization's mission. This idea is further elaborated by Quinn et al (2011) when framing and defining a vision for an organization on any level. These authors explain that in order for teams to have insight on the large perspective or purpose, those in leadership positions must "make a case for change and identify ideal goals by focusing on people." (Quinn et al, 2011, p. 182-183) As mentioned above, directors may have an assistant director or stage manager to aid in this process. Quinn and his team would be inclined to say that when articulating and communicating on any topic, managers should be strategic, appeal to the hearts and minds of their stakeholders, and lead and model the process of achieving the best end result. Here, directors and managers can be seen as an inspiration, inviting others to follow his lead. While there is not a direct correlation of this relationship in the business structure, a manager can ally with other managers or his own manager to creation this relationship. This person can be his "second in command" and act as a sounding board or voice of reason when issues arise or a new idea needs to be vetted.

The idea of team meetings is key in the relationship of the manager and his teammates in the business organization because, as with the work of the principal cast and ensemble, these continuous and routine – and normative – check-ins allow the team to be on the same page and offer help, time, and suggestions to their colleagues. It must also be structured as a safe space to share these feelings whereas they may not be accepted or heard during meetings and in other venues. While the manager is facilitating these meetings,

the meetings essentially serve as a time for team members to voice concerns, share successes, and request help and assistance when issues arise. Like the actors in a production, issues and suggestions for making changes are vetted best when handled by all members of the team. For my teams, I am very much aware of the consistency and frequency of these meetings so that progress can be monitored and problems are brought out into the open without letting them progress into larger issues. I work to ensure that solutions are offered by my team members and I hold them accountable for finding solutions.

Just as with my director role, as a manager, I am seen as a guide or a helping hand. Keeping issues private or bottled up can make for silos (segmented, fortress-like physical work spaces) and allow petty gossip, furthering the breakdown of the relationship of all team members. An idea to manage this specific instance of muddle would be to possibly adopt and adapt the ideas of Liz Lerman's Critical Response Process. Through this process, the manager (or stakeholder in need of feedback) can survey the team for feedback. Throughout each step of Lerman's process is the presence of positivity and permission. The sharing of ideas begins with statements of what is working well and what others appreciate about the artist. Questioning comes next in this process, and in keeping with the through-line of positive thinking, the artist can choose to answer questions or not. In any case, all questions or concerns are heard and shared with the whole group, in an open format.

Within an organization, the team is the machine that keeps the momentum moving forward. With the manager leading the group, each team member is

given sole responsibility for his work or department. They become a main source of knowledge for his specific area. This set up creates a structure where the manager doesn't handle issues; the respective team member, pulling in the manager only if he is needed, handles them. The ownership lies with the team and the manager oversees the work while maintaining the relationship and well-being of his team.

Casting

Nickerson (2014) tells us of two rules that can help in casting the perfect team:

"First, invite people who are likely to have the relevant information, knowledge and experience your team will need to create a feasible, effective and efficient solution. Second, identify the people in trusting relationships with those who are likely to be essential to implementing whatever solution[s] the team comes up with. A network of preexisting relationships and a reservoir of trust are vital resources for building new capabilities. Subordinates on your team with these network resources can make the difference between success and failure" (Nickerson, 2014, p. 58).

Often, the cast is pre-selected for any manager. It is very rare that a manager gets to interview (audition) all new members of a team, although they do and will eventually need to audition new candidates for team roles. Unlike with the director, there isn't a true set beginning and end of a relationship with a whole cast or team. Due to positions and structure changing, individual team members

may come and go, thus setting up the casting process for one role versus many. When directors are auditioning cast members, they ultimately look for those with the skills to carry out the role while thinking about the overall fit with team members already set.   Like an audition process mentioned above, managers should have the options to interview any and all candidates when looking to fill a vacancy within a team. It is important to mention that while skills and know-how are important, the idea of being able to "gel" or fit in cohesively with the other team members may trump this requirement. If skills are rote and easily learned, the previous idea may be all a manager looks for in the casting process. Within my interview structure, I always make certain to hone in on the personality, character and emotional competencies of any candidate. I can facilitate this process by asking them to explain experience in various troubling scenarios, sharing personal values and beliefs as well as asking each of them questions on proper judgment and priority of tasks and duties.

This same process works well, especially when candidates come recommended by a colleague or another manager. Like the private casting auditions, these candidates are interviewed for specific qualities or techniques based on a recommendation by other professionals in the field. Within these types of interviews, managers may ask candidates to expound upon different scenarios and how they would handle them, approach a project or interact with other team members. As with auditions and casting for the director, it often takes more than just the solid skillset to be offered a position. This process may not be fully applicable in its complete state to the manager's role; however, this may be

possible when formulating project teams or assigning a team member to varied task outside the normal purview.

Gareth Morgan (1993) explains that being able to create new, highly creative teams, no matter the makeup of the individuals (new to the organization or within the same team for many years) is key in his theory of Imaginization.

Imaginization is based upon:

1. improving our abilities to see and understand situations in new ways,

2. finding new images for new ways of organizing,

3. the creation of shared understandings,

4. personal empowerment, and

5. developing capacities for continuous self-organization (Morgan, 1993, p. 2).

When creating the relationships for teaming using the techniques of the director, incorporating Morgan's theory is a powerful foundation on which to build the structure of a team.

Scripting

With a fully cohesive team, the manager's work is on its way to becoming highly successful. While there isn't a script to read through and a visual representation to share, I will argue that the script of the team is the sharing of responsibilities and any aspects where members feel that teaming with other colleagues or the manager would be most effective. The manager can lead this walk-through of day-to-day job duties and overall responsibilities, highlighting the areas where inter-team relationships can thrive as well as teaming with other

individuals up and down the larger organization. One technique that I have used with my teams has been the idea of shared responsibility of duties. This process enables all team members to be cross-trained (learning the jobs of others) so that as work flow comes into the team, each team member can take action without relying on others, asking repetitive questions or relying on a single person to take the initiative.

Unlike with the director, the technique of "scripting" doesn't have to always take place at the start of a new business year, but should take place frequently as new projects are introduced, duties change or expand, or when new team members enter the organization. These scripting meetings also allow team members to share their own personal visions of the work at hand and how they think best to handle and tackle new ideas. These ideas can be shared across the team and then set up for constructive feedback and criticism from colleagues. This is a space for personal vision and interpretations to thrive. Having the space to let teams share their responsibilities and ideas provides a lucid understanding of responsibilities and bandwidth that may not be shared regularly. As with a cast, this sharing allows relationships to be further created and solidified. Without using these techniques, teams (or the idea of team) may not actually be extant due to silos and a more independent structure being in place. Using this "scripting" breaks down these silos and allows team members to learn each other's different working styles and ways in which they process feedback.

In my current role as a business manager, we hold monthly team meetings. Generally, these meetings have no set agenda and are specifically a

time where my team can share projects on which they currently are working and

issues or problems that need team assistance for solving. It is also a time to

discuss larger organizational changes and ideas that are important for us all to

hear at the same time. Lasting no more than thirty to forty-five minutes, these

sessions are a great touching-base point for the success of our team. Even

though we work along-side each other, we hardly have the chance to interact

with each other. By holding these meetings routinely, we have been most

successful in addressing tensions within the team and asking for support when it

is most needed. Providing a time and space for face-to-face interactions allows a

deeper connection between my colleagues and me.

With any script, the focus remains on the language and text. The same

can be true of the script within a work team. Each team member has his routine

and processes. The manager can take the lead in driving the understanding of

the personal script and help to make refinements as necessary for the sake of

the whole team and even for political effectiveness with stakeholders..

Scene Work (or blocking)

The previous technique dealt primarily with the thought process and words

behind the true successes of teams. Through this scene work process, we focus

more on the physical aspect of the team. The office environment in which the

team interacts on a daily basis can be directly compared to the stage in which the

director uses to employ this technique. The manager can use this technique to

help bring the feelings, words, and actions to life as colleagues interact with their

teams and others within the organization. We can parallel the concepts of

entrances and exits and use of scenic design within the organization framework. In order to gain and hold successful relationships with colleagues, team members should work with the manager to know when it is appropriate to make their voices heard, as well as when to introduce an idea and "exit the scene" to let ideas be left to interpretation. This methodology can take place during a new project proposal, influencing change to the organization, or incorporating the use of new technology. The timing and sense of self in introducing an idea is just as important as the idea itself. Managers and their teams can practice timing, entrances, and exits -- or knowing when to take initiative or a step back when working on projects or engaging with new team members -- to ensure the most meaningful outcomes that will ultimately lead to successes. As mentioned above, the director is tasked to work with small groups of actors to enact this technique and the same can be true of managers. The scene work process doesn't need to always include all members of a team or all stakeholders within an organization.

It is important for a manager to share with teams that when "blocking" a new idea or concept, the reasons for proposing and introducing the new idea should always align with the visions of the organization – there must always be an underlying purpose to benefit the business as a whole. One example of this technique that I use regularly is helping my teams to see the "big picture." This is most helpful when individuals cannot get past a troubling email, harried phone conversation or a confrontation with another stakeholder. Bringing each team members back to his foundation, to refocus, allows him to see his place in the larger organization. This visual concept is most powerful when individuals can

see that the work they do makes an impact at various points or places within the organization. Organizational politics and power plays into this idea of scene work. Those who hold the power are usually the ones who effect the most change. These few voices are the ones most heard. In order to stop this domination (or upstaging of others) from always taking place, as in the process with the director, managers should be comfortable in asking sense-making questions of clarity to ensure that the team members understand the implication of their own actions and those of others. This step of clarification ensures a continued fit and connection to the overall business; this is where teams begin to understand their place and fit within the organization.

This idea of scene work within my team doesn't always look or feel the same. The script is ever-changing and evolving. A casual dialogue around the water cooler can lead to a more substantial "all-hands" team meeting, which may ultimately lead to the involvement of other teams, senior executives, or heads of departments. As the scene work goes through its iterations, the scene tends to become more formal and structured. At the onset, the manager and his team cultivate the creative piece of this staging technique. They brainstorm and create new ideas that are continually vetted and staged, as they become closer and closer to implementation.

When thinking of the problems that may arise when running these scenes and set blocking, managers should plan for roadblocks, "traffic jams", or instances of resistance as they relate to the overall politics of the organizations. These occurrences should be expected and planned for in advance so that the

overall concept of what is being introduced isn't compromised. During the process of scene work, all ideas are shared as possibilities. No one idea is considered any less important than the next one. While all members of a team may not be on board with a certain stakeholder's idea, the idea should never be dismissed. Instead, this point in the process would prove to be a perfect opportunity to work with and re-define or refine the original idea that encompasses the wants, needs, and feelings of the whole team. What might seem like a potential roadblock in the beginning can lead to a great idea when taken through this process.

As this idea of blocking through issues becomes more routine for the individuals, the more natural the process will become. The internal script will be pre-planned with this technique in mind. The manager is the one who models and uses the techniques so that all team members feel comfortable in incorporating these strategies. As with the actors in theater, this process, too, will become like second nature. As this technique is rehearsed and used routinely, further teamwork and team face time will be expected along with the input and time to work through suggestions and ideas. The more modeling and practice given, the more common this technique will be. It is important to note that within this technique the ideas surrounding when and when not to speak up, knowing when and how to make the next move, as well as the right questions to ask, all come from those who hold the power. Empowering the stakeholders to grasp some of this power will allow the shift in political control from the top level to the

middle and bottom levels of the organization. This will enable a more shared approached to modeling and enacting change.

To further incorporate these ideas of working through staging, we can turn to Barry Oshry's (2007) theory in seeing the "whole" of the organization by using his Time Out of Time (TOOT) method. This method allows stakeholders to step outside of themselves to look at the overall organization. He explains that "[there are] two basic guidelines for TOOT: (1) *Tell the truth* and (2) *listen carefully to others"* (Oshry, 2007, p. 28). This process brings all stakeholders together in one space to learn about what is happening – good or bad – in all other parts of the organization. This method sets up a framework to allow all members of an organization to feel a part of the whole. When individuals are asked to share what they think and whether or not their vision aligns with the bigger organization, the TOOT method can play into aligning their visions. I believe that Oshry's (2007) concept can be taken down to the team level as a continuous thread for teaming. Since trust and relationship factors have been built, the idea of being truthful and accepting, and listening to feedback, can only aid in helping this technique to thrive.

Oshry's TOOT method can be highly effectively when these two simple conditions are met. Among his six key benefits, the most notable and applicable are the ideas of *empathy, depersonalization, revitalization* and *problem solving.* Through the TOOT method, people begin to have more empathy, understanding, and patience with one another. They are less quick to judge and slip into the Side Show. Oshry (2007) refers to the side show as the space in which gossip and

deviations/deviants live, where the Center Ring is the spotlight or the main focus or idea – the "main attraction" – when incorporating this technique.

Next, Oshry explains that the idea of depersonalization comes into play when people begin to see the direct context of others' actions. This helps them to see the issues they are dealing more clearly and he notes that they are less apt to take concerns, issues and actions personally. Revitalization is evident when people are more apt to stay in the Center Ring and put more effort into their work instead of reacting to others. The final concept of Oshry's method is problem solving. Although it is not the purpose of the TOOTs Method to solve problems, problems are clearly identified and brought to the forefront. The main purpose of this idea is that these problems are addressed and dealt with from any place in the system, not just by the Tops or leadership of the organization.

Rehearsing

Rehearsing is key to success in the usage of these techniques within the organization as well. This is the part when team members begin to automatically think like a stage actor, and the manager is there to observe, monitor process and progress and make changes or recommendations as he observes. The manager can take a "big picture" view of how the individuality and team are viewed by others in the organization. This observation technique will allow managers to "polish" and "clean" team members and their processes. The most important technique that can be modeled here is that the team members own the responsibilities and output of the team. The director is part of that team, but now acts like a facilitator and guide.

It is important to note that like the director's process, the manager's process here doesn't have a definitive end. The manager can use the rehearsal process whenever he feels that a refresher or re-purposing is needed. Since ownership is held with all members of the team, the group can work with their manager to try new techniques and ideas, plan out their impacts and implications, and adjust, incorporate, or remove as necessary. Like the director, managers can hold scheduled meetings and feedback sessions –even quick "stand up" meetings or touch-base sessions – to keep abreast of current situations, discussions surrounding successes, and room for improvements. These can be inclusive of the regular schedule team meeting (most often as required my organizations) or held on an individual basis. It is important for team members to commit to these meetings as their individual presence does and will ultimately affect the team as a whole. Since the manager is invested in the team, so too should the team be invested in the manager and his colleagues. The format of these feedback meetings, as in the theater, should be a forum where ideas are shared openly, truthfully and respectfully. The frequency and continual impact of these team meetings are essential to rounding out the incorporating of these techniques. Within my team, if we have to reschedule a meeting or cancel, the act of rescheduling it and holding meeting attendees to being part of them is key. With any type of team meeting or even with individual conversations, results are achieved when all involved parties are responsible. I ensure that when I set up one-on-one meetings with my colleagues that I am attentive in presence and

mind. I devote my attention and time to the meeting and expect my colleagues to do the same should they require my time.

From my experiences in the theater organization, this feedback/rehearsal technique works well when the "production team" technique (noted first in this section) has been adopted and used as a foundation. This process relies on the strongly-formed relationships within a team. With these relationships in place, more value and meaning are put on the feedback shared and the shared appreciation between all members of the team.

***

I have mentioned the five techniques essential to directors as acted out by the manager. The biggest takeaway within all of these techniques is the idea of relationship. The relationship among all involved is the thread that runs continuously through all aspects of these techniques. The sense of "togetherness" is also an important aspect of the successes of these techniques. A key point is that there is not just one leader. The concept of leader is a shared role by all involved. The top-down structure in teaming won't work for these techniques to be used well. By seeing the manager as the end-all and be-all of the decision making process, the concept of actually teaming together with colleagues is nullified. Sharing in the responsibility of leadership allows for an increase in shared power and effectiveness.

"No matter what position you have in the company or what your coworkers do, *you are a performer*. Your work is theatre. Now you must act accordingly."

B. Joseph Pine II & James H. Gilmore, *The Experience Economy,* p. 167

CHAPTER 6

WHERE DO THEY GO FROM HERE?

Now that I have explained the director's techniques re-framed in the lens of the manager, it is important to formally establish an affinity to the two fields of theater and business. By thinking of the business organization functioning like a theater, we can further elaborate on, and make sense of, the use of these techniques in an organization where they may seem, at first glance, out of place.

Pine and Gilmore (2011), explain in great detail, building on Richard Schechner's Enactment Model (1998), the link between theater and business. I plan to use this framework to further illustrate my points made previously. The framework discussed here relies on four essential ideas – drama, script, theater, and performance – to drive the successful nature of any business-related issue. Continuing onward, I will summarize Pine and Gilmore's reiteration of Schechner's model. The overall encompassing idea is that the word *performance*, while it is almost always associated with the theater, shouldn't be connected in such a way in all instances. These authors support that idea that a performance is "an activity done by an individual or group in the presence of and for another individual or group." (p. 184) While quite simple, this all-encompassing definition explains how a performance can be a viable activity in the business organization. To further this point, Pine and Gilmore (2011) explain that this model "embraces not only the staging of plays, but also the staging of business." (p. 184)

The model, made up concentric circles, starts from the center ring and continues outwards with each ring containing terminology from the world of theater and its direct connection to a concept in the business organization. Beginning outside of the circle diagram, the concepts of *Audience* and *Customers* are linked as a pair. In the business setting, the customer is truly the audience. They are the ones being served by the organization. The activities being vetted are for the customer – those who grow the bottom line and who are the make or break point – everything – in determining successes. The stakeholders rely on their audience to provide feedback and insight in order to keep the business moving in a positive direction towards continued success.

As I begin to relate the terminology, I will be relying on the interpretations of Richard Schechner as researched by Pine and Gilmore (2011) in their popular text, *The Experience Economy*. First, we begin with the pairing of strategy and drama. Here, *drama* is meant to convey the artistic genre where the actual body of work takes place on the blank canvas of the stage. When pairing this idea of *drama* within the theater to that of the organization, for a business activity that is simple and plain, with the *drama* added, strategy and planning come into play. *Drama* is shown here as the strategic vision, mission, or plan of an organization. This sets the activity "on its feet" and gives stakeholders a clear path of the direction in which the company is headed. To summarize, drama is a direct parallel to strategy within the organization. There would be no strategy without stakeholders enacting the vision and mission of the organization.

Continuing out into the next ring, our authors link *script* and *processes* together. Pine and Gilmore (2011) define the *script* as the code of events in a performance. Whereas the *drama* sets the overall vision, the *script* paves the way for the activity to function while keeping the *drama* close to the hearts and minds of the individuals involved. Ultimately, the *script* interprets the *drama*. Stakeholders in the business organization must learn (even memorize) and "live" the *script* – essentially the plan -- in order to carry out this connection in the most effective way possible.

Next, we link the ideas of *theater* and *work.* Schechner concludes, as explained by Pine and Gilmore (2011) that, "within this context, *theater* is the event enacted by a specific group of performers; what the performers actually do during production…the manifestation or representation of the drama and/or the script… [this is] both the function and the form that bring the drama and its script to life." (p. 185) In making a direct connection, bringing any project or activity to life within any business is breathing life into the theatrical aspect of the organization. The function and form of the work at hand within the business organization can be a success or failure dependent on implementation methods or how it is presented, received, perceived, and by how much it engages the customer, stakeholder, or audience.

Finally, Pine and Gilmore (2011) use Schechner's model to relate *performance* to *offering.* The connection here is the value that the customer or audience takes away from an activity. This pairing can be characterized as the "hook" that grabs the audience right from the start and the very last sentiment

they experience before exiting the theater or exiting a project or activity. One can ask him or herself: *what I have gained from this experience? What is the value to me and how can use what I know to continue making sense of the world around me?* In summary, by using Schechner's Enactment Model equivalents, we can clearly see a direct link between theater and business organizations.

To further illustrate the point this link, Pine and Gilmore take the Enactment Model to a more detailed level relating the theater stage to the workplace. In essence, these physical spaces are one and the same. Also designed using concentric circle, and with Schechner's model as a foundation, Pine and Gilmore's Performance Model goes into greater detail on a more granular level to explore the factors that drive any performance.

Here, *people* (or the *cast*) are at the center hub of the system. This cast is the people of an organization picked to function within a certain role or to handle a specific responsibility based on his experience, previous roles within the organization, or through concepts of teaming and relationships with others. These are effectively the right people to play the right parts. In order for the concept of *[drama = strategy]* to thrive, the right people have to implement the strategy or the right cast has to implement the drama.

Continuing into the next ring, theater *roles* are the equivalent of the various *responsibilities* within an organization's activity. Responsibilities are key in supporting the enactment of the ideas that *[script = processes]*. As shared early on, the roles of those active players aren't the only ones contributing to the overall performance. They are supported by those "backstage" – the production

team or crew – that ensures the flow and seamlessness of the overall activity. There are specific individuals cast into these roles to allow for true success for all.

Next, we explore the idea that *representations* are equivalent to *characterizations.* Pine and Gilmore (2011) explain "people take on roles, but they act out characters." (p. 212) When theater actors take on a character, they assume a role, learn about the life of that part, then actively decide – or work at – how they want to be portrayed and represented when viewed by the larger cast of characters. This concept drives the earlier idea that *[theater = work]*.

Finally, explaining the connection of ensemble and organization concludes this model exploration. Pine and Gilmore illustrate this point by formally relating the whole idea of people, responsibilities, and representations – or cast, roles, characterizations – working and intertwined together as the inclusive body that functions as a whole. No one part is greater or more prominent than the others. Successful relationship between these parts leads to the success of each organization.

Just as Schechner had hoped to relay when summarizing his model, Pine and Gilmore (2011) attempt to do the same here in saying that when *[ensemble = organization]* great character work is taking place. Stakeholders observe, listen, and respect each other and there is true camaraderie for the success of each individual. In each activity, the relationship between cast members and the relationship created with the audience or customers is of utmost importance.

Pine and Gilmore simplify their Performance Model into the following structure:

Table 4. Performance Model Equivalents (Pine and Gilmore, 2011, p. 213)

[cast = people]
must take on
[roles = responsibilities]
by making choices to develop compelling
[characterizations = representations]
that form a cohesive
[ensemble = organization]
to engage guests in memorable ways

In summary, it is important to state that while the idea of (theatrical) performance isn't commonplace in the organization, the idea isn't too far removed. Having a top-notch performance on stage delivers rave reviews and crucial acclaim from audience and critics. Within the organization, this same praise is delivered and rewarded through internal performance appraisal systems and the continuous successful outcomes of duties, responsibilities and projects. I would even continue to conclude that when a stakeholder acts within the set parameters of the organization, he is working "on stage" in hopes of delivering a stellar performance.

Pine and Gilmore use the Performance Model to directly relate the theater with the business organization. One is able to see how the creativity,

cohesiveness, and responsibility of a theater ensemble can align definitively with the stakeholders of a business organization.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the models explained above offer a solid reference and resource to provide and model a constant reminder of the hypothesis I posed at the onset of this paper. Restating my hypothesis and looking through a more granular lens, it is easier to now see how the manager's role benefits from the director's role. The director and manager are part of a cast with specific roles that function in a way to represent the larger organization. The manager and director are key roles in the ensemble of any organization. The idea of creativity and change aren't just pertinent to the organization overall, but can reside in the choices and actions any manager takes. This change can be the thought process of creating new intuitive, innovative ideas for better business, obtaining more clients, or growing the bottom line financially. In addition, and maybe quite more resounding and important, it is the creativity and change within the relationship of the cast and their set roles that can also be renewed and improved upon. Being able to better connect with stakeholders, understanding their backgrounds, foundations for learning, and the strengths they bring to the organization, can further advance the overall needs of the organization. A manager must first concentrate on his cast of characters, developing a strong relationship within the team, before tackling responsibilities, projects and programs. Giving colleagues

the freedom to express themselves creatively can ultimately impact the work being performed.

In my experiences, whether being managed by another or managing my own team, it is important to me that my colleagues feel comfortable in the work environment. This idea of feeling comfortable comes from a shared partnership built on support and trust among the manager, team member and colleagues as well as on an environment that allows for empowerment and ownership when problems occur as well as a shared responsibility for remediation. This is the same when working with fellow actors in the theater. Not only do my casts need to be comfortable with me and the space, but they need to feel comfortable in expressing who they are and what can be brought to the group as a whole without the fear of failing or "being wrong." I have often allowed my colleagues and teammates to sing while working, share mantras, or display motivational pictures, posters, or knick-knacks. I also encourage teaming, but more in the social sense. Time spent together that is purely social, such as scheduled outings, meeting at the local brew-pub over Happy Hour, sharing in meditative sessions, taking a walk through the work campus, or chatting by the coffee machine in the office conference room greatly builds relationships. In my experience, I have called this social teaming. In my role as business manager, all of my supervisors have supported this framework and have allowed social teaming to thrive. This carries over to my theater roles when I directed and when others have directed me. The work off-stage is just as important as the work

onstage. Facilitating a creative and open environment where all feel comfortable leads to great success up, down, and across organizational structures.

By allowing these creative sparks to emerge, the cohesion among stakeholders, the process in which work is completed and the relationship between all of these individuals and their functions can provide efficient and effective success. By keeping a strong through-line of being transparent, trust is gained, ideas are shared openly and acted upon regardless of the outcome. In this framework, colleagues openly ask for feedback, act on constructive criticism, and partner with teams to become better people, better at the work at hand, and better teammates. Managers should keep the techniques described and detailed in the previous chapters as a resource guide to keep the innovative and creative ideas fresh and new. Relying on and using the techniques and ideas of the director can lead to great and welcomed change within in any organization.

In table 5 below, each technique is summarized as it relates to the role of the manager and director:

Table 5. Techniques as related to Director and Manager

Technique	As it relates to the:		
	Director	Manager	
Production Teams	heart of a production; all share in director's vision; a director's eyes and ears	Heart of an organizational team; trust is gained and vision is shared through the relationship building with manager and individuals; opportunity to highlight and engage team members with applicable and cohesive skills	CONTINUOUS THREAD OF RESPONSIBILITY
Casting	The selection process of principals and ensemble who bring script to life on stage; the auditioning of individuals to find best artistic skill; short engagement – hired for one contract/production	Most often pre-selected, but ability exists to audition candidates within the life-cycle of a team; long term engagement; preference of desired candidate who brings a creation vision and understanding of role to the team	
Scripting	Actors use scripting to share in director's vision; the process by which connections and meanings for characters and the written word are made; director is a guide in this process	Script isn't documented, rather a sharing of responsibilities; relying on skillset of other team members to make connections; manager as facilitator/guide to ensure all stakeholders are aware of others and their impact as well as clearly outlining processes through well-defined communication	
Scene Work (or blocking)	Moves the scripting process to the stage, usage of full space, entrances and exits confirmed and use of set pieces and props are introduced; starts with principals and builds to include ensemble roles; script becomes internal	Physical space in which the team operates along with the manager; brings out the intangible traits within the team; entrances and exits "blocked" for new and continuous projects; knowing when to relieve team members of their duties and when to re-engage them; openness and truthful engagement; information is shared transparently	
Rehearsing	Vision and scene work of cast comes to life on stage; a time for adjusting, polishing or tweaking script and/or blocking; open format for critical feedback; change is a collaborative process	Manager allows team members to function like actors; feedback is key - observe, monitor process and progress and make changes as needed; no true end; always in need of refresh and re-purpose; continues the circle of trust; team is held accountable through collaborative process	

Implications, Possible Roadblocks and Recommendations

While the conclusions drawn from this topic seem all well and good as described above, it is important to note that, although this paper expounds on the ways a manager can benefit from the director to be more effective and efficient, there is not much information provided on how to combat problems or issues when these techniques do not work. Often, directors are faced with a dilemma of having too free of an environment. Being immersed in an environment that calls for constant input and feedback can put the director in a compromising position. He will likely have trouble taking all ideas into consideration. Time simply won't allow for everyone's specific contributions to be vetted. Larger issues of funding, cash flow, and administrative issues and complexities – buying concessions, printing of the production programs, external factors such as weather, building, and facility maintenance – can also bog down a director, causing him or her to be pulled away from the artistry and creativity. The same can be true of the manager. He will need to be cautious in using only these techniques without being able to adapt and tweak as seen fit. Too free of an environment in the business organization can be more problematic than in the theater organization. In theater, having a free environment is a welcomed technique that is often expected. This, however, is not true of business. There needs to be much more time dedicated to this idea of implementing the director's techniques in a manner that allows them to be readily and eagerly accepted.

With that being said, implications for further research should include alternate methods and techniques to use when the above-mentioned ideas are not adopted fully or cause further issues within the business organization environment. One might also want to research what to do when there is a need for creative and innovative change, but the pairing of the director's role with that of the manager isn't a fit for a particular organization. It might also be helpful to note that further study should be given to encouraging teammates and stakeholders to model and share the vision in support of the manager. This idea would allow the ownership to be more in the hands of those who ultimately need to accept and use the techniques versus the manager or director leading and effecting the change all on his own.

Personal Value

Dan P. MacAdams (1993) writes on creating one's personal myth, or the narrative comprising our adult identity. He explains that "we begin to generate and collect [the] images for our personal myths in early childhood. [Images] are the raw materials out of which our personal myth is to be made… [and they help] to shape our understanding of who we are and how we fit into the world" (p. 65). As explained in the introduction to this paper, and as long as I can remember, there have always been creative images in my life, from infancy, through childhood, and into adulthood. In making sense of my personal story, I always knew that it would tie to the arts – more specifically, the theater.

Throughout all of my life, I have been preparing to share this story with an audience. As I grew into a developed and skilled business manager, through my part-time jobs, summer internships, and full-time work, I always felt that the creative and theatrical side of me was missing in these roles. In preparing, researching, and detailing my thoughts and techniques for this capstone, I am finally able to share my story with others. The idea of sharing this story goes beyond the simple act of doing just that. It is my hope that it will have a further reach and that what I share here will lead someone to create better workplace relationships, more effective teaming, and encourage an ensemble of characters that can continuously learn and benefit from one another. Even if I reach just one person, my personal value in sharing these ideas will be recognized.

I will conclude with another thought from McAdams (1993) as he shares the following in relationship to our personal stories. While the following quote

sums up the writing of the personal identity myth from infancy to the present, I think about his idea not only as a foundation in which the personal story is rooted, but also as grounds to continue the sense-making journey in years to come. If the individual isn't invested in the personal myth as being meaningful to him- or herself along with the importance of its use in society, then the work of the author is lacking. The personal story isn't just for personal use. The reach is greater than oneself. There is a purpose and a higher calling that is much greater than the author (or manager or director).

McAdams (1993), closes Chapter 4 of his book, *The Stories We Live By*, with the following thought. This quote is a wonderful conclusion to being able to share my personal myth's value and purpose with you, the reader:

> "We must be true to ourselves, certainly. But we must be true to our time and place. If our myths do not integrate us into a social world and a sequence of generations, then the development of identity runs the risk of degenerating into utter narcissism. Ideally, the mythmaker's art should benefit both the artist who fashions the myth and the society that adorns it" (p. 113).

EPILOGUE

A vignette: A not-so-typical typical Friday morning in Suite 1100

It's a cold January morning as I walk through the side entrance to our suite around 7:45am. I am greeted by Gail (my direct report) as she sees me pass by her desk – "Morning, Sam!" she says melodically, "Hap-hap-happy Friday to you!" I am bundled up from the winter cold, complete with oversized parka, infinity scarf, ear wrap and ski gloves and, while I can't fully see or hear, I don't even have to turn around to know Gail is dancing in her chair with her R&B tunes blaring through her headset. I settle into my cubicle and greet Gail in an even more melodious chant (complete with a riff like Christina Aguilera) and we both settle into our to-do lists for the morning.

Around 8:30, my morning emails are answered, SiriusXM Radio is blaring channel 72 – "On Broadway" – through my USB-connected speakers, and I make my way over to the kitchenette for my second cup of coffee for the morning. On the way over to the coffee machine, I meet up with Laura, also craving her second cup of dark roast for the morning. As she pops her K-cup in the machine and swings around the corner to pop her lunch into the refrigerator, she asks me if I can sing the lyrics to Taylor Swift's newest song as her daughter has been singing it non-stop and it's stuck in her head, but all she can recall is the beat and a few basic words. This is routine for us – Laura always asks me to keep her up-to-date on the newest music trends. We share a lyric or two, prepare our coffees and head back to our desks, but not before we exchange few kick-ball-change steps.

En route back to my box-like "cube", eager to hear Broadway Connoisseur Seth Rudetsky's latest commentary about the new musical to open ringing from the internet radio, Alicia, our supervisor, arrives at her office door, jingling her ring of keys and greets us with a Journey song that she heard on the ride into work that morning followed by a harmonious, "Morning, all! How are we all doing today?" Gail and I sing right back to her greeting without missing a beat.

Another hour passes. Karen and Marjorie arrive, settle into their offices and waste no time cranking out work, making for a busy (and isolated) morning. Another couple of hours pass and we realize that we have all been furiously working – typing away, answering emails, making calls, making copies and checking items off of our to-do lists – when Alicia announces that it's time for a team dance break. She comes around to the offices and cubicles of the team and insists we take a stretch break, get up from our desk and literally dance to Marjorie's song choice of the day. Marjorie has a plethora of songs on her Android Phone playlist. This morning's song choice booms from Marjorie's cell phone and usually is a Top 40 hit or an old 1980s jam. It's not long before we are all busting out dance moves and singing the chorus to Sweet Caroline, while spinning in our desk chairs.

***

Years ago, the notion of a team break would be unheard of in our suite. With Alicia as a relatively new manager to the team, she understands the need for freedom of creative outlets in our office space. While all of the office leadership may not agree with her, Alicia, along with us, has made this a necessity when managing our team, so much so that word of our "dance parties" has spread like wildfire through the organization. We have even gone on "trips" to bring the dance party to other departments and individuals, especially to those who didn't believe that we schedule time for these breaks or those that simply need a creative jolt on a mundane Monday afternoon. This environment is one where our team thrives!

We may seem silly or feel out of place, but it's the support of the team that allows this functionality to work. It allows us to have fun while enjoying each other's' company in addition to our work-related responsibilities and this small notion of "dance breaking" with colleagues leads to better relationships within our job roles and responsibilities, both large scale and on smaller projects.

Gail and I used to have conflicting ideas and we often butted heads on assignments. Being able to connect with her on non-work related ideas – not to mention sharing many songs and laughs – has greatly improved our relationship, so much that I am now her manager and she is comfortable with me and comfortable in coming to me with issues, ideas, and suggestions. I am thankful to the leadership of our team for setting the foundation where the

commitment to our work is held in the highest regard, but the commitment to being creative individuals outside of our jobs is just as important.

Alicia gives me the support to be creative, not only in the fun aspect of the work day, but in organization-wide projects and the impetus to thinking differently when it comes to onboarding new staff, introducing new programs and training colleagues. She often allows me to take full leadership, while taking risks, in making choices that will better engage our audience, colleagues and external clients regardless of failure or outcome. I find myself building on my skills as a director, musician, stage actor, and performer in my role as a middle manager. By having these set times to get to know each other and our business better, we are more productive when it comes to work load, responsibilities and thinking creatively. When the work environment is a pleasant place to be, the quality and efficiency of the employee's work grows immensely. Whether a success or failure, Alicia supports me through the good, the bad and the ugly.

The stark contrast between this epilogue and the interactions and environment presented in the prologue is presented to show how different, yet successful, a team can be when thinking innovatively and adopting the techniques presented as an active stakeholder in the team along with the leadership of the manager. Roles and responsibilities that can otherwise be mundane and routine can prove to be newly exciting and engaging when incorporating a new approach.

REFERENCES

Boubil, A., & Schonberg, C. (1987). *Les miserables*. New York, NY: Decca Broadway.

Bridges PhD, W. (2009). *Managing transitions: Making the most of change* (3rd ed.). Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: Da Capo Press.

Cornelissen, J. P. (2004). What are we playing at? theatre, organization, and the use of metaphor. *Organization Studies, 25*(5), 705.

Dunham, L., & Freeman, R. E. (2000). There is business like show business: Leadership lessons from the theater. *Organizational Dynamics, 29*(2), 108-122. doi:http://proxy.library.upenn.edu:2100/10.1016/S0090-2616(00)00018-8

Friedman, L. (2002). *Break a leg! the kids' guide to acting & stagecraft*. New York, NY: Workman Publishing Company, Inc.

Hamel, G. (2007). In Breen B. (Ed.), *The future of management*. Boston, Massachusetts: Harvard Business Review Press.

Hamlisch, M., & Kleban, E. (1975). *A chorus line*. New York, NY: Columbia Records.

Herbst, P. G. (1970). Behavioural worlds: The study of single cases. *Social Forces, 51*(1), 106.

Herbst, P. G. (1973). *Behavioural worlds: The study of single cases*. London, UK: Tavistock Publications.

Herbst, P. G. (1976). Non-hierarchical forms of organizations. *Acta Sociologica, 19*(1), 65.

Hill, L. A., Bandeau, G., Truelove, E., & Lineback, K. (2014). *Collective genius: The art and practice of leading innovation*. Boston, Massachusetts: Harvard Business Review Press.

Jagiello, J. (2002). Organisational theatre of professional practice: The application of the forum theatre technique to business ethics. *Business and Professional Ethics Journal, 21*(2), 91. doi:http://www.jstor.org/stable/27801282

Keidel, R. W. (2010). *The geometry of strategy: Concepts for strategic management* Routledge.

Lehner, J. M. (2008). The staging model: The contribution of clasical theatre directors to project management in development contexts. *International Journal of Project Management, 27*, 195.

Lerman, L., & Borstel, J. (2003). *Liz lerman's critical response process: A method for getting useful feedback on anything you make, from dance to dessert* (First ed.). Takoma Park, MD: Liz Lerman Dance Exchange.

Martin, D. M. (2004). Humor in middle management: Women negotiating the paradoxes of organizational life. *Journal of Applied Communication Research, 32*(2), 147.

McAdams, D. P. (1993). *The stories we live by: Personal myths and the making of the self*. New York: The Gilford Press.

Meisiek, S. (2002). Situation drama in change management: Types and effects of a new managerial tool. *International Journal of Arts Management, 4*(3), 48.

Morgan, G. (1989). *Creative organization theory: A resourcebook* SAGE Publications.

Morgan, G. (1993). *Imaginization: The art of creative management.* California: SAGE Publications.

Morgan, G. (2006). *Images of organizations* (Updated ed.) SAGE Publications, Inc.

Nickerson, J. (2014). *Leading change from the middle: A practical guide to building extraordinary capabilities (innovations in leadership).* Washington, DC: Brookings Institutional Press.

Nissley, N., Taylor, S. S., & Houden, L. (2004). The politics of performance in organizational theatre-based training and interventions. *Organization Studies, 25*(5), 817.

O'Connor, D., & Peterson, L. (1997). In Ramsey D. (Ed.), *Kids take the stage: Helping young people discover the creative outlet of theater.* New York, NY: Watson-Guptill Publications.

Oshry, B. (2007). *Seeing systems: Unlocking the mysteries of organizational life* (2nd ed.). San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler.

Oshry, B., & Schlesinger, L. A. (1984). Quality of work life and the manager: Muddle in the middle. *Organizational Dynamics, 13*(1), 5.

Pine II, B. J., & Gilmore, J. H. (2011). *The experience economy* (Updated ed.).

    Boston, Massachusetts: Harvard Business Review Press.

Quinn, R. E., Faerman, S. R., Thompson, M. P., McGrath, M. R., & St. Clair, L. S.

    (2011). In Johnson L., Vernon S. (Eds.), *Becoming a master manager: A*

    competing values approach (Fifth ed.). Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.

Rath, T., & Conchie, B. (2001). *Strengths based leadership: Great leaders,*

    teams and why people follow. New York: Gallup Press.

Schechner, R. (2003). *Performance theory*. New York: Routledge.

Shurtleff, M. (1978). *Audition: Everything an actor needs to know to get the part*.

    New York: Bantam Books.

Vaill, P. (1991). *Managing as a performing art: New ideas for a world of chaotic*

    change (1st ed.). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.