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Leadership Versus Management and Needing Both  
to be a Successful Stage Manager

THESIS

Submitted in partial satisfaction of the  
requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF FINE ARTS

In Drama

By

Nathaniel Chase

Thesis Committee:  
Professor Don Hill, Chair  
Professor Joel Veenstra  
Professor Daniel Gary Busby

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## **ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS**

Leadership Versus Management and Needing Both  
to be a Successful Stage Manager

By

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Master of Fine Arts in Drama

University of California, Irvine, 2017

Professor Don Hill, Chair

The term “stage management” is misleading when trying to fully understand how someone functions in this role. The term in itself allows one to believe the primary function is to manage the stage and those involved. Saying that stage managers simply manage the stage, while accurate, is not the whole truth. One must not only be a manager, but also be a leader. A stage manager must act as a leader in varying degrees and at different points throughout the process of a production. With exploration of what constitutes a manager and a leader, I determine that one needs to understand and utilize both management and leadership in order to be a successful stage manager.

## Introduction

Theatre inadvertently cultivates many of its stage managers more towards being managers than leaders. Management and leadership are two terms often erroneously perceived as interchangeable. These concepts are very different in nature, and one could argue that leadership is more important than management or vice versa. However, if you are caring for a team or attempting to successfully accomplish a goal, such as a theatrical production, having both of these foundations is very important. A stage manager must not only be a good manager, but also an effective leader in order to be successful.

## A Discussion of Management

Webster's dictionary describes "managing" as exercising administrative, supervisory control, and direction over a company or group. From this definition, we find that managers have a more rigid type of role. Managers are there to maintain the status quo, to maintain organization of the team through records, jobs, and people, as well as make sure that the group is functioning properly. In the book *Harvard Business Review on Leadership* (16-22), Henry Mintzberg describes three areas within which a manager functions: decisional, informational, and interpersonal. These three functions seem to be a recurring theme throughout various explorations of what management entails.

Decisional functions include aspects such as negotiating, controlling the group, determining resource usage, and handling disputes. This role can cause the manager to seem removed from an emotional connection to the team, although the manager can still have strong loyalty in, and concern for, the company. We find decision in stage managers through delegating daily duties. Managers look at who already possesses a particular

skill, and employs that team member to perform a daily task (i.e. tracking, blocking, or scheduling) in order to help the flow of the day-to-day needs. A stage manager must also see what problems may occur and what solutions can be offered that are best for the project. Many times these solutions are not win-win, but are based on what will best serve the producer of the show.

The informational portion makes up a major part of what stage managers do, and this concept consists of collecting, monitoring, and disseminating information. A stage manager is the central hub of all information that comes into and out of the rehearsal or performance space; a manager is always collecting knowledge of the social temperature, what the gossip is, what foreseeable problems may arise, and which potential successes can be capitalized on.

Monitoring and information sit hand in hand. Through monitoring, a manager will learn what information is bubbling up from within the company; even gossip can contain important information. By monitoring this information, it can then be disseminated to surrounding groups of employees, CEOs, or customers when appropriate. The manager must know what is viable and what is not, who needs to hear certain bits of information, and who does *not* need to hear certain information. The manager must also know who may be lacking access to information, and make sure that these members receive proper communication.

Interpersonal roles lean closer to leadership (and can include leadership in a small capacity) in that the manager needs to keep the team working successfully under his or her supervision. Often this means that the manager must take a human approach to working with employees, whether this means attending weddings, bringing in a birthday



cake, or having conversations outside of working hours; a manager needs to express their humanity and keep the culture of the work force functioning in top condition, including mentally and emotionally.

Bertman Raven, a faculty member in the psychology department at UCLA developed five different categories of “social powers” (*Shafritz 250-252*). These social powers are: Reward Power, Coercive Power, Legitimate Power, Referent Power, and Expert Power. Reward Power is the perception that the manager can give rewards to the employees. For example, if an employee feels that the manager is able to offer them a raise in their Christmas bonus then the employee will be more inclined to obey the requests of the manager. Coercive Power is the opposite of Reward. The employee believes that the manager could potentially fire or demote them for requests not met. Legitimate Power is based on the belief that the manager has the right to tell the employee what to do. Referent Power is the identification of the employee to the manager. This means that the manager has power because the employee feels connected to them through aspects such as admiration, respect, or other similarities to the employee’s personal life. Then there is Expert Power, which is based on the manager having the knowledge and expertise allowing them to have power over someone who is lacking the knowledge.

### **A Discussion of Leadership**

Leadership is defined as the action of leading a group of people or an organization. Shortening the word to “leader” leaves us with a similar definition: a person who leads or commands a group or organization. Boiling it down to the root of the word, lead means to cause a person to go with or follow someone, be the reason or motivation

for someone, to be in charge of someone, or to initiate action or forward momentum. We often get stuck when trying to define who a leader is or how a leader functions. What do they do? If we were to use the basic definition then we could argue that a leader is simply someone who is in a high level within a company and propels the company forward in profits and building itself better with each successive year. In theatre, this is someone who is guiding the production towards excellence while keeping things operating smoothly, making for a spectacular show both from an employee and an audience perspective. However, every business looks for something different in a leader, which makes finding a single definition complex – if not impossible.

Leadership, in essence, comes down to how who the leader is as a person serves the type of leadership a business needs in order to thrive. Darlene Leiding speaks of three broad categories of leadership in *Managers make the difference – managing vs leading in our schools* (33-60). These three categories are hierarchical, transformational, and facilitative. Hierarchical leadership consists of leading from the top down. This style has a boss and the employees below follow the directives, decisions, and wishes of this leader. The transformational leader uses persuasion and emotion to gather the employees to jump on the bandwagon and get them excited to move in the desired direction. Facilitative leaders use other leaders within the group, form teams, and make sure that communication is happening throughout the teams.

Along with these styles of leadership I would like to offer a few more to the list for consideration: democratic, strategic, transactional, and visionary. Democratic leadership is similar to facilitative, but not quite the same. In democratic leadership, we find that the leader maintains the power, but incorporates the suggestions and the ideas of

those not in the leadership position in order to keep people invested in the company. Strategic leadership can be seen as somewhat manipulative, but it is meant for the greater good of the group. This style uses the leader's influence on others to make decisions that will accomplish the goals of the group. Transactional leadership is a *quid pro quo* style, in that the leader will reward others for making certain decisions or accomplishing tasks. Visionary leadership is similar to transformational in getting people on board with a goal, except it is less emotional and persuasive and instead uses inspiration, attempting to show others how they are important to the goal; both the leader and followers work together in this model to move towards a combined vision for the company or group.

### **Effective Leaders**

A great leader must be able to switch between styles when needed. Depending on individual employees and the types of goals a company would like to reach, the effective leader needs to consider a few things. Firstly, the leader ought to consider why they were brought into the company and know what their own style of leadership is, which is most likely why they were hired. The next point of consideration is who the employees are; if a group of people functions under a different style of leadership than that of the person engaged to work with them, a different approach may be needed to gain their trust and get them on board. Groups of people change as time goes on, and a good leader is able to change to keep up with the shifting culture. Thus, a good leader must be familiar with different types of leadership as well as different types of followers.

A leader needs to have a vision, sometimes called having a "why". Your why acknowledges what your goals are, or why you are involved with the business, group, or project. In Simon Sinek's TED Talk on this topic, he explains how to find and be

successful with your why. A leader needs to know their own why and the why of the company for which they are working. The why of a company is the essence of the company's mission statement. "Why are you doing what you are doing?" When you discover the why, you will be immensely helpful to furthering the group's future and goals. You could even take this one step further and discover your followers' whys. Why are they in the company? What do they hope to get out of this project? Knowing your followers' whys will gain trust and respect leading into their receptiveness to being motivated, inspired, and influenced by you.

Motivation, inspiration, and influence are tools an effective leader will know how to utilize. Motivation helps employees gain momentum and empowerment to move as individuals and as a group toward accomplishing goals, and without it the group will not complete tasks effectively or efficiently. Inspiration is something leaders strive to give their employees; an individual who is inspired can come up with creative solutions, and will feel empowered to take on challenges and make decisions. A leader who inspires is a great asset to the company. Last, but not least, influence is an important tool for a leader. Influence manifests itself through the behaviors and opinions of others onto an individual or a group of people. I find influence to be helpful when the leader associates it with how they operate within the team. If a leader has a positive attitude and is not afraid to working alongside the followers, then the followers will feel persuaded and wish to comply when given tasks because they know the leader is one of them.

In *How to Win Friends and Influence People* (39-78), Dale Carnegie writes about the influence someone can have while trying to get people to follow. This book is a must read for anyone looking to become a better leader. It explains that being a leader is also

being a good person. Being an all-around good person will allow you an easier time managing, leading, and accomplishing goals for the group or business. Some of the points Carnegie makes are: take interest in others, smile, and listen longer. Taking interest in others is very important since it shows that you care the other person is present. The follower will feel welcome and accepted, thus they will be more willing to contribute to the goal. If you take interest in others, they will be drawn to take more interest in you, in what your goals are, and will feel a connection to you. Once a connection is created, you are apt to have their loyalty and dedication to you as a leader, as well as to the group and its goals.

When talking with others, whether the encounter brings up good news or bad news, a smile can go a long way. Smiling will result in a pleasant experience for the other person. A smile can say many things. It may let the other person know that you are willing to come up with a solution or hear a suggestion to the problem. Even in day-to-day encounters, if you neglect to smile, others may see you as cold and removed, causing them to stay away from you, in turn losing the devotion and connection you were working to create.

Listening longer is something that may feel difficult at times with our busy schedules or short break periods. However, listening longer shows the other person that you continue to care about them and that they matter to you. If you listen longer, you may even stumble upon a problem or a solution to something you didn't have on your radar in the first place. Listening longer can also instill a sense of trust among followers, because they feel heard and respected by their leader. What better way to get people on your side than to make them feel important and respected?

Something else most leaders do is to train an heir. Many leaders in business have mentioned this concept. If something were to happen to the current leader, or if the leader were to get promoted, someone would need enough knowledge to take over from the current leader and smoothly transition the company through the shift in leadership. These successors may include an assistant who has worked under the leader for years, or someone from the group of subordinates that exhibits great potential. These heirs must be built up, and trained in the current leader's methodology, then given the freedom to explore their own style of leading. This allows a stress-free transition for a company, and leaves a positive legacy for the departing employee.

### **Management and Leadership in Stage Management**

Throughout this exploration of management and leadership, the information has been focused on a general application within the business environment. I am now going to focus on stage management and the use of management and leadership within theatre. Theatre is a culmination of all aspects in life. Business, construction, engineering, electrical, health care, psychology, physiology, biology, history, and anthropology are all a few areas that are encountered while building a production both on and offstage. Looking more in depth, theatre can include dance, painting, design, fashion, audio and visual arts, and even the human body itself as an element of art. We also include management, but there is not much talk about leadership. You can find hundreds of talks or literature on Management and Leadership within the business field and in corporations, but not much is found when talking specifically about stage management in theatre. In arguing that stage managers not only need to be good managers, they also need to be good leaders. Not only good managers and leaders, but stage managers also need to

know how to ebb and flow their power and leadership with other members of the artistic team, such as the director.

When asking “What is a stage manager?”, the name itself may lead one to think that a stage manager is someone who manages the stage. When looking at the words stage manager we see “stage”, which indicates a physical space where actors perform a show, and we see “manager”, someone who controls, records, supervises, and directs the group. The misnomer lies in the word stage in conjunction with the word manager. In reality stage managers actually manage the people: Cast, Designers, Crews, Directors as well as information going to or coming from the director, the designers, and the producers and production managers. Managing the physical stage, more specifically, lies with the production manager. Stage managers manage the company or group of people using that physical space.

Stage managers must be able to manage very well. Thinking back to the previously stated definition of a manager: exercising administrative, supervisory, control, and direction over a company or group, adding timekeeper to this definition, it can seem like we have a very non-expressive or unentertaining job. Other managers will agree through their own experiences with management, but being a stage manager rarely feels dull. This is where maintaining the human aspect comes in, and eventually leading to the ability to be a good leader.

As a stage manager, one comes in contact with so many people every day and this can change simply on how big the cast size is for different productions. It becomes imperative for a stage manager to also be a people person. It is important to keep a positive energy and a polite demeanor. A perceived unhappy and uncomfortable stage

manager can alter the culture in the room, even if not intending to do so. One needs to be always present. This can express itself either physically or mentally. As stage manager, one must stay in the room. The stage manager is the first point of contact for questions, requests, and check-ins from outside team members, as well as being the point person in the case of an emergency. If the stage manager is not physically present, the group can become confused and implement irrational or detrimental decisions that can set the process back or even harm someone. When needing to be present mentally, one must be able to switch conversations when necessary, jump in and out of different conversations, and have a continual ear out to the cast and director. The stage manager may have the answer to a question that will save everyone a lot of time. You are expected to be at least one step ahead of the room and on some occasions, you must also utilize the power of mind reading or predicting the future. This includes when the scene feels like it is coming to an end and a scenic change is approaching, or it could also mean you have become in tune with your director and anticipate when he/she may need something. You can learn a lot just by being watchful and observant. You need to keep your eyes on every little thing, including the clock. Having a watchful eye allows you to read the room. Are cast members getting tired? Is something physically safe to do? Does a prop look like it is about to break? Was the blocking that just happened correct? Stage managers will benefit from having extremely watchful eyes and highly attentive ears. You must record everything that occurs and filter what is pertinent for those who are not in the room to know. Sometimes a stage manager interacts very little with the room and sometimes they interact a lot; one needs to be adaptable. A stage manager is even a confidant and a friend. They must be the most levelheaded people in the room; this allows others to



confide in or look for inspiration from them. If you are perceived as a “wild card”, most will not look to you as the emotional or mental thermometer for the company.

While speaking with other professional stage managers, I have found my thoughts reflect how they also believe a stage manager functions and operates encompassing the attributes of both a manager and leader. One such idea is that there is a difference between being a “good” and “bad” leader or manager. This does not mean that the stage manager was considered ineffective, however this means that the person may not have been a “good” person. Someone may be able to collect a following, but not necessarily have good intentions at heart. Thus, we look for not only effective stage managers but also genuinely “good” people to trust with a project.

Another concomitant idea is that a manager is often thought of as the “what” in the equation and the leader is thought of as the “why” or “how”. A leader helps inspire, cultivates trust, and focuses on the people involved. We also feel that a leader will further the goals of both the employees and the company. This leaves us wanting a good leader on our team overshadowing the desire for a good manager. We tend to believe that leadership holds more weight, in fact, when asked which is more important or more prominent; many directors, actors, and assistant stage managers tend to sway towards desiring a good leader while expecting good management to follow or be incorporated into good leadership. Does this mean we prefer one to the other? I believe this preference means that we feel more desire for the connection we get with a leader because they feed our need to feel connected with others. I’ve heard it said that one can be a great worker, but if the worker were not great to work *with*, then an employer will not be keen to hire

that person in the future; which also lends me to believe that we prefer a leader (being more personal) to a manager (being more mechanical).

I also asked other stage managers if they remembered someone they considered a good leader who had occupied the manager position. Many of the answers mentioned someone they would gladly work with again in the future. There was also mention that these good leaders in manager positions, while not always the case, came from some form of formal training. Formal training in utilizing the combination of good leadership and management can be found in training programs such as schooling. At UCI, emerging stage managers are trained to take on leadership qualities as well as management skills. This aims to keep the developing professional well rounded and able to adapt to any type of situation that the student may encounter while managing or leading.

Management skills must not be minimized. Without effective management qualities, a company will fall flat. While a leader is a leader when someone gains a following, whether the leader has good intentions or bad, a manager may not have a following, but they do have a group of employees to maintain. The manager initiates the desired plans, accepts the current situation and makes the best of it, administers, and keeps communication open and thorough. Effective managers keep the company running smoothly. They will always have an answer; even if unsure of the actual answer, a good manager will know where to find the answer. The effective manager does not just have a grasp of his own schedule(s), but will also have an understanding of everyone else's schedule that he comes in contact with for business. I also believe that effective managers keep a constant temper. They must not let the heat of the moment phase them; they must

be able to see what is being put in front of them and then evaluate the best and most efficient route towards solving a problem.

Some questions I was exploring while talking with others on the topic were: Do you feel management or leadership has more weight than the other? What have you seen in successful leaders/managers? What have you seen in unsuccessful leader/managers? I found some interviewees had a difficult time expanding on the existence of or the desire for, a good manger. However, the answers typically corroborated the idea that you will definitely know when you are working with an ineffective manager. The desire to have an effective manager was most definitely desired, although some mentioned preferring a good leader to a good manager because they felt that management skills are part of good leadership. Some could not necessarily recall or recognize having a good manager unless the manager was also a good leader.

Hoping to gain the best of both worlds, there is what is called a “leader-manager”. A leader-manager is someone who can keep the company organized, empower employees to take ownership, while being a solid foundation that the company looks to for information and inspiration to solve problems and improve the status quo. Effective leader-managers know when it is necessary to maintain and sustain, and when it is time to push and stretch the team’s believed capabilities; pushing them in the right direction while doing the right thing. This can be seen within the tech phase of a theatrical production. The stage manager is definitely managing all the information and flow of the room, but the stage manager may also need to read the room and know when it is time to push forward through a difficult sequence or to get something down on paper and come back later with fresh minds. This decision can help prevent colleagues from being burnt

out or avoid possible tedious arguments that may develop because everyone is “too close” to the project at the moment and can’t see the big picture.

As just discussed, the stage manager is one who takes on the leader-manager role. Theater in itself is a reflection, an exploration, and a questioning of humanity. You need humans to interact with humans if you are presenting a human state of being. This is not to say that managers do not interact and have a human side. One way to accomplish being human is to maintain a positive and pleasant sounding voice when giving direction or answering questions. One would benefit from keeping pleasantries such as “please” and “thank you”; things that play into the human side of working with others. Managers must also have people skills in order to keep the status quo and continuous momentum of the company. If the stage manager has an attitude that reflects negatively on the goals of the cast and director, the group will slowly, and sometimes unconsciously, pick up on negative energy and then subconsciously lose motivation to accomplish the goal.

In being a leader you must also realize who the other leaders are within the room. An organization may have a few different leaders. An effective leader will be able to empower and encourage other leaders both already solidified and those immersing within the group. This helps even out the workload that the head leader may experience. A stage manager can use delegation to help empower others in the stage management team by trusting them with tasks or jobs. One such example is the assistant stage manager. In order to have a well-oiled machine, the assistant stage manager must take on leadership qualities to keep backstage working at full capacity. Your assistant stage manager must feel empowered to act as a leader, including making quick decisions, delegating other tasks, and even taking over if you were absent from the process for any reason. In

extension, it is also in your best interest to identify a possible successor who can take over if anything were to cause you to be removed from the current structure.

### **Effective and Ineffective Stage Managers**

Effective stage managers are constantly learning and serving. Most aim to make the production the best experience and work towards helping create the best-looking production it can be. Always learning is important otherwise both you and the production may hit a roadblock in momentum. Learning comes from two places. The first is learning the people and the needs of the show. As you gain knowledge about the people involved you will be better equipped to help them and serve the production. The second place of learning comes from the craft itself. The more you can experience and learn from both the job you are currently working and fellow stage managers in the business, the larger your tool belt of skills and talents will become.

Effective stage managers know when to step forward and when to step back. This can be a difficult line to walk. Some have an easier time with stepping forward than they do stepping back and vice versa. Stepping forward may come from a need from the director, a safety issue, or even if you notice a lack in motivation or forward momentum. Stepping back comes into play when the director needs time to work with the actors without interruption, when people are working self-sufficiently, or when your energy and input is not necessary in the situation. This concept displays adaptability. To be adaptable is one of the greatest strength a stage manager can have, and knowing when adaptation is needed is increasingly important. Those who cannot adapt to new situations will become obsolete in the work force. You will most likely not be rehired when

freelancing or may be let go for lack of progression that the company desires. Being an effective stage manager leads to success. Success is improving what is under your care.

Managerial qualities can be specific, but are also dependent upon each other. Some negative qualities of an ineffective manager are: being disorganized, not being able to answer questions, being late, or absent both physically and mentally. Important deadlines can be missed due to not having the correct information sent out in a timely manner. Disorganization can lead to great frustration from a coworker that has a project on hold until the answer is found. Leadership may be more fluid and have different sides of the coin, but management is a very dependent position. It is dependent on others in order to function and others are dependent on the manager to be organized, disseminate information, and keep everything on track.

Ineffective stage managers lack trust from the team. If your team does not trust you, they will work in spite of you in order to accomplish tasks and goals. They will begin making their own decisions and choosing their own leader to follow in order to progress. The team will become autonomous which will be a negative reflection of your leadership. Ineffective stage managers can also come in the form of a “wild card”. A wild card is overly emotional and irregular. Now, emotional in this case does not mean able to express and have emotions. In this use of the word, I am describing someone who is unable to properly express his or her emotions in a safe and socially acceptable manner, while also not becoming emotionally unavailable. As a stage manager, we watch and experience almost as much as the actors’ experience while working on emotionally charged material, whether that be sad, depressing, shocking, or exhausting. When there are others in the room that *must* be emotionally invested into the work, it is essential that

a stage manager is able to maintain a concrete presence in the room, all without delegitimizing the emotions experienced by the rest of the company. If the stage manager has an irregular personal rhythm, the company can become confused on how to function with the person or even avoid talking to them because they are afraid of the response or presentation of the response. Irregularity can be a detriment to the process, especially in theatre when the process calls for situations and people to be in a reliable routine.

### **Discussion of Ways to Improve Leadership and Management Styles**

As mentioned earlier, a stage manager must learn not only from the company, but also from fellow stage managers in the field. To become a well-rounded Leader-Manager, learning and building your “tool belt” and depth of knowledge is vital. When you can, look at blogs or chat rooms that are geared towards stage management, ask questions, and even take notes on what you see your coworkers doing. The information base within some of these networks is awe-inspiring and many will excitedly pass along tips and tricks. The world of theatre lends itself to helping each other, bettering each other, and maintaining lasting working relationships.

I would like to push this notion one step further to say that you can learn just as much by looking at other managers and leaders in other fields. Read business journals, interview CEO’s, and speak with head chefs. Just because they are not in theatre does not mean they don’t have relatable knowledge or experience in managing and leading. In fact, there are thousands of books written on leadership, management, and a combination of the two in other fields such as business, culinary, and construction just to name a few.

Learning can be a tough process when you are unsure of where to look for lessons. Start by taking a basic course in management or leadership at a local college.

There are also plenty of books dedicated to exploring leadership and management skills. Many, if not most, of these materials are geared towards a generic or business related field however; the application to theatre is still completely possible. I have found books such as: *Leadership and Management in the 21st Century: Business Challenges of the Future* by Cary L. Cooper and *Leading the Living Organization: Growth Strategies for Management* by Lane Tracy. These books help the reader explore techniques and recent trends as well as provide basic insights into what proves effective.

The best way to become a better leader and manager is by acting like one. This is both simple and complex. The simplicity in the idea comes as you do things that other leaders do, you will begin to engrain those traits into your own inner being, causing them to occur more naturally. This is complex in the motive behind the adjustment. If you are going to act like a leader with the key word being “act”, then those around you will see right through the façade. You need to bring a sense of integrity into how you approach becoming a leader or manager.

In addition to Carnegie’s thoughts as previously expressed, I believe that interacting with others through a sense of honesty and integrity is also very important. If you live and work honestly, people will trust you, and, in turn likely follow you. Honesty and integrity can be used to win people over to your side, to gain a following, and eventually become the leader of the group. As a stage manager, if you operate with honesty and integrity through your work and through interactions with others, it will be much easier to progress towards the goals of the production. Carnegie also touches on the politeness and connectedness that can be a great asset of a leader. This aligns with Bertmen Raven’s Referent category of social power in that you will gain leadership



power through earning respect and admiration from your employees. The more you treat people like people, the more they are willing to follow you even if the goals seem like a bit of a stretch. In theatre, we find that to accomplish a seemingly impossible scene change or costume change, a little bit of encouragement, personal involvement, and enthusiasm can go a long way. Even a quick Google search can reveal numerous articles, forums, or blogs that are almost real time updates to current methodologies or personal anecdotes from CEO's.

From everything discussed so far, the argument that stage managers are simply managers of the stage does not hold together. It is possible to have a stage manager who is just the managerial type, although the production would lack a key component that build relations, brings a positive and progressive atmosphere, as well as a company that others would compete to get involved with.

Stage managers must strive to improve their leadership skills along with their managerial skills. Not only will this increase their ability to get hired, but it will also increase their business network with larger groups who would love to work with you again in the future. In order to increase leadership skills and managerial skills, do a little research; pick one skill such as developing your "why". Why are you trying to lead this team? What story or concept are you sharing with the world? What is important to you about working with this group of people of this particular show? You also need to incorporate the why of the company. Once you have figured out what your why is, you will become better equipped to finding the best path towards success. A stage manager who is on board and understands the why of the company or production is a greater asset than a stage manager who only goes to work and leaves when the clock tells him to. Also

try looking at how you interact with others who are in a follower position to you. See how you talk with them, how you direct them, and see if you know anything about them personally. This does not mean you need to find out all their deepest darkest secrets, but find out what makes them happy, what frustrates them, and what makes them comfortable. Knowing these things allows you to adjust in order to give a better work experience to your employees. This in turn will gain you a larger following because they trust and respect you as their leader.

### **Conclusion**

Once on the path of learning how to be a better leader, also take a look at your managerial skills. Determine how you can best maintain the results that have been produced. Figure out where you can save the company time and money. Talk with peripheral employees and see what information they are lacking and what information you can bring into their sphere to better equip them for success. Managers are often seen as unemotional, as a firing machine, or someone who does not engaging with others. Usually the manager has to be the point bad guy in the company. However, if you take a hint from leadership, you can increase your perception from others as a manager who cares and provides the knowledge and resources others need. This also works in the opposite direction. If you are a leader who is untrustworthy, lacks people skills, and makes detrimental decisions, others will be afraid to work with you. As a leader, it is beneficial to take a hint from management and discover the techniques to approach your vision with an organization that allows followers to feel safe and informed.

Leadership and management are often blurred in responsibilities and understanding. Even though they are separate genres, one form needs the other in order

for an employee to come out on top in the industry. Especially in theatre when many times stage managers are asked to take on more than one role throughout a process. They manage during rehearsals, shift into using leadership during technical rehearsals, and then must utilize both while in performances. In order to be successful, and a stage manager that has a greater chance of being rehired, is one who can evenly utilize leadership and management, know when one must tighten or relax the reins, and even knowing when the need to change leadership or management styles will produce a better result.

By saying that stage managers simply manage the stage, while accurate, is not fully true. One must not only be a manager, but also be a leader. A stage manager must act as a leader in varying degrees and different points throughout the process of a production. With exploration of what constitutes a manager and a leader through examples provided, questions explored, and literature read; I have determined that one needs to understand and utilize both management and leadership in order to be a successful stage manager.

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