

SPECIAL REPORT

Seven Biggest Mistakes
Everyone Makes
When Hiring Speakers and
Entertainers and how to avoid
them like the plague!

By Eric Anderson

Inside: Discover everything you need to know
when hiring an entertainer or speaker!

Here is the information you requested!

"The Truth Finally Revealed the Seven Biggest Mistakes Event Planners Make When Hiring Speakers and Entertainers and how to avoid them like the plague!"

It is very, very, very rare for a Professional Presenter to write this kind of report. Many other entertainers and entertainment agencies / Speaking Bureaus do NOT want you know this information. Please take the time to read it carefully. In fact, if you are - as I hope - very interested in making sure that your company's events are successful, then I urge you to get comfortable, ask not to be disturbed, and STUDY this report - it IS that important! It reveals vital information that you NEED to know!

Dear Friend,

It's shocking but true. Every day, businesses hire entertainers that they should not be hiring. Entertainers and entertainment agencies often lie about their qualifications, charge you a LOT more than they should, end up turning your important event into an embarrassment. They put your reputation on the line by presenting sub-par performances.

Organizing a corporate event is a **DIFFICULT and STRESSFUL** job. There are so many details that must be attended to. But here is the undeniable truth:

**THE OVERALL SUCCESS OF YOUR EVENT HINGES
ON YOU HIRING THE RIGHT PRESENTER.**

I realize that you might not believe that right now but think about it for a minute. When is the last time you remembered the dinner you had at a Corporate Event?

Did the centerpieces make the event memorable and successful? When is the last time you attended a Corporate Event when what you had for dinner made the event successful? Unless the event was hosted by Emeril, Bobby Flay or Paula Deen the answer is probably never.

The entertainer is the "**key**" to a Super Successful event, but here's the problem...Hire the wrong person and your event will fail miserably.

Hire someone who offends even one member of your audience and it is your reputation on the line. Overpay for an entertainer who delivers a sub-par performance and all eyes will be looking at you.

This report is going to reveal the truth and give you the inside-scoop on what some entertainers and agencies do to unsuspecting event planners.

You'll be armed with the knowledge you need so you won't be "taken" by these people.

In just a minute, I'm going to reveal what the 8 Biggest Mistakes are and how you can avoid them, but first let me answer a couple of questions that are probably on your mind:

Who are you and why are you revealing this information?

My name is Eric Anderson and I'm a Corporate Entertainer. For the past 14 years I have specialized in providing unique and entertaining presentations for corporations around the world.

I have entertained at Super Bowl XXXII, Super Bowl XXXIV and the Centennial Olympics. My client list reads like a who's who in Corporate America.

More importantly my clients trust me because I'm Fantastic at what I do and I make them look GREAT!

I'm revealing for the first time information that the entertainment industry doesn't want you about

I'm doing this for to reasons:

REASON #1: If you end up hiring a lousy entertainer, this will put a bad taste in your mouth and could close the field not only to me but other competent professionals. Odds are, if the person you hire stinks, you'll be very reluctant to hire a similar type of performer in the future.

REASON #2: I HATE to see bad performers rip people off and make event planners look bad. It puts a black eye on the entire profession. Okay, now that you know who I am and why I'm doing this, let's talk about the 7 Biggest Mistakes Event Planners Make When Hiring Entertainers and Speakers...And How to Avoid Them!

BIG MISTAKE #1:

Assuming That Going Through an Entertainment Agency Or Speakers Bureau Is the Best Way to Go.

Many event planners feel that they are better off hiring performers from an agency instead of hiring performers on their own. First, let me say that there are many good and reputable agencies. In fact, if you want to hire entertainers through an agency, give me a call and I'll give you the names and phone numbers of some superb ones.

The following information is intended to help you avoid disreputable agencies. While it is true that making one phone call to an agency and letting them do the work is a lot easier than doing it yourself, there is no assurance that you are going to get the performer or speaker that is perfect for your event.

Dirty little secret #1 some agencies don't want you to know:

Agencies have a list of entertainers in different price ranges. Their first concern is booking the highest priced performer so they'll get a nice fat commission. They don't care if the presenter is right for your event. It's for this reason that they always ask you what your budget is. If you tell them that you have a \$15,000 budget they will look to book an entertainer in that price range. Remember this may not be the best person for your event but because they can gobble up every dollar you have to spend, the agency books them.

Dirty little secret #2 some agencies don't want you to know:

Many agencies have never seen the person they are sending you perform in a LIVE situation. Video does not count I'll talk about this later.

Dirty little secret #3 some agencies don't want you to know:

If you have a very substantial budget, an agency will almost always book way more performers than are necessary. For example, I performed at a very small corporate event (75 people in attendance) the agency booked 20 magicians This was way beyond OVERKILL. The agency didn't care about what was best for the client; they only cared about spending every dime that company had available.

Dirty little secret #4: some agencies don't want you to know:

This is going to blow you away and maybe even anger you. Did you know that many agencies mark up their talent by 100% to 300% or more? That's right! If a performer normally charges \$1,000 for a show, an agency will charge you up to \$2,000 for the same performer!!! Are you getting a \$2,000 performer? No! You're getting a \$1,000 performer but paying twice what you should! The agency practice of charging you DOUBLE what you would have paid if you hired the performer on your own is quite common. In fact, in a training manual for entertainment agencies, the author boasts about this practice and has charts to show agents the "obscene" amount of money they can make by doing this.

Again, there are some agencies that do NOT do this. There are some very reputable agencies that really care about their clients.

Instead, they require that their talent discount their fees to them so that they can charge their clients the same amount they would have paid if they hired the performer directly.

Or they charge add a nominal fee service fee on top of the talents fee. These are the types of agencies you want to deal with.

Bottom Line: Remember that a disreputable agency's first concern is about the amount of money they can make. Your needs come in a distant second at best. Take charge and be in control!

BIG MISTAKE #2:

BASING YOUR DECISION PRIMARILY ON PRICE

Wow! This is a biggie. Of course, price is a factor when hiring a performer. If you only have a \$250 budget, you're not going to be able to hire a major star to come and entertain your group! However, many event planners place

too much emphasis on price and not enough emphasis on the overall impact the entertainer will have on their event. Is the highest priced performer always the best? Absolutely not! In fact, in a marketing course put out for entertainers, the author tells his readers to dramatically raise their fees because a lot of event planners equate the value of a performer by how much they charge. He says that it is all "perception". Well, it certainly won't be just "perception" if you hire someone who charges you thousands of dollars for a program that is, in reality, only worth a few hundred dollars and they "bomb"! On the other hand, hiring the least expensive entertainer is not always the best way to go either. Magicians, motivational speakers, and other performers are perceived as a dime a dozen a commodity by many event planners, and because of this they try to find the lowest priced performer. The fact is that each performer is unique and, like in any other profession, there are entertainers who are great, some who are good, some mediocre, and some who should never be allowed on stage! You need to base your decision on the performer who will best fulfill your needs and help you to achieve your desired outcomes. One way you can know whether an entertainer is going to meet your needs is by whether or not he or she asks you what your needs are and what outcomes you want to achieve with your event. When you call them, do they just tell you how great their show is without finding out what you want and need? How would you feel if you went to a doctor because you weren't feeling well and the doctor instantly prescribed some medicine without first finding out what was wrong with you? It's the same with entertainers. They should find out what you want and need first and see if they have a program that can fulfill those needs. BEWARE! Many performers are so desperate for work that they will say anything to get hired. They will tell you that they do things that they don't, won't, or can't do. We'll be talking about how to spot out these hacks and avoid 'em like the Bird flu in just a few minutes.

Bottom line: Decide what your budget range is, check out a number of performers in that budget range, and choose the best person regardless of price.

If your budget is so small that you cannot find an excellent performer, DO NOT HIRE ANYONE. It is far, far better to have no entertainer than it is to hire someone who is not good.

Save your money and wait until you can afford someone who is outstanding.

BIG MISTAKE #3:

BELIEVING TESTIMONIAL CLAIMS

Testimonials are of the utmost importance when hiring any entertainer. In fact, they are of paramount importance. If a performer does not have a TON of great testimonials it means one of two things.

- First, the performer is inexperienced and hasn't worked professionally long enough to get testimonials.
- Second, the performer isn't very good and can't get any testimonials from his customers.

In either case, this is a performer you probably don't want to hire. Yes, testimonials are critical. In fact, I have an arsenal that I use in my marketing. What people say about performer is infinitely more important than what a performer says about him or herself. The sad fact is that many entertainers make up their testimonials and totally lie about their credentials. In fact, in a best-selling videotape program for entertainers a fellow performer asks the "Guru" what to do if you don't have any testimonials.

The answer was, "Oh, just make them up. Do what ever it takes." As insane as this sounds, it is unfortunately very common.

Another scam that entertainers pull on unsuspecting event planners is to claim that they have performed for people and at places they never really have.

For example, one sleazy entertainer, who will remain anonymous, claims on his website that he has performed on the Tonight Show and The Late Show With David Letterman. He then shows a picture of himself outside the Tonight Show Studio and one of him inside the Letterman studio. Please note that David Letterman and Jay Leno are nowhere to be seen!

Discovering the truth is very easy. Ask the performer to give you copies of some of the actual testimonial letters they received and not just the quotes from these letters. If the entertainer/performer can't produce at least some of the actual letters, you've caught 'em!

(I have a whole book of them that I send to my prospects upon request.)

Some speakers actually get copies of the company's letterhead and make up the entire letter. (Crazy I know)

Solution#1: Call the number and actually talk to the person and ask lots of questions.

Solution#2 Ask for video testimonials any speaker worth their salt will have at least 10 they will send you though email or direct you to a webpage where they are hosted.

If a performer claims to have performed on a well known television program, simply ask for a copy of the tape. If they don't have it...well, you know.

Bottom Line: You should put a lot weight on performer's testimonials when making your decision. Just make sure you are dealing with someone who is honest and ethical.

BIG MISTAKE #4:

RELYING SOLELY ON A DEMO VIDEO

A performer's testimonials are more important than their demo video, much more important. The problem with basing your decision solely on someone's demo video is the fact that anyone can make themselves look good on video through editing and retake after retake. Three quick, true stories that will graphically illustrate this point:

HORROR STORY # 1:

An Event Planner at a major German automobile company hired a comedy juggler. She said his demo video was great and that he did some amazing things on the video. But when he did his show live he, "Couldn't do anything...Dropped everything on the floor...Was totally embarrassing."

HORROR STORY # 2:

A Fortune 500 company paid a famous magician to perform strolling magic at the tune of \$50,000 for the evening. The president of the company saw this magician make himself float on television in front of a crowd of people on the street and asked him to make himself float for his group. "I can't do that here," the magician informed the very disgruntled client.

HORROR STORY #3:

A local teacher's association hired a hypnotist based on the great demo video he sent them. In the words of the event planner, "It was a disaster. He literally couldn't hypnotize anyone. People started leaving the event. Other's starting talking amongst themselves. And the hypnotist started yelling at all of us." Yikes!

Solution #1 Ask the speaker to see a raw and unedited presentation from **beginning to end** if the video is over-produced and too slick, beware. The performer may be trying to hide behind special effects.

The video should give you an idea what the performer does, how they relate to the audience, and how the audience responds. (The audience's response to the performer is in reality more important than what the performer actually does.)

Solution #2 Go and see the speaker LIVE - this is not always possible but if you can do it this will tell you everything you need to know.

Bottom line: A demo video can be a useful tool in helping you decide whether a performer is right for you but it should not be the only factor that contributes to your decision.

BIG MISTAKE #5

Basing your decision a speaker's website. With today's technology anybody and I mean anybody can put up a GREAT website in record time. Everybody talks about the internet leveling the playing field and allows the little guy to look as Successful as the BIG GUY. This is true.

Solution Ask them to send you **HARD COPIES** of their promotional materials through the mail. If they are serious they will have hard copy promo materials. (Make sure they do not just print out their website and send that) If you are in a rush ask them to send what they can by FAX.

BIG MISTAKE #6

Judging value by the length of time and BOOKING TOO Long OF A PRESENTATION

Scheduling too long of a program is a mistake many event planners make. It's important to remember that it is not like people are going to a theatre or to the movies and want to see a two hour program. In many cases, conference

attendees will have been in meetings all day and will be tired. Even if your event is "dinner only", your guests will have been sitting for at least 45 minutes before the show starts. If you add a cocktail hour, an awards presentation, and/or a speech from the company president, the length of the event increases dramatically. Bottom line: The ideal length for the entertainment portion of your program is 35 minutes with a maximum of 55 minutes. This will keep your event moving along at a nice pace and keep everyone energized. If you do have an awards banquet have the speaker help present the awards in an entertaining way or have them incorporate the passing out of the awards into their presentation. This will make the awards portion fun for everyone involved. It's sad but the only people who care about the awards are the people receiving the awards. You must involve everyone without dragging out the event.

BIG MISTAKE #7

NOT GETTING 100% REASSURANCE THAT THE PRESENTATION IS SQUEAKY CLEAN

This is sooooo important especially in today's day and age when people are offended by the least little thing. It is vital that you make sure that the performer's material is absolutely clean. There is a story about a very popular comedian who was hired by a Fortune 500 Corporation to entertain their top clients after dinner. Prior to the show someone mentioned that this performer uses blue material. Well the Corporation had to cancel the show at the very last minute. Never mind the \$18,000 they paid the performer was wasted the entire event was brought to a screeching halt. Make sure it's in their contract that they are CLEAN!

BIG MISTAKE #8

NOT GETTING A MONEY BACK GUARANTEE

In most cases, you can avoid falling prey to a bad entertainer, or entertainment agency by **insisting** that they give you a 100% money back guarantee if you are not satisfied with their presentation.

This is the ultimate test as to whether someone really believes in what they are offering or if they are just full of hot air.

If a performer really believes in the quality of their program, they shouldn't hesitate to guarantee it.

Bottom line: Some performers may argue that people will take advantage of them if they offer a guarantee. This is a bunch of bunk. In the 9 years that I have offered a guarantee and hundreds of performances, no one has EVER taken advantage of the money back guarantee. In fact many companies have me back year after year. If the performer you're considering for your event won't back up their presentation with a guarantee...WATCH OUT!

Well, there you have it. Obviously, if you're a seasoned event planner you may have already known some of the secrets revealed in this report.

But I hope you found a few gems that you can use to ensure that your next event turns out exactly as you want it so you get the applause, accolades, and acknowledgement that you so richly deserve.

If I can help you or you want To contact me, please call (404) 286-2973.

Sincerely,
Eric Anderson
CEO of Showmanship

Ah-Ha! Entertainment Inc.
P.O. Box 162004
Atlanta, Georgia 30321
www.erictyleranderson.com
office@erictyleranderson.com
(404) 286-2973.