

**BULA – SMG MG 438– COURSE OVERVIEW / SYLLABUS
TALENT REPRESENTATION, MANAGEMENT, AND CONTRACTS**

Randi Siegel<RSiegelBULA@aol.com>

Spring Semester 2011 - Office Hours: TBD and at request

Course Overview and Objective

For every movie made, every game played, every television show produced, every play performed and for every celebrity or personality that controls trends, record sales, ratings and box office dollars, there is a key person making the deals. But, the Entertainment Industry in general, is not a science and there are no “right” answers most of the time. It’s a business based on opinions and advice. Many decisions are made by a “best guess” process that includes analyzing and weighing up all of the options presented in order to form a logical, strategic opinion that will result in the best decisions possible.

Participants in this course will be offered a rare, hands-on opportunity to peer behind the historically closed doors of talent agencies, personal management companies, entertainment law firms and other representation “team members”. Utilizing actual “case studies” and business models, class members will examine the manner in which these critical players interact and attempt to work together on behalf of the clients in an effort to make their “professional dreams” come to fruition. Participants will gain an understanding of the different areas of talent representation, how each one functions in the scope of a talent’s career and what the responsibilities are for each position in each area of representation. Participants will also learn how buyers and producers can best interact with representatives to attain their talent and business affairs needs for their projects.

Participants will also gain a clear view of what the business of Entertainment Representation has to offer as a chosen career. Being an agent, manager, lawyer, or publicist is not just about marketing and selling a “talent” into superstardom, but it includes strategic positioning and deal making that can turn an actor into a star, a career into a life, a product into a brand, and a production into a franchise. Participants will gain a working knowledge of how and why these deals are made and they’ll learn that representation infiltrates every aspect of the Talent Management and Entertainment Business. From executives to filmmakers to writers and producers, everyone will eventually need to attain or deal with someone’s representation.

Pre-requisite

SMG OB 221 “The Dynamics of Leading Organizations” or equivalent.

Methodology

This course will be taught by Randi Siegel. It will include:

- lectures and discussions
- guest speakers
- case studies
- workshops and role playing for practical applications in the industry
- video and audio presentations / discussions of commercial television shows and films
- review of actual talent contracts and applications of career strategy based on current situations in the business

Required Reading

Textbooks:

- Where Did I Go Right?** (Bernie Brillstein, David Rensin) ISBN- 0-446-67665-9
Warner Books, 1999 *THIS ENTIRE BOOK IS PRE-ASSIGNED READING*. Attention will be paid to specific pages listed in the class schedule reading assignments, but the whole book will be discussed.
- Hollywood Dealmaking** (Dina Appleton) ISBN- 1-58115-228-0, Allworth Press 2002
- This Business of Television** (3rd edition) (Howard J. Blumenthal, Oliver Goodenough) ISBN-13: 978-08230-7763-2, ISBN-10:0-8230-7763-2, Watson-Guptill Publications, 2006
- Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreements Without Giving In** (R. Fisher, W. Uri and B. Patton)

Handouts/articles

Real contracts for talent with agents, managers, lawyers, etc as well as talent agreements for roles and projects that are negotiated by representatives
Trades (Daily Variety, The Hollywood Reporter)

Suggested Reading:

It's All Lies and That's the Truth (Bernie Brillstein, David Rensin) ISBN 1-592-40160-0 Gotham Books, 2005

Film & TV viewing

- Wayne's World*
- Pulp Fiction*
- Boogie Nights*
- Sex in the City*
- Entertainment Tonight, Access Hollywood, Extra*

Trades/mags (AdAge, Media Week, Entertainment Weekly)

Academic Conduct and Plagiarism

Every member of the Boston University School of Management is responsible for becoming familiar with the School's academic conduct policy, as described in the **Academic Conduct Code** booklet. All students are responsible for having read the Boston University statement on plagiarism and for understanding that the penalty against students on a Boston University Program for cheating on examinations or for plagiarism may be "...expulsion from the program or the university or such other penalty as may be recommended by the Committee on Student Academic Conduct, subject to approval by the dean."

NB: The instructor of this course believes that you are only as good as your word. It is expected that you approach this class with honor and integrity and in a manner that will ultimately be a reflection of what you'll put forth in the business world.

GRADING CRITERIA

Quizzes (2)	15%
Practical assignments	20%
Participation/attendance	20%
Verbal Presentations	10%
-Case analysis	
-Research	
Final exam	35%

IMPORTANT NOTES

Participation in class is not only required, but is paramount to the learning process. During any given class, there will be role playing scenarios, case analyses and interactive discussions of current issues in the news, and the possibility of surprise guest speakers. While it is understood that “public speaking” may not be a strong suit for everyone, careful attention will be paid to the growth process of one’s ability to step beyond his/her original comfort zone.

Following week eight, students will receive a partial grade assessment illustrating their current academic performance in the course. This will include participation/attendance, presentations, assignments and both quizzes.

By the end of the course, there should be a clear understanding of how each area of talent representation functions in the scope of a talent’s career and how, as a representative in a given situation, you’d weigh up the most reasonable options in order to form a logical, strategic opinion. There will also be a clear understanding of how to handle and deal with representatives from the production and development side of the business.

As such, the final exam will be written and will include basic knowledge questions as well as the presentation of a case study requiring, in essay form, a full analysis of the case and a final opinion on how to best advise the client. Heavy consideration will be given to the logic used and the defense and conviction of that final opinion.

COURSE SCHEDULE

SESSION & DATE	SUBJECTS	READING
1 1-19-10	<p>Welcome and introduction of instructors and students. Review the syllabus, give an overview of what will be expected of the students for exams, class participation reading and practical assignments.</p> <p>The Entertainment Industry as a Whole: From broadcasting to distribution to production to performing, how each area functions and who plays in which sandbox The new balance of power Representation: what it means, what makes it a vital component / how reality TV has changed the landscape Talent is King Ethics and morals – lying, cheating and stealing</p>	<p><u>TELEVISION</u></p> <p>XX-XXIII 126-156 209-257 430-435</p> <p><u>BRILLSTEIN</u> (the whole book is pre-assigned) attention to: 1-121 303-318</p>
2 1-26-10	<p>Representation: What is it? Who needs it? Why do it? Different types of talent Actors, writers, directors, producers, comedians, singers, bands, brands, below-the-line talent, athletes Different types of representatives Agents (theatrical, literary, packaging, personal appearance, tours, sports) Managers, lawyers, publicists, business managers What does each job entail? When do they become relevant for talent and how do they work together? As a job, what area of representation best suits your personality? Contracts and agreements between representation and clients Ethics and morals – being trustworthy <i>(possible guest speaker)</i></p>	<p><u>TELEVISION</u></p> <p>2-9, 16-18 22-24 231-257 337-368</p> <p><u>BRILLSTEIN</u> (the whole book is pre-assigned) attention to: 125-216</p> <p><u>DEALMAKING</u> 1-8, 11-14</p>
3 2-2-10	<p><i>QUIZ 1</i></p> <p>Talent: How do you know you're looking at a future star? It's just one opinion... Identifying talent, scouting and developing instincts, understanding the difference between a working actor and a superstar The reality of Reality TV talent and 15 minutes of fame Online/internet media stars Ethics and morals – exaggerating your credibility</p>	<p><u>TELEVISION</u></p> <p>68-72, 83-91 104-111 157-163</p> <p>MOVIE: Jerry McGuire</p>
4 2-9-10	<p>Representation requires passion, strong opinions and good instincts. How do you gain experience to have the necessary conviction in these areas? Identifying, selecting and signing talent The importance of headshots, resumes and demo reels Communication with talent and building a team Establishing goals and career strategy for clients Ethics and morals – overselling and client poaching</p>	<p><u>BRILLSTEIN</u> (the whole book is pre-assigned) attention to:</p> <p>217-302 317-373</p> <p>Handout TBD</p>

	<i>Assign case study for presentations in next session</i>	
5 2-16-10	<p>PRESENTATIONS OF PRACTICAL ASSIGNMENT</p> <p>You will identify a talent that you'd like to represent. Based on a real situation, you'll be presented with the circumstances that provide the opportunity for you to try to sign this person. Your 7-10 minute, verbal presentation will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Why you've chosen this talent What's your strategy to beat your competition? How you plan to build your new client's career <p>Research assignment:</p> <p>You will be provided with a list of working representatives (including agents, managers, lawyers and business managers) and their contact information. You will be required to call AT LEAST TWO of them and discuss some of the signing strategies they've used, to their benefit and detriment.</p> <p>Because so much business is done over the phone, part of your evaluation for this presentation will come from the feedback given to me by the people you've chosen to call. How was your phone manner? Did you ask good/valid questions? How were your listening skills? Did you accomplish your goal?</p>	<p><u>TELEVISION</u></p> <p>399-427</p> <p>TV show: Entourage (episode will be provided)</p> <p>Handout TBD</p>
6 2-23-10	<p>Building your client's career / creating a star</p> <p>Contracts and agreements in film, television, internet, DVD and other distribution channels</p> <p>Reality TV contracts</p> <p>Working with other team members to land roles and strategizing on negotiation techniques to get the best deal</p> <p>Leverage: how to get it, how to use it in contract negotiations</p> <p>Dealbreakers</p> <p>Ethics and morals – strategy vs. manipulation (Possible guest speaker)</p>	<p><u>TELEVISION</u></p> <p>304-336 501-514</p> <p><u>DEALMAKING</u> 61</p>
7 3-2-10	<p>More on building a client's career / creating brands</p> <p>Setting goals and career strategy</p> <p>Headshots and demo reels</p> <p>Marketing and selling your client to casting directors, networks, studios, writers, bookers and the public</p> <p>Identifying the right projects, roles, deals</p> <p>Ethics and morals – what's right for the client vs. your checkbook</p>	<p><u>TELEVISION</u></p> <p>112-124 198-207</p> <p>Movie: Broadway Danny Rose</p>
8 3-9-10	<p>QUIZ 2</p> <p>Passion for your client: if you don't have it, no one else will.</p> <p>CLASS PARTICIPATION: Debate</p> <p>Students will be paired off according to opposing views about a specific talent and will debate. For example:</p> <p>“Funny vs. Not Funny”</p> <p>Ethics and morals – overselling your clients credits or abilities</p>	<p>Research from Trades for past “Hollywood Hot Lists”</p>
3-16-10	SPRING BREAK	

9 3-23-10	Being a dealmaker, not a deal breaker: Protecting your client's best interests in the long run The power of the word "pass" and knowing when to let the deal go Risk vs. reward Ethics and morals – pretending to know what you don't <i>(possible guest speaker)</i>	<u>TELEVISION</u> 526-529, 533-535, 541 <u>DEALMAKING</u> 119-158 <u>GETTING TO YES</u> Soft vs Hard Positional Neg.
10 3-30-10	Mock negotiations Talent deals and contracts: negotiating AS a representative vs. negotiating AGAINST a representative Dealbreakers Making sense out of the "fine print" legal jargon	Handouts: sample contracts and agreements
11 4-6-10	Possible guest speakers: A representative and client who've had a long standing relationship (10+ years). What makes it work?	
12 4-13-10	Learn about building your career, representing yourself, maintaining client relationships, and the art of client psychology Representation means putting your clients first and learning how to protect them, often from themselves Client contracts and agreements: getting them to resign Anatomy of successful and unsuccessful talent careers Ethics and morals - never lie to your clients	Review select Brillstein chapters <u>DEALMAKING</u> 167-190 201-242
13 4-20-10	Establishing your own name, network of associates and fighting the idea that "you're only as good as your list" How to ride the wave of success and avoid creating "monsters" Ethics and morals - at the end of the day, what's important to you? <i>Review and preparation for the final exam</i>	Handout TBD
14 4-27-10	FINAL EXAM Last day of class	

Guest speakers (to be confirmed and may change):

Marlo Brawer
Business Affairs, NBCUniversal

Michael Tenzer
Business Affairs, Comedy Central (formerly at ICM and Brillstein-Grey)

Jeff Geibelson
Partner, Geibelson & Young, Business Management

Steven Burkow
Entertainment Atty, Ziffren Brittenham, LLP