

Strategic Advice from Radio's Premiere Talent Coach

Planet Reynolds

We Create Personality Radio



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What Talent Can Learn by Going to Summer Movies

Issue #32

July, 2013

Before we lose the rest of the summer, go grab your morning show and take them on field trip. Head to the theater to catch one of this summer's action flicks (Star Trek, World War Z, Man of Steel) or grab on Netflix one from a previous summer (the latest Bond movie, Skyfall, works). Not only to have a good time and bond, but to teach. One of our jobs as managers of talent is to help them become outside thinkers; to see their show not as they do, but as listeners do. Listeners require immediate, constant, and on-going, stimulation to hook them and keep them through content breaks. This is where the movies come in. If you watch any action film from the last few years, pay attention to the first five minutes. There is always a big, brash, attention-getting action scene to get the audience on the edge of its seat. In Skyfall, James Bond used a crane to open a moving train and drove a motorcycle on the roofs of homes, in Man of Steel we saw the birth of Superman and the destruction of Krypton. This happens in every action movie - they put the proverbial car on the highway and floor it, even before the credits or character development. The first five minutes say to the audience, "Do we have your attention?" The first five minutes of a two-hour movie are equal to the first thirty seconds of a four minute content break on a morning show. Listeners (dare I say all of us as consumers) have A.D.D. (whether we're medicated or not!) and desire immediate and constant stimulation so we'll pay attention. What your show does in the first thirty seconds of a break helps listeners decide if they want to stay for the next thirty seconds. I love analogies so the movie references above work. They help talent become "outside thinkers". So the next time your morning show decides it wants to meander through a break, with no meaningful and bold hook, take them to the movies and show them how multi-million dollar films craft the beginning of the story, all in an effort to give attendees their monies worth. So they stay engaged throughout the entire effort, have a great experience, and leave the theater talking about what they just saw. This is how to craft great breaks in PPM so listeners stay.

Lessons in Leadership No. 18: Happiness

Several years ago, coaching a high profile, major market show, I had the toughest time convincing the team to do new things so Pis wouldn't get bored or complacent with the show. For programs that have been on for a few years, as this one had, innovation and new ideas play a role in the game plan to make listeners turn us on again as they groom "miss a day, miss a lot" images crucial to survival. As we probed what the problem was, it became apparent that one team member was the roadblock to anything new happening. This became a typical "addition by subtraction" management challenge. We decided to make a change by reducing our cast size and very quickly innovation and new ideas started to appear on the show. The key that made this happen, and the lesson in leadership gleaned from this experience for us as managers, was the introduction of one key element that made the room more successful in both its sound and ratings: happiness. I espouse in these pages the understanding that we're not in the radio business, but the experience business. That the happier (read: more fun) we make for the listeners, the more times they'll return, because this is one of the critical reasons they turn us on each morning. That same logic applies to creating it internally. It doesn't cost money, but time and effort for us, as managers, to create an environment where our talent feels secure, valued, and worthy. If you are a fan of Ted Talks (as am I), here's a link to one done by Shawn Achor. It's twelve valuable minutes that'll re-focus those of us who manage radio talent. Its central message is this: if you want to make your people more productive and successful, then make them happy. That might mean an occasional lunch or perk. But often it works when you simply tell them how much they mean to the growth of the station. As I've coached talent in big and small markets, I am consistently reminded of one important thing: the more I genuinely and regularly affirm the shows I work with, the better they perform. That doesn't mean I can't be tough and honest when they miss the mark. Talent values honesty, but they also want to know they're important to the success of the brand. Find the Ted Talk [here](#).

The Reynolds Group coaches morning shows to better connect with their audience. Focusing on the demo and challenging them to develop fun, relevant content and entertaining ideas makes more people want to tune in!

Steve Reynolds



Double Twitter #s in Two Months

Wanna double your Twitter followers in two months? Eric Kuhn is Hollywood's first "social media agent" - he uses social media to gather support and awareness for all things Hollywood. In a recent video chat with the Huffington Post (see it [here](#)), he says do these four things and your Twitter numbers will double in two months:

1. Engage your followers in "now moments".
2. Tweet directly with people who have more followers than you.
3. Be social - ask questions to engage people and engage them back (verses just spouting off with observations).
4. Have the occasional "Twitter battle" with someone to instigate interest.

Each Sunday morning we publish and share the Hot List of topics for talent and programmers. These are the topics which have the greatest accessibility for any audience that week, regardless of format. Create fun from these topics and the most people will gravitate to the show because it's highly relatable. More than 1000 people receive it weekly. If you'd like to get it (or have the entire morning show receive it), send an email to steve@reynoldsgroupradio.com with names and e-mail addresses and it'll start that next Sunday. Then the show can use it as a guideline for content choices each week to stay on point to attracting a larger audience. The weekly Hot List is free.