

10 STEPS TO BE A WORKING COMEDIAN

**MAKE MONEY WITH YOUR
STAND-UP COMEDY FUNNY**

WRITTEN BY:
GREG DEAN



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ISBN 978-1-7328248-0-5

Published by Be Funny Inc.

Cover Design by Waqar Nadeem

www.bookbosss.com

Chapter Art by Victor Sonora

DEDICATION

For my father, Herbert Dean,
who taught me to never back any further than
necessary before moving forward.

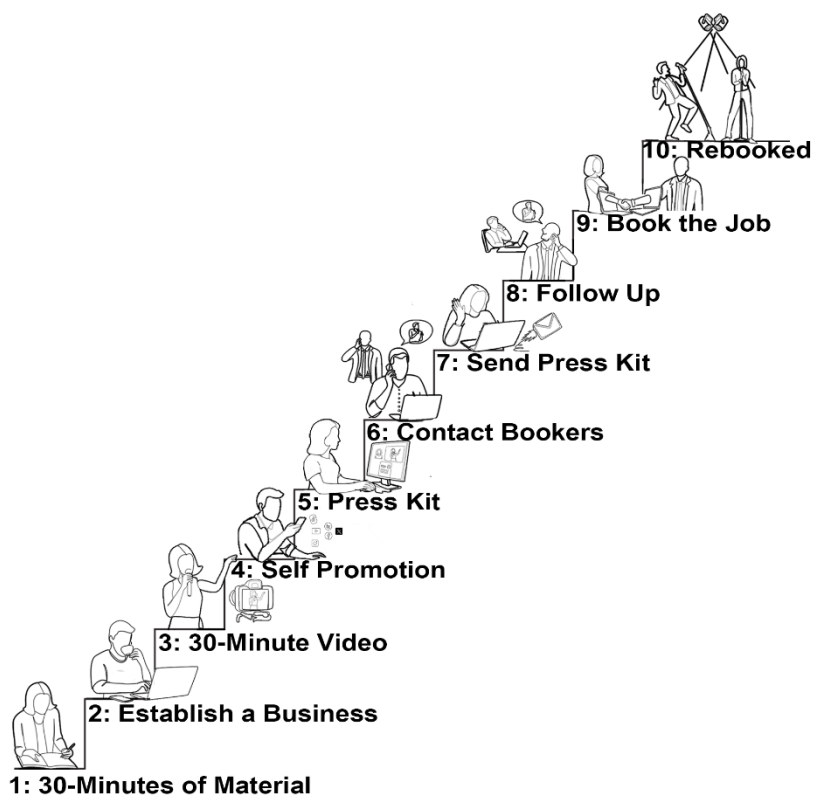


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I N T R O D U C T I O N

THERE IS WORK

There are literally hundreds of comedy clubs with “one-nighters” and “week-long gigs” spread across the United States, Canada, UK, Australia, and so on. They pay good money, and they need *you*.

Bookers can easily hire their wait staff, door attendants, and managers from their own communities. But the string of comics they need to fill their lineup for the entire year must come from somewhere else. You are standing exactly at that somewhere else. Work is out there. Now is the time for you to go and get it.

This seminar focuses on comedy club gigs, yet there’s work to be had in what is known as the 4Cs. They are:

- **Comedy Clubs**
- **Colleges**
- **Cruise Ships**
- **Corporate**

Your first jobs will more than likely be in the Comedy Clubs. But the essential information in this book also applies to getting work in any of these venues. The process is the same, but each of the Cs has their own differences and requirements.

Hollywood offers a variety of opportunities, and they seem to keep expanding every year. Here are some of the jobs open to comedians:

- **Talk Shows:** Hosts - Appearances - Writers
- **Comedy Specials:** Hosts - Appearances - Writers
- **Sitcoms:** Stars - Acting Parts - Writers - Warm-Ups
- **Sketch Show:** Hosts - Appearances - Writers - Warm-Ups
- **Variety Shows:** Hosts - Appearances - Writers - Warm-Ups
- **Game Shows:** Hosts - Writers - Audience Warm-Ups
- **Movies:** Stars - Acting Parts - Writers - Directors

You Are Self Employed

To get this work, you must approach it like a job; after all, it *is* a job. Comedians are self- employed. You are now a comedian, writer, director, producer, receptionist, secretary, videographer, editor, salesperson, agent, manager, CPA, publicist, and social networker all in one very busy package. You must develop a system and have all the tools needed to seek and get work. That system is available in this book. This information is the result of years of road experience, talking to bookers, teaching stand-up comedy, and helping comedians like you become professionals.

Booker

Throughout this book, the term **Booker** is used as a catchall term for those who give stand-up comics work. For simplicity's sake, the word Booker includes Bookers, Club Owners, Club Managers, Agents, and Producers unless otherwise designated.

Let's get started.

HOW TO GET WORK

This section, Part One, offers a 10-step model for getting work doing stand-up comedy in clubs. These 10 steps are general guidelines because all Bookers have their own systems and requirements, so you'll need to be flexible and apply them as appropriate.

Here are the 10 steps to be a successful comedian:

STEP 1: 30-MINUTES OF MATERIAL

STEP 2: ESTABLISH A BUSINESS

STEP 3: 30-MINUTE VIDEO

STEP 4: SELF PROMOTION

STEP 5: PRESS KIT

STEP 6: CONTACT BOOKERS

STEP 7: SEND PRESS KITS

STEP 8: FOLLOW UP

STEP 9: BOOK THE JOB

STEP 10: GET RE-BOOKED

There it is. All you need to do to get work in a comedy club. Of course, each of these steps requires some specialized knowledge and hard work to complete successfully. Let's explore each step, one at a time.

30-MINUTES OF MATERIAL



The first thing you need is a show—something to sell. Despite what others might say, it's never too late to become a working comic. As a matter of fact, Bookers love to find new comics because they can say they discovered them. Work is out there if you know how to get it. Here are some things you need to know about creating a show that will sell.

ABOUT THE SHOW

Bookers are looking at two primary criteria to book you. One is you and your appearance, which is to say, are you the type of person they want on their stage? If your character is a punk comic with pink hair, tattoos of broccoli on your face, and seventy-six facial

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piercings, then you're probably not going to get booked into a club with a mostly elderly clientele.

The second aspect is the number of clean minutes of material you can do. The number of minutes of great material has a big influence on your position in the lineup. You can't even begin to get work until you can do at least 30 solid minutes of relatively clean material. Here are some things you need to know:

Make Sure You Are Ready

Getting a club date before you're ready can do more damage to your career than almost anything else. Most of the Bookers know one another and talk to each other frequently. A couple of bad gigs, and they'll all know not to book you. Some beginners think they'll get some road gigs, which will force them to get better. It's true that road gigs will make you get better, but you must still be ready for them. If you can't handle the job, the Bookers may need to replace you to save their reputation. If you're ready, the Bookers will see this and move you up from the Opener to Feature (Middle) spot as appropriate.

Quality is Key

If you're just starting out, don't rush things. This comedy thing isn't going away. Bookers know and rely on one another. Word gets out quickly—who does well and who doesn't. Have something of value. Your show must be the kind of show anyone would be happy to take their own mother to see.

Your Material Must be Able to Travel

If your comedy only works because it has local references, you've got to remember that audiences in other cities won't get these references. You need to have material that everyone, everywhere, can enjoy. If you're from Los Angeles, for example, and your jokes depend on people knowing information about West Hollywood

being populated by gay people, those same jokes won't work outside of the LA area. Your material must be general enough so people in Nebraska, Washington, Maine, Florida, etc., can understand and laugh at it.

Clean Material is Better

Most Bookers won't mind if you cuss a bit in your show. If you have a primarily clean show, they won't mind if you say "shit" or "fart" and maybe a well-placed "fuck." Conversely, most Bookers won't book or rebook you if you have primarily blue material. Blue material is a rather vague term, yet it refers more to disgusting subject matters or the constant use of curse words.

For instance, if you tell a joke making fun of a commercial and comment, "they're lying bastards," this will probably pass. But if your subject matter is a vagina with references to fish smells, it can be considered blue and offensive, even if you don't cuss. Remember, it's easier to add curse words to punch up a clean show than it is to try to clean up a blue show. Part of understanding the business is looking at your show from the perspective of the Bookers.

Do Original Material, Don't Steal

When you get a reputation for doing a show unlike any other comic, you'll get the respect of comics and Bookers. Strive to find those topics that will set you apart from everyone else.

Conversely, if you steal material, you'll incur the wrath of other comics as well as Bookers.

Even if you stop lifting jokes, once you have that reputation, your calendar will begin to empty. Some Headliners have some say so about who is on the bill with them. And most top comics know the other top comics. If you steal from someone, they can make sure you never work in certain clubs. Your career can flourish if you use only original material.

Know the Show Requirements

Different clubs will have their own variations to suit their needs, but generally the following information about show requirements will be similar.

In the classic club format, the first comic is called the **Opener** because he or she (obviously enough) opens the show by doing *15 to 25 minutes*. To be safe, you'll want to have 30 minutes of material because if your material isn't working, you'll want to have fallback material. The second comic on the bill is the **Feature** or **Middle**, who should be more experienced and funnier than the Opener and does *25 to 30 minutes*. To cover the time, you'll want to have at least 45 minutes of material so you can adjust to regional audiences. Closing the show is the **Headliner**, who should be the funniest of the night and traditionally does *45 minutes* in the first show and *45 to 60 minutes* in the second show. Most Headliners can do an hour and a half so they can vary their shows. There is a clear theme running through this section: Have more material than you need, so that if what you're doing isn't working, you can switch it up.

The first show must adhere to a strict time schedule because the club staff must herd the audience out, clean the room, reset the tables and chairs, restock the bar, and seat an entirely new crowd. The second show need not end at a precise time, so some Headliners take the liberty of breaking in new material or just enjoy doing a longer show.

Classic clubs have two basic show formats. In the first format, the person in the sound booth or club manager/owner introduces the Opener, who does the first set. The Opener then acts as MC for the rest of the show by introducing the middle and reappearing briefly to bring on the Headliner, then closes by thanking the comics and leading the finale applause.

In the second format, a local **guest MC** starts the show by doing a *five to ten-minute* set. Then, the guest MC introduces the Opener, later reappears to do a very short bit before bringing on the middle, then another short routine before introducing the Headliner, and finally closing the show by thanking all the comics.

Note that in the first format, the Opener acts as the MC, while with the second format, a local is hired as the MC but isn't strictly one of the comics on the bill. Either way, it's very helpful for you to have MC skills because you can then talk a local club manager/owner into letting you MC a show that already has three comics. It'll also be easier to book an Opener spot if the Bookers have seen your ability as an MC.

Make Sure Your Show Fits the Venue

Your show must be appropriate to the club and the region. For instance, if you're a conservative white male like Louie Anderson, don't get yourself booked at the Apollo. Most comedy clubs will want you to work clean. Some will insist that you work absolutely clean. Others will want the subject matter to be clean but won't mind some cursing. Which means you can't talk about anal sex with Jesus, but you can say, "Trump is a crazy fuck." There is a difference between offensive topics and acceptable topics. As a fledgling, your best bet is to have acceptable topics and clean language, then as the Bookers get to know you, they won't mind if you do bluer material because they have come to trust your judgment.

* * *

Keep in mind the audience's perspective. They are just sitting down and ordering drinks and maybe food. You don't want to hit them over the head with X-rated stuff that will upset their stomachs. If you were on a date, what kind of a show would you want to take your date to? That's the show the Bookers want in their clubs.

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Later, when you have a following, then you can say all kinds of outrageous things. But for now, if you want to make a full-time living as a stand-up comedian, it is better to have a safe show that Bookers want in their clubs.

WAYS TO DEVELOP MATERIAL

There is no single way to create a show, so try everything. Read every book on the subject. Ask other comics what they do. Find a mentor. Make up your own methods. Here are a few suggestions to help you on your comedic journey:

Learn Joke Writing, Rehearsing, and Performing Technique

There is a misnomer amongst many comics that the *only* way to learn to be a comic is to write and perform. This is not true. If it were, the *only* way to learn to be a basketball player would be to simply play. Again, not true. Even Michael Jordan spent years learning excellent basketball technique from his coaches. At first, he wasn't very good. But by listening to his coaches and years of practicing his technique, he became one of the greatest players of all time. It was a combination of proper fundamentals, coaching, and practice that made him great.

This is also true for comics. The problem is that many comics don't know that comedy technique even exists, that it is teachable, and that coaches are available. They are. Most books on stand-up comedy have a few good comedy techniques. My book *Step by Step to Stand-Up Comedy* is dedicated almost entirely to comedy techniques. Read all the books on stand-up comedy and collect the best ideas to add to your skill base.

Take a Good Stand-up Comedy Workshop

If you can find a workshop and a teacher who can help you articulate *your* sense of humor, then you have found gold. A word of warning: Make sure the instructor is based on a technique rather than giving his or her opinion as to what *they* think is funny.

At first, it might sound good to have someone tell you what is funny. But in the long run, you do not. You must learn to trust your own sense of humor. Any teacher's sense of humor is not right or better than yours. It's a personal taste. You need to learn to express *your* sense of humor, not the teacher's.

So, if the workshop is based on technique, the instructor will trust your sense of humor and help you express it. If the instructors offer his or her opinions of what they think is funny, you'll be performing the teacher's comic voice instead of searching for your own.

A good workshop will give you a safe environment to try untested or controversial material. The point of the workshop is to experiment and learn, not always be perfect by doing what is safe. If a workshop has a supportive atmosphere, you should be able to take the risks you would never take in a nightclub where a Booker might be watching.

Five Reasons You Need Greg Dean's Comedy Classes: Level 1 - How to Build Stand-Up Comedy Routines

Comedy isn't just talent. It's skill. Think you need to be born funny to succeed? Think again. Comedy is a craft, and like any craft, it has techniques you can learn, practice, and master. Greg Dean, the man behind the success of Whoopi Goldberg, Anthony Jeselnik, Sherri Shepherd, Christina Pazsitzky, and countless working comedians, has spent decades cracking the code. Now, he's handing you the blueprint.

Reason 1: This Class is Your Career Roadmap

Every successful comedian started somewhere. This course lays out the path from beginner to working comic, teaching you the fundamentals of joke writing and performing. Everything you need to own the stage.

Reason 2: Greg Dean's Joke Structure

If your jokes aren't landing, chances are, it's not your sense of humor. It's your structure. In this 5-week course, you'll master the Five Mechanisms of Joke Structure so your setups will misdirect, and your punchlines will hit hard, every time.

Reason 3: Perform Like a Pro

Writing a killer joke is only half the battle. In this class, you'll learn how to rehearse naturally (no robotic memorization), so you can tell funny stories the same way you've been funny your entire life, except you'll be getting 5 plus laughs per minute.

Reason 4: Overcome Stage Fright

Never let nerves stop you from turning your dreams into reality. When you feel prepared, you'll take the stage with confidence. You'll command respect from the audience and other comedians.

Reason 5: Taught by Comedy's Best Teachers

Take this course in person with Greg Dean at the Santa Monica Playhouse Studio or on Zoom with veteran comedian and instructor Gayla Johnson. No matter where you are, you'll get expert guidance tailored to your personal sense of humor.

It's your turn!

If you've ever dreamed of being a comedian, this class is your starting line. Don't waste years figuring it out on your own, learn from the best and fast-track your comedy career.

Sign up now at stand-upcomedy.com. A journey of a thousand laughs begins with the first joke.



Join or Form a Writing Group

This is a must to compete in today's world of being a comedian. You don't have to do it all alone anymore. You can generate more material because you've got more than one perspective pitching jokes.

BEWARE: put together a group of no more than 3 to 5 comedians who know how to pitch jokes. Nothing worse than one person getting the benefit, but not being able to return the favor. Be picky about who gets in the group.

Since I only teach the techniques of joke structure and guidelines for writing tight setups and punchlines, I suggest you work with folks who understand how jokes work and how to write them. If the group turns into a free-for-all of opinions of what each person thinks is funny, not funny, or offensive the end result will be confusing as everyone has a different opinion. With that said, being in any writing group is better than not being in one because you'll have a weekly goal to meet and a reason to work on your material.

Develop a Writing Ritual

Write a little bit every day. It is more effective to write fifteen minutes five or six days a week than to try to write for six hours in one day. When you write daily, your conscious and unconscious mind will dwell on your material. Then the next day when you write, you have a better chance of creating jokes because your mind has incubated the idea overnight. Also, it's easier to be productive for fifteen minutes than to try to force yourself to stay in a room for many hours. Those who try the one long day of writing approach usually discover that it doesn't work, get discouraged, and give up. Commit to working on your show for a short period of time every day.

Record Every Show

There are several reasons you'll want to audio record every show. One is to review it so you can correct your shows and think of alternatives for the situations that were troublesome.

Additionally, if you ad-lib a keeper, if you haven't recorded it, you'll forget it. Play it safe and record your shows.

Write or Record All Your Funny Ideas

If you're serious about doing stand-up comedy, then your mind will be generating ideas throughout the day and night. Whenever you get an idea, write it down at once.

TIP: I use the app **Evernote** on my smartphone. You may think you'll remember a random thought, but trust me, you won't. Every working comic I know has a basket full of ideas scribbled on paper; they've learned that it's just too easy to forget a great idea.

Perform as Much as Possible

This seems obvious, but some comics will only perform when they have a nice club and a good audience. It is true that many of the venues for beginners are terrible, but there is much to learn from these shows—flexibility, for example. If you think only doing your show is what stand-up is all about, you are very mistaken. Your job is to make the audience in front of you laugh. To do this, you may need to do your show, ask them what they want, make fun of the previous comics, bag on the audience, or do only your best jokes, etc.

Also, there are more places to perform than just nightclubs. You can create your own show, join Toastmaster, volunteer to perform for civic clubs like Rotary or Kiwanis, or even perform on the streets. Don't knock the streets. I made a good living street performing. Robin Williams, Michael Colyer, Penn & Teller, as well as myself all began as street performers.

Become an MC

Being a really great MC can fast track your comedy career. After going to some open mics, comedy rooms, and sometimes major clubs you'll quickly discover most of the MCs range from despicable and self indulgent to adequate or at least so-so. This is a major opportunity for you to be better at it and get loads of stage time.

I offer an on demand course How to Be an MC for Stand-Up Comedy. My students who have taken this class and worked on the skills quickly rose through the ranks of their local comedy community. Check it out: gregdeancomedyacademy.com



* * *

Developing a 30-minute show is the fundamental step of this program. All the other steps require this first step to be completed. This is not to say only build your show. Read all the steps and set your life up to launch into the business of stand-up comedy. If you don't care then nobody will. Start now. Read the rest of this book and prepare to work.

ESTABLISH A BUSINESS



You are entering *Show Business*. There are two words in this phrase. Show means that you're a comic who crafts a show that makes people laugh. Business means that you're an office worker who calls Bookers and talks them into hiring you as a comic. You must be equally good at both aspects of show business. If you're only good at the show, you'll be funny, but not working. If you're only good at the business, you'll work in clubs only once. You must be good at both. To become a comic, you've had to deal with rejection from an audience, but you've stuck it out and developed your show. Now, as your own nightclub appearance agent, you must deal with the rejection from club owners and Bookers. You've persevered as a comic, and now you must persevere as your own office worker to get gigs.

CREATE AN OFFICE

So what if your office is a crappy apartment? You still need to set up an area to organize your promo materials. Dedicate a corner and create stacks of pictures, DVDs, and other promo materials. The more successful you become, the more room you'll need for a variety of promo materials for different types of gigs, like comedy clubs, cruise ships, colleges, and corporate.

Each venue has its own requirements for promo materials as well as different lengths and quality of shows. That is to say, if you're submitting to a club, the show can be a little more blue. If it is corporate, the show must be squeaky clean. There are cruise ships that have early shows that must be clean and late-night shows that can be dirty. You need to collect an array of resumes and promo materials that will fit the proper venue.

If you're organized, then all you must do is compile the materials from your media area and mail or email it. These same items can be made available on your website.

Get Basic Technology

In a world more and more dependent on technology, there are some essential items you need to run your stand-up comedy business.

Computer - I don't care how technophobic you are; if you don't have a computer, you don't have a business. Select the software programs compatible with most other businesses, which means Microsoft. If you're already a Mac person, chances are you know what you're doing already. I am assuming you're starting from ground zero, so you need to invest in a standard computer with Word as your word processing program and a printer. With these tools, you can write and send cover letters, make resumes, and create other texts that will be requested as you get more work.

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Cell Phone - You need to be in contact with everything on your computer. In this millennial world, almost everything is done on smartphones. If you set it up, you may not even need a computer for much of the correspondence. There are services for everything online.

This is your travel office.

Email Capabilities - Make sure you have software that includes Outlook. Outlook is software for email and building a database. It will help you organize business correspondence and remind you to follow up as well as compile a list of fans so you can keep them informed as to where you're appearing. More and more business is being done on the internet. There are some Bookers who will only do business by email. If you don't already have email, get it now. If you want to do business like a professional, then you need the technology of a professional.

Social Networking

When you sign up for any social site, you'll be asked to pick a permanent name for your sites. Think about this before committing. It will be easier for you and the public if all your networking pages have the same URL. My suggestion is your name and the word "comedy," "comic," or "comedian." You can find me at these URLs:

[Youtube.com/gregdeancomedy](https://www.youtube.com/gregdeancomedy)

[Facebook.com/gregdeancomedy](https://www.facebook.com/gregdeancomedy)

[X.com/gregdeancomedy](https://www.x.com/gregdeancomedy)

[Instagram.com/gregdeancomedy](https://www.instagram.com/gregdeancomedy)

gregdeancomedy@gmail.com

[gregdeancomedy.com](https://www.gregdeancomedy.com)

Create a YouTube Channel

If you don't have a YouTube page, make one today. This has multiple functions. Once you have your show uploaded, it is easy to cut and paste the URL into emails, websites, blogs, comments, bulletins, messages, wallpaper, or on pretty much any internet medium to send your shows around. Make sure to only send good shows. If it is a marginal show, don't send it. Quality will decide if people want to see you live.

At Least Facebook

Social networking is the PR of now and the future. I put in only a half hour in the morning during coffee and I can reach thousands of people with common interests.

Bookers won't mind if you send a link to your Facebook page if it is classy and easy to navigate. Again, don't overdo it. Keep it simple and make your relevant information obvious. As with all online sites, they require constant updating, so set a regular schedule to put in your most recent information. To promote yourself, collect friends and send them updates about your upcoming gigs.

Join Facebook comedy groups. First, join mine: Group – Greg Dean's Stand-Up Comedy Workshop. There are many other great groups that give advice, allow promotion, and represent open mics or shows. This is a great way to get involved with comedians in your local area, the US, and globally. It's all at your fingertips.

Get a Website

If you don't have a website, you'll never be perceived as a professional. You can now do this easily on Wix, Weebly, or Squarespace. They're free to build and charge a small monthly fee. Get the same URL domain name as all your social networking. I own gregdeancomedy.com even though I don't use it.

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Browse the internet to check out different sites to know what design you like. Too many sites make the mistake of having an overly elaborate site that looks great but makes it difficult to find the relevant information about you as a comic. Keep it simple. The homepage should have a series of categories to make things easy to find, like your headshot, your resume that should be kept to one page, and a calendar of where you're performing. You can't get work if you aren't easy to find. If you're in this for the long haul, then you need to develop a fan base.

BE A PART OF THE COMEDY COMMUNITY

Part of being in the business is letting everyone know you're in the game. Anyone who is great at anything will immerse themselves in that field. They will surround themselves with people who are in it, read the literature about it, sign up for newsletters, and hang out with the professionals. Stand-up comedy isn't just a job, it's a lifestyle. If you're not willing to do this, understand that there are thousands of comics who are already doing this and working their way up. Here are a few suggestions:

Haunt a Comedy Club

By haunt, I mean be there as often as you can with the goal of working your way to getting stage time. If the club owner/manager asks you to do something, do it, no matter how below your station in life you believe this task to be. At the Comedy Store in Hollywood, the beginner comics are asked to volunteer their time to be door persons, park cars, answer phones, etc.

Just so you know, Andy Garcia used to answer phones at the Comedy Store. Andy was always willing to do whatever it took. You must also be willing to do whatever it takes to get stage time and further your career.

TIP: Become the MC for the open mic nights. It is a miserable job that no one wants. It is a pain in the ass, yet it'll give you an

opportunity to get loads of stage time. (See my book *MC Training Manual* for instructions on being an MC and how to effectively run open mic nights.)

See Other Comics

Most comics are so wrapped up in their own struggle that they miss the chance to study and network with other comics. Of course, go to see Chris Rock, Amy Schumer, Bill Burr, Ali Wong, John Mulaney, Tiffany Haddish, and the like. But also take the time to go to a club and support one of your fellow comics on a night when he or she needs an audience.

Most comics will reciprocate in kind and show up at your shows. Part of the training in my workshop is to get everyone to work in collaboration—in writing material, giving each other solution feedback, and going to each other's shows. This builds a community that you're a central part of. Create a gang of comics who know and support one another. Remember, today's comic is tomorrow's sitcom producer.

Get to Know as Many Comics as Possible

The more friendly contacts you have in this business the better. Most every comic you meet will have some information about a room or comedy contact. In fact, some of the worst comics have the most contacts because they don't work on their show as much as they network. This will also come in handy as your career grows.

Whenever my wife Gayla Johnson and I go to Las Vegas, which is often, we always drop by several comedy shows and get in free. When comics are on the road, they are usually delighted to see a familiar face, even if it's a casual acquaintance. This is not just about politics—it is about making friends. Sometimes, lifelong friends.

Find a Mentor

If you haunt a club long enough, the established comics will recognize that you're serious and you're not going away. At proper times, approach them and ask for feedback. They will most likely tell you which jokes they like and which jokes they don't like, but this can be helpful.

The idea is to get a known comic to take a liking to you and offer to give you advice and help you move up the comedy ladder to get more stage time. To avoid being manipulative, pick a comic you admire and would enjoy being friends with on a personal level. A mentor is one of the only shortcuts there is in stand-up.

TIP: When the mentor comedian brings you along to a gig, especially if you get to perform, buy the gas or a meal. Show your appreciation of being included with something that helps the mentor.

Be Visible

Make sure the other comics and club managers know you're around. Make regular appearances at all the clubs. Drink at the bar with the working comics. This includes the internet. Send out bulletins, invitations, and newsletters consistently. The adage, "Out of sight, out of mind," is very true in comedy. Be in sight and in mind.

Create Your Own Shows

This is too complex a matter to discuss thoroughly here. But if you want stage time to hone your show and keep your material sharp, and you don't want to wait for someone else to give you the chance, create the opportunity for yourself. This is your career. Take charge and do whatever it takes to build your 30 minutes worth of material and get it on tape. In most large cities, there are rooms you can get for free if you can bring a small audience. There

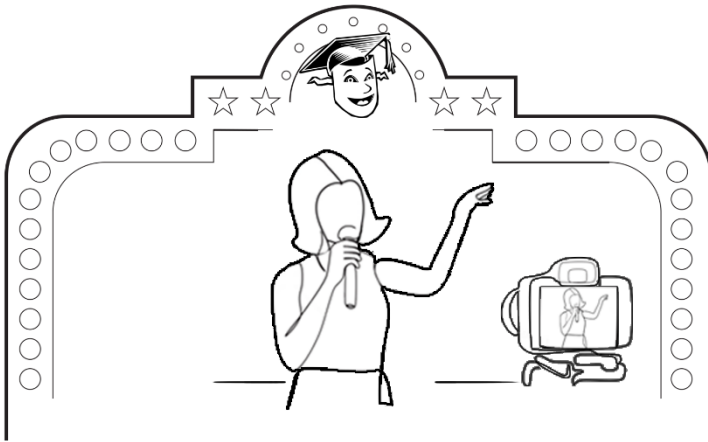
Greg Dean

are clubs and restaurants that have small rooms that can be used for comedy shows. Be imaginative to create opportunities.

* * *

You cannot have a business until you create and carry out a business plan. Just doing shows and waiting to be discovered means you'll be doing a lot of shows and doing a lot of waiting to be discovered. Be proactive, set goals, and make plans to get work. Then you'll be doing shows and waiting around for your paycheck.

30-MINUTE VIDEO



You must create an excellent 30-minute video of your show to submit for gigs. This is a bigger challenge than you may think, even if you have 30 minutes of material.

Finding a club that will give you a regular 30-minute spot is a rarity.

Then once you learn how to pace a 30-minute show, you'll need to get a good show on tape. Not all shows will be a show you'll want to send. It may be a funny show, but you might have had to riff with your audience so much that not much material was performed. There are also camera concerns.

You may need to find a friend who owns a camera or use the camera supplied by the club (often with a fee and not very good quality). To solve these problems, several of my students have set

up their own showcases for the purpose of getting a tape. Four of them pooled their money, rented a space, hired a camera crew, and invited their own audience and got an excellent tape.

The ironic thing about this requirement is that the Bookers will probably not watch the entire tape. They will watch the first few minutes, maybe, then listen to it in the background as they do office work. The Bookers just want to hear that you can fill the time. Nonetheless, this is a necessary step in getting work in a comedy club. When you have no recommendation from a Booker or comic and you can't go in person to do a guest spot, your video is your most important sales tool. Get it done right.

THE FUNDAMENTALS

Bookers Want an Unedited Show

Present your show without interruptions so the Bookers know you didn't edit out the unfunny moments. It's not just about material; they also look at the rhythm of your entire set, your interaction with the audience, how well you handle the unexpected, and whether your personality, tone, and subject material is right for their club. Give them your best show.

Attend to the Focus

I know this seems ridiculous to mention, but I've seen too many videos that are so out of focus that the watcher can't tell who's performing. Or because a waitperson constantly passes in front of the camera causing the *auto-focus* to shift back and forth.

Get to know the camera or ask the camera operator to make sure the camera is set on *manual-focus*. This means the operator must physically focus the lens on you while you're on stage at the start of the show. Thereafter, it'll remain focused on you, no matter who walks in front of it.

Proper Framing

The best framing for the shot is to place the performer's head very near the top of the screen and cut him or her off at the mid-thigh or just below the knees. Notice the framing of comedians on late night TV shows. If your image is too small, the Bookers won't be able to get a sense of who you are. Conversely, you don't want to shoot with *60 Minute* close-ups where they can only see the comic's face. Notice how stand-up is framed on television talk shows like the *Tonight Show* and *Late Night with Stephen Colbert*. This will give you a good idea of how to frame your videos.

Clear Sound is Imperative

It won't matter how in-focus and properly framed your video is if the Bookers can't understand what the comic is saying. Bookers are busy, and instead of watching the video, they listen. If they can't understand the audio, you've set up a roadblock to getting work.

This is one of the best reasons to hire a professional camera operator who can either tap into the sound system or who has directional microphones—one for you and one for the audience. If the laughter isn't on the video, it'll make a strong show sound weak. If you have a great performance with a lousy sound system, you still don't have a good tape.

Most Clubs Want the Opener to Work Clean

Many clubs aren't too upset if you have a few cuss words in your show. But when you're beginning, do only clean material to better your chances of getting the gig. If the Bookers know you can be clean, then they also know how easy it is to add cuss words if you need to work bluer. Clean is the key into nightclub work, but imperative for getting college and corporate gigs.

Perform Sober

My suggestion is to always perform sober. You're a grownup and can make your own choices. But if you're sipping a beer though your entire show, you lessen your chances of getting booked. View this from the Booker's perspective: Would they book a comic who drinks on stage over a comic who is sober on stage? Bookers want to be sure things will run smoothly. Help them.

Know What Individual Bookers Require

If the Booker wants a clean show, send a clean show. If he wants an edgy show, if you have one, send him an edgy show. If he only wants five minutes, send a five-minute show. If he wants your entire show without edits, do that. How can you find out the Booker's preferences?

TIP: Ask the Booker. Better yet, ask the secretary or assistant or manager. Ask other comics who have worked in that club. Do some research. Go online and see if the Booker's requirements are laid out on the website. If you can supply what they need without them having to explain it personally, you have taken a big step toward making them want to book you. Also, you must understand your show might not be right for every club. Be honest with yourself and only target the clubs that want the kind of show you have.

Make Sure Your Name, Phone, and Email is Easily Found

Make it easy for Bookers to get in touch with you. If the Booker likes your DVD or link and your contact information is only in your press kit, and he has misplaced it or thrown it away, he will book someone else just because it's too much trouble. If your name, phone, and email are clearly available, so are you.

* * *

10 Steps to Be a Working Comedian

This is one of the harder, yet essential steps to getting work. The sooner you get your 30 minutes of material, the sooner you can start figuring out ways to get it on video.

SELF-PROMOTION



It's time for you to become computer and internet literate. It may take extra work and money to get everything set up, but once it's available, everything is easier for everyone. Plus, you'll look like a professional comedian.

Here are ways to be more visible on the internet:

WEBSITE

If you don't have a website, you'll not be perceived as being a professional comedian. This is your most useful tool to establish a web presence as all the other platforms are designed to drive traffic to your site.

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You may not think this is important, but just to let you know, at least one half, or more, of my business, Greg Dean's Stand-Up Comedy Classes, comes from people finding me on the internet. You can get a simple site built for a few hundred dollars. Ask other comics about their Webmaster.

Here are some tips:

Place Your Press Kit Materials on Your Site

Once you have a website, then upload your entire press kit and make it easy to find on the menu. (Press Kit covered in Step 5)

Make it Easy to Contact You

On the home page, make sure you have your name, phone, and email. For every click people must make, you lose some of them. Make it stupid obvious who you are and how to contact you.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Again, these sites are free but time consuming. Signing up for a page is quite simple. Once you have a page, fill it with dates, videos, and pictures of your shows so people will get a sense of who you are.

TIP: One of my grads, Christine L, puts the show dates on memes of her upcoming shows and then posts them to all her social media platforms.

Here are the most important:

- **Youtube** - every comedian needs to have a channel.
- **Instagram** - IG is where most comedians post and chat.
- **Facebook** - the old standard. Facebook can give you a worldwide following.
- **TikTok** - world reach, but harder to get an audience.

- **X (Twitter)** - as of this writing it's under major changes, so do your research.
- **Blue Sky** - started as a replacement for X.

That's enough. I suggest you begin by learning how to use Youtube as it's the best for storing, organizing, and distributing your videos.

Create a Posting Ritual

Once a week, post your shows. Make it easy by typing where you'll be appearing on a background like the ones on Facebook. Create posters or flyers of your shows as these make great posts.

Use Social Networking to Publicize Your Shows

As a beginner, you cannot continue to get an audience for your shows by just relying on your family and friends. You must build a fan base by collecting friends on the internet. You must keep them posted about your upcoming shows on a regular basis.

Ask People to Subscribe, Join, or Like

Promotion is the key element to becoming a success. The more people who subscribe or join your YouTube channel, Facebook, and Instagram pages, the higher your ranking on search engines. This makes you easier to find.

EMAIL

Sending promotional emails is free. First, you'll send announcements to your family and friends. This must become a habit. Once a week, once a month, but do it. This doesn't have to be fancy, just a list of the places where you want people to see you perform.

Begin now. This is not something you do once and then you're a working pro. It will be a continuous process to build a fan base.

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Here are some things to know:

Create a Template

It's easier to send emails if you have a template with your basic information. Then all you need to do is fill in the show dates, times, venues, URLs, and addresses. Always include the venue address to make it easy for your fans to come to your shows.

Collect Names and Emails

Ask the club manager if you can put cards on the tables, then at the end of your show mention to the patrons that if they'd like to be on your mailing list, fill out the card. I know it seems like a lot of work to continually collect cards and type them into the computer, but after a year or two, you'll have a large database of fans.

Also, when anyone says they'd like to see you perform, get their name and email. I mean anyone. My wife Gayla Johnson was at a garage sale and mentioned she did stand-up. The people running the sale said they'd like to see her perform. She took their business card and entered it into her fan mailing list. Two weeks later, two of the people running the sale and four of their friends came to see her perform at the Comedy Store in Hollywood. It does work.

Use a Newsletter Form

It seems more professional if the announcement is a newsletter. First, just send out the emails. As you get better at it, shift over to a newsletter. Check Google. There are newsletter forms available for free. It just looks nicer and gives a more professional appearance, especially when you begin getting names of agents, producers, and casting directors.

For a fee, you can use ConstantContact.com or MailChimp.com. They have forms and other services that make it easy to send announcements in a very professional manner.

WARNING: people will come to see you, so make sure you're promoting the shows in which you wish to be seen. If the other comics are terrible, the drinks too expensive, the performing space nasty, or the area unsafe, then don't include these venues in the newsletter or announcement. You want your fans to have a fun time, so be selective.

Include Contact Info and Links

Always have clearly available contact information. Make sure your name, email, phone (if you have a business line), agents and managers etc. are listed. Also place links to your website, networking pages, video sites, and profiles. Make it easy to find a bunch of great promotional material about you.

VIDEO

There are several sites that allow you to upload videos. Create clips and place them on all their sites. YouTube, Vimeo, Break, LiveLeak, Twitch, Google, Metacafe, Daily Motion. By the time you read this, there will be even more or less. This is about building a video web presence.

Video Record Every Show

The reason you're doing this is to capture those moments in shows when you're in the zone and crushing it. As a beginning comedian, you'll have a lot of bad shows, but you'll also have some good ones, and you'll want to have them on video.

Equipment and Services Needed

There are some easy and more complex ways to shoot and edit video. Here's the equipment and services you'll need:

- Camcorder and tripod – I know this is a pain in the butt, but do it anyway. You'll get better quality picture and sound. Get a carrying case for these things and keep them in your car ready for any occasion.

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- **Go-Pro** – These are small, portable, and use mini SD cards. You can stick them, hold them, or set them on a table. The less the club or manager knows, the better.
- **Smartphone Camera** – If you don't want to carry a camera, then use your smartphone. Someone can hold it, or you can put it on a selfie stick and set it somewhere. Hold the camera horizontally like a real frame, not at a vertical angle, as it makes it look like a camera phone. If you record a good show, it'll look like it was taken with a camcorder. You can make clips on your smartphone and edit them on YouTube editor. No cost, only time.
- **Special Tripods and Camera Holders** – They now have all kinds of gizmos that hold cameras and smartphones. Some are like snakes, and you can bend them to hang on a pole or sit on a table. Some are for cameras, some are for smartphones, and some are for both. Look into them and get several.

Branding

Make sure your name and/or moniker as well as keywords in the title and description of all videos. This helps the Google search bots to index your videos. What you want to happen is when someone types in your name or moniker or keywords, they get several results that lead them to you. If you want to get fancy, create, and include a graphic logo.

TIP: Fiverr.com has a plethora of great graphic artists who will design a logo for you at a reasonable price.

Keep Videos Short

The best length is under 3 minutes. Short and funny are the best. No one has the attention to watch a ten-minute video. (The exception is when you're placing a video that you want Bookers to view. Then upload as long of a show as the site will allow.)

Material Theft

Many have asked me, “If my clips are out in the public, won’t someone steal my material?” Yes, they will. Joke stealing will always go on. This is not an excuse for not creating a web presence.

If it’s your best material, then put it on Youtube’s “Unlisted” setting and then the only people who can see it are those you give the URL. It’s better to have them up so you can show them to Bookers at a moment’s notice.

TIP: For everyone’s protection, YouTube now tracks duplications and will notify you.

Use Caption Graphic at the Bottom

If you put your URL at the bottom, then If someone tries to lift your video, it’ll do them no good because it’ll have a graphic that lets the watcher know where it came from. You can also add your graphic logo for the purposes of branding.

On the videos for Greg Dean’s Stand-Up Comedy Classes which are shown on youtube.com/gregdeancomedy, all the videos show the graphic that reads: stand-upcomedy.com. This also allows anyone to easily contact me.

Upload Videos to Social Networking Platforms

You need to have several accounts to spread the word that you’re a comedian and where you’re appearing. There is much to know, and it will take a while to get good at it, yet self-promotion cannot be ignored.

YOUTUBE

Obviously, you must have a Youtube account. To sign up for a Youtube channel, watch a google video. It’s all pretty easy, yet if

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you have any problems there are tons of videos on Google or Youtube to guide you through any process.

Here's some advice as to how to make your videos more effective:

Titles

The video title is very important as you want it to be clear what it's about and entice users to watch it. Part of getting good at creating titles is knowing how Google and Youtube search engines work.

Here are a few things you need to know:

Keywords

These are the words and phrases people type into the YouTube and Google search bar. Using the right ones makes it easier for your video to appear in search results. They rank videos based on how closely your titles match a user's search. Relevant keywords in the title boost your chances of ranking higher.

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Using the right keywords ensures your video reaches people who are genuinely interested in your content. Selecting strong, relevant keywords is like putting a spotlight on your video, helping the right audience find it quickly and boosting its performance.

Here are some keywords you might want to include in your titles and descriptions:

Stand-up comedy

Stand up comedy

Comedian

Comic

Laugh

Laughter

Funny

Comedy Show

Live Comedy

Funny Stand-Up

Comedy Routine

Hilarious Comic

Comedy Performance

Killer Shows

Funny Comedian

TIP: No need to concern yourself with synonyms and plurals as the search engines can understand without you writing, “funny, funnier, funniest,” it will accept them all as the same keyword “funny.”

Descriptions

Here’s why crafting a great description for your YouTube video is so important, along with how to do it effectively:

- **Keywords in the 1st Sentence** - Using the same keywords from your title in the *1st sentence* of your description helps YouTube understand your video’s topic. It should grab attention and explain why viewers should watch your video.
- **Include Links** - Paste a line followed by a link to your:

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- Website: URL
- Youtube: URL
- Instagram: URL
- Add #tags - In the 2nd line put in 3 #s to make your video more discoverable in searches and categorized results. Make sure at least one is the same keyword as in the title and 1st line of the description.

Crafting a strong description ensures your video is discoverable, engaging, and helpful for building your audience!

Thumbnails

Here's why making good thumbnails for your YouTube videos is essential:

- People often decide to watch a video based on its thumbnail. A clear, compelling thumbnail boosts your click-through rate (CTR).
- Thumbnails give viewers a quick idea of what your video is about, helping them decide if it's worth their time.
- A thumbnail with visuals or text that matches your title reinforces the topic and draws the right audience.
- Consistent, high-quality thumbnails build your channel's identity and make your videos instantly recognizable.
- YouTube notices when your thumbnails drive more clicks and watch time, helping your video rank higher in search and recommendations.

A polished thumbnail makes your video look credible, encouraging more viewers to trust and watch it.

TIP: Use Keywords in Alt Text: When uploading your thumbnail, add a description that includes your primary keyword. For example, if your video is about "Stand-Up Comedy Show," use that phrase in the alt text.

Cards

This creates that “i” with a circle around it in the upper right hand corner of your videos that shows a Call to Action or Teaser Text attached to a link. When views click on it they are taken to a URL you’ve put into the End Card template

Look for the “Cards” option and click it to open the end screen editor. Click “+ *Element*” to add different features to your end card:

- **Video:** Direct users to another of your videos.
- **Playlist:** Highlight another video or playlist viewers might enjoy.
- **Channel:** Promote another channel you like or collaborate with.
- **Link (if eligible):** Direct viewers to an approved external website.

Adding a card is a simple way to keep viewers on your channel and guide them to take specific actions, like subscribing or watching more of your videos.

TIP: Use the timeline at the bottom to adjust when you want the Info Button to show up. With video shorts I place it all the way to the end so it shows for the entire video.

End Screens

After uploading, in the video editor section, find and click the “*End Screen*” option in the menu on the side.

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In the new window at the top pick “Elements” it will give you a choice of:

- **Video:** Send viewers to another of your videos.
- **Playlist:** Direct them to a Playlist with many videos.
- **Subscribe:** Get them to subscribe to your channel.
- **Channel:** Drive them to your Youtube homepage.
- **Link (if eligible):** Take viewers to approved websites.

Pick a pre-designed template and follow the instructions to add a URL to one of these locations. Use the timeline at the bottom to decide when the end screen starts and ends (usually the last 5-20 seconds).

Each element on the end screen serves to keep viewers engaged, grow your channel, and achieve specific goals like gaining subscribers or promoting other content.

Videos Longer Than 15 Minutes

Here’s how to enable videos longer than 15 minutes:

Click your profile picture in the top-right corner and select “*YouTube Studio*” from the dropdown menu. In the YouTube Studio, click “*Settings*” (gear icon) at the bottom-left corner. In the settings window, click on the “*Channel*” option.

Look for a prompt to verify your account. If you don’t see it, you can also go directly to [YouTube Verification](#). Select to verify via phone, either through a text message or an automated call. Enter the verification code sent to your phone into the verification page.

You’ll see a message confirming your account is verified. Now, when you upload a video, you can select files longer than 15 minutes without restrictions.

Subtitles

70% of people watch videos on their phones without the sound and read the subtitles. They will be added automatically, but you still need to check and make sure they present what you're actually saying. I had one subtitle turn the term, "Not see" into "Nazi." Fortunately I was informed by a fan on comments, that's when I learned how to edit my subtitles.

Here's how to edit subtitles step by step:

If YouTube has auto-generated subtitles, Click *"Duplicate and Edit"* next to the existing subtitle track. Review the auto-generated subtitles for accuracy and make corrections as needed.

Play the video and type in the text for each section, matching it with the correct timestamp.

Watch the video on YouTube to confirm that the subtitles appear correctly. And that's it! Your subtitles are now edited and ready for viewers.

Youtube Editor

Here's how to edit your video and add music:

- Edit Video

Click on the *"Content"* tab on the left menu, then choose the video you want to edit. Click *"Editor"* from the left-hand menu of the video's details page. Use the timeline below the video to trim by dragging the edges or cutting out sections.

- Adding Music

Get more likes and views.

In the editor, select the *"Audio"* tab to access YouTube's free music library.

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Use the search bar or filters (like mood, genre, or duration) to find the perfect track.

Click on a track to listen and make sure it fits your video. Once satisfied, click “Save” to update your video with the new edits and music.

Your video is now edited and enhanced with music, ready for your audience to enjoy.

Get to know Youtube as it’s going to be in your life as long as you are a comedian.

* * *

Start creating an internet presence now to promote yourself. If you wait until you have a bit of notoriety, then you'll be behind. Get these promotional tools in place to help you on your climb to success. Don’t think future agents or managers will do it for you. PR is not what they do. Promote yourself . . . **now**.

PRESS KIT



A good press kit is one of the more valuable tools for getting work. The kit is an introduction to the Booker to see you and your work. Like any first impression, it'll last. Your press kit must impress the Booker without seeming like you're overcompensating. It doesn't matter if it's a physical kit or electronic press kit.

TWO TYPES

Electronic Press Kits (EPK)

You're lucky to be in the internet generation as you can put your entire press or media kit online. EPKs are pretty easy to find. Type into Google "electronic press kits" or "EPK" and add the word "free." You'll get a selection, yet most of them will be for musicians. Not to worry. They all contain about the same modules to upload the needed promotional materials.

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The ones that are free, usually have a paid version, which as your career progresses you may want to upgrade to, but for now, free is fine.

Physical

For club work, you can put together a press kit at home for a moderate price, but if you're submitting to colleges, cruise ships, or corporate work, you'll need a physical press kit.

If you spend thousands on a press kit that would impress a major corporation, the Booker will wonder why a beginner has such an elaborate kit. This tends to create mistrust in the information because it doesn't jibe with being an Opener comedian.

A physical press kit consists of these items: a folder, cover letter, business card, headshot, resume, bio, reviews (if you have any), and links to your videos.

TIP: Pick one font and stick with it. Many fonts make it hard to read.

Here is the information you'll need to know when building a press kit:

COVER LETTER OR EMAIL

This is your first handshake, which should invite the Booker to browse the rest of your materials and ultimately hire you. Physical or email cover letters can make or break a press kit. Spend some time composing it. Don't just jot down some quick thoughts and send it. It should cover the same information, plus links to your website, KPK, YouTube, and other social media platforms.

Here are some helpful hints for both:

Remind the Booker Who You Are

Put a little reminder at the beginning of the letter to help the Booker remember that you've already had personal contact. Pick

something memorable from your conversation like, “I’m the one from Monkey Eyebrow, Kentucky.” Or whatever will make your conversation easy to recall.

Put Your Name at the Top and Your Contact Information at the Bottom

The first thing the Booker is going to want to know is who the letter is from, so put your name in large letters at the top of the page. Make sure you're easy to contact. Put your phone number, address, email, etc., on everything and make it easy to find at the bottom of your cover letter. If there is any hassle at all, they'll move on to a press kit with a letter that makes their job easier.

Keep it Short

If a Booker glances at your cover letter and it's a full page or more, they may pass it up for a kit with a letter with just a few sentences. Put yourself in the Booker's position: There are several kits a day to look over, and whichever kit is easiest to review is the one they'll spend the time on. Rewrite your cover letter or email several times to make sure it's clear and to the point.

Check Spelling and Grammar

Have someone else proofread it for you—there is nothing more annoying than a letter filled with spelling and grammatical errors that make it difficult to read. Send it to friends to get feedback and suggestions. A professional letter states that you're a professional.

Include Your Avails

Avails is a comedy biz term for the dates you're *available* to work. There's nothing more frustrating to a Booker than to go through your press kit, watch the video, and then call you only to discover you aren't available for the dates they have open. If your avails are in the letter or email, it makes you appear professional. This

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saves the booker time and will pay off in an easy booking. Remember, calling and booking comics is a great deal of boring work, so the easier you make it for the Booker, the more likely they are to use you.

Clearly State the Name of the Person Who Recommended You

Recommendations are the building blocks of a successful comedy career. Short of doing a guest spot, this is the most reliable way a Booker gets good comics to fill their calendar. If someone the Booker trusts recommends you, then your chances of getting booked are much better.

Mention That You Will Do a Follow-Up Call in a Week

This lets the Booker off the hook because they won't have to remember to get back to you. You've stated that you'll take responsibility and get back to them yourself. Be sure to call when you say you're going to call. Consistency is key.

Refrain from Writing a Letter Filled with Jokes

This is a business letter, not a comedic essay. I recommend you keep the body of the letter as formal business. Then, if you want to write something funny, put it at the end as a quote or as a P.S. This will end the letter with a laugh after business has been taken care of.

Remind the Booker Your Materials Were Requested

Bookers speak with dozens of new comics each week. If you mention you called and spoke with them, and they asked for your press kit, this will make them curious as to who you are. Your cover letter should make them want to look at your picture, resume, and view your video.

Here is a Sample of an Email or Cover Letter

Your Name in Header

Dear Mr./Ms. *Booker's Last Name*, Date: *Fill in Club Name*

Club Address Club Phone Club Email

I'm writing to request a Feature spot in your club. As you remember, I'm being recommended by *Name of Famous Comic*. (link to comic's website). Included are all my promotional materials. (Either physical kit or a link to your EPK.

Here are my avails for the next quarter:

Jan. 15 – Jan 30.

Feb. 1 – Feb. 28 Mar (booked) Apr. 1 – Apr. 20

I'll call to follow up on *day and date*. Looking forward to working with you. Thank you for your consideration.

Cordially,

You Signature

Youtube.com/URL (hyperlinked)

Instagram.com/URL (hyperlinked)

In Footer

Address, City, State Zip Code

Phone Number, E-mail. Website

VIDEO

All the information you need to know to make an excellent video is in *Step 2. 30-Minute Video*.

HEADSHOTS

Nothing will create a first impression like a great headshot. A good one can help you to get work, just as a bad one can cause you to lose work. If your picture is amateurish, out of focus, or presents you as unlikable, then your chances of getting booked are slim.

Here are some tips for getting a great headshot. This picture should look like you and be available to download from your website or KPK.

Go to a Professional Photographer

This isn't as easy as it seems. There are hordes of bad professional photographers making a living cranking out bad headshots.

First, check out a prospective photographer by going to his or her website or Instagram site or better yet studio to see the example headshots to make sure you like the kind of lighting and atmosphere. Some will specialize in outdoor shots, and some will work exclusively in a studio.

Avoid a photographer friend if he doesn't know the business. Even if he takes a great picture of a tree in winter, this doesn't mean he knows how to take a headshot. Invest in yourself.

When done correctly, the bucks can add up quickly, so make sure you like the headshot before you go any further with production on it.

If you don't like any of the pictures on the proofs, ask the photographer to take more. Most will honor this request because they want to protect their reputation. If they resist, push. You spend the money, you should get what you want, nothing less. If they won't reshoot, go on Yelp.com and write a note to let others know.

Then, recommit and spend the money to get another set of pictures done. It's cheaper to hire a photographer than it is to pay less for a bad picture that won't get you work. The reason pictures are so important to the Bookers is they'll be placing the headshot in the lobby of the club and submitting it to the local newspaper and TV shows as part of the advertising and publicity.

Do a Normal Pose

Don't let the photographer talk you into a goofy pose with your hand on your face or lying down or trying to make the picture funny. All these things scream, "Amateur." This is the business part of show business. It's better to play it straight until you have a personal relationship with the Bookers.

Get Pictures in the Correct Style

This is a confusing area to give current advice. The requirements for pictures are constantly changing for no clear reason. Sometimes the style is black and white; other times it is color. Some Bookers will want a shot of you from the waist up, while others will want an ordinary headshot. How will you know the Booker's preference? *Ask*. Part of being a professional means knowing what questions to ask. Yes, this means you'll need several styles of pictures to choose from as you put together your press kit.

Make Sure Your Picture Looks Like You

You look the way you look. Accept it. Make sure the Booker recognizes you by your headshot. This is especially true for women. Some photographers try to talk you into a glamor shot. Don't do it. This is not to say, "Don't look good," but to say, "Look like yourself."

You will need to update your headshot every couple of years. There's nothing more disconcerting to a Booker who hires a clean-

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shaven comic with a full head of hair than to get one with a shaved head, Amish beard, nose ring, and tattooed ears.

Smile in Your Headshot

Don't try to be coy, silly, outrageous, or overly dramatic. The best picture is with an authentic smile. The one exception is if you're selling a specific character. Then allow the character to be him or herself. Remember, these are going to hang in the club lobby and be used for publicity.

Place Your Name at the Bottom of Your Picture

Make the letters easily readable, even hung up in the lobby. This is the one place where you can change the font used in the rest of your press kit. Once chosen, keep it consistent to brand your name.

Do *Not* Put Your Phone Number on Your Picture

If the headshot is in the lobby, you don't want your number accessible to everyone who comes into the club. If some crazy person doesn't like your material, opinions, or sense of humor, you might end up with some nasty phone calls.

Don't Staple Your Resume to Your Picture in the Press Kit

This seems like a good idea, but it creates a few problems. If your picture is being used for publicity, the newspaper will remove the staple, which diminishes the quality of the photo because it'll have holes, if not tears.

Leave your picture separate from your resume. The one exception to this rule is when your picture has the resume printed on the back. This is classy and proper. The one downside is that once your resume is out of date, you may still have a bunch of pictures with printed resumes left over that you can't use.

Headshots in Your Press Kit

Initially, Bookers just want to make sure you're not hideous looking. After that, they'll use the headshot in the marquee or lobby, sent to the local newspaper, and use it in flyers. Place at least three headshots in your physical press kit. For the online press kit, it's always good to offer multiple versions of headshots. Then the Bookers can select the one they want to use.

RESUME

The Bookers will read your resume as a way of understanding your level as a comic. How you present your resume will represent your professionalism, even with just a few good credits.

Here are some tips:

TIP: fiverr.com with two r's at the end. This site presents people from all over the world who will do most any task for only \$5, including resumes and bios. I use them all the time for proofreading and book cover design, etc.

Put Your Name at the Top

Do not put "Resume" at the top of your resume. If a Booker doesn't know it's a resume by looking at it, you don't want to work for them anyway. All the Booker needs to know is who the resume belongs to, so at the top of the page place your *name*.

Cut Off the Edges to Match the 8 X 10 Headshot Size

If you're just submitting a physical picture and resume, you should staple them together. Make sure they are the same size. When the resume paper sticks out around the edges of your picture, it'll get torn and look bad. Also, when the Booker stores it in their files, they won't want to deal with a ratty edged resume sticking out and cluttering the organization.

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As discussed earlier, if you can afford it, print your resume on the back of your picture. This is the only way to guarantee the Booker won't lose your resume unless he loses your picture.

Which happens far too often, and then you'll need to submit another picture and resume.

Have Consistent Font Styles

This is a business document, so keep it simple by only using one font style for your name and a different style for your credits. Some mistakenly think that they can add some pizzazz to their resume by emphasizing things with weird fonts of different sizes. All this does is make it difficult to read. I suggest Ariel for both a physical and online resume. It's always easy to read.

Print Your Resume on Nice Colored Paper Stock

There's inexpensive light blue, tan, bone, pale yellow, and light green that are easy on the eyes and make your resume easy to read. No need to go overboard and use expensive paper. Conversely, avoid plain *white* printer paper. Avoid bright red, dark blue, or Kelly green because your printed information will be difficult to read. Also skip the bright, fluorescent- colored paper because it's rough on the eyes.

In your EPK keep it simple with white or pastel background with black type.

Tell the Truth About Your Experience

If you pad your resume and get the job, but then don't live up to the lies, you'll never work at that club again. Even worse, most Bookers know all the other Bookers, and the word will get out. You may have gotten one gig only to ruin your chances of getting any other work. This brings us back to the theme of making sure you're ready before trying to get work. Be honest on your resume. If you're not ready for the work, then don't submit your press kit.

BIOGRAPHY

The bio should be in the form of a *press release*. If you don't know the format for press releases, then Google it. The reason for this is that the Booker may get a request from a local paper to do a story on you.

Tell the Truth

If you lie about your credits or your past and Booker finds out, you'll be marked. People don't like to be deceived. Also, the radio, TV, and newspaper interviews may be using your bio as the source for their questions. If your bio is a lie, then you'll have to lie even more in these public forums. The problem is that lies require more lies, which require even more lies. Tell the truth and keep things simple for everyone.

Make Sure it Fits on *One Page*

It's too daunting for a Booker to read your life history. They want to be able to glance down at one page and get the gist of your background and career. Leave the epics to the Russian authors.

Keep the Information Relevant to Your Comedy Career

Include things that are related to your show or comedy—for instance, if you've written a funny book or recorded a comedy album. It's also fine to state that you've had an unusual or interesting past, like having been a policeman or if you've worked as a carnival barker. Avoid details about you being the funny person in your hometown. These may be quaint, but they're also unprofessional.

Include Any *Quotes* From Newspapers or Celebrities

If you have a *real* comedy review from a newspaper, work a quote from it into your bio. Also, if any celebrity has said something flattering about how funny or talented you are, make sure it is

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visible. These are endorsements, which will pique the interest of the Booker.

Put the Impressive Credits Near the Top

Often people will want their bio to be in chronological order, the early stuff first and their latest work near the end. This often causes their most impressive credits to be buried too far down their bio. If you have recently appeared in a sitcom or done a comedy special, place it near the top so the Booker will read it right away.

Be Prepared to Discuss the Information in the Bio

The Booker may want to discuss something they find interesting in your bio. Also, your bio could be used in ads, newspaper articles, or sent to TV or radio stations. You must be prepared to discuss all the things in your bio, because this is all the interviewer knows about you. It's best to have a funny story for each notable item. For instance, if there is a funny story about how you got a quote from a famous person, be ready to tell it to the Booker or interviewer.

BUSINESS CARDS

Business cards are an essential part of being a professional comedian. Spend the time to create a good one. The point of a business card is to pass them out to those who might offer you gigs or jobs. By the card alone, they probably won't remember who you are, so here are some tips:

Make it Clear You're a Comedian

There's nothing worse than having to figure out what business the card represents. It would be nice if you can create a logo for yourself that says your name and "comedian" on it. These will mostly be used to hand out to people in person. I can't tell you

how many times I've asked a comedian for their card and they don't have one. How am I supposed to remember and contact you to offer you a spot or a gig?

Make it Easy to Read

Bookers are probably older than you are, so make sure everyone can read it. I know the cards are small, but make sure the font is large enough to read at a glance. Remember, cards have two sides, so utilize them.

Put Your Headshot on the Card

There are several reasons for this. One, people are more likely to remember who you are and where you met with a picture to remind them. Two, people feel guilty when they throw a card away that has a picture on it, so they'll keep it in their collection.

TIP: vistaprint.com You can design a card from a template and order a few hundred at a reasonable price.

Digital Business Card

Keep up to date with technology. There are many software products from which you can make digital cards. Canva is one that is free. Just a few things to know are to select a template that is vertical because it's easier to scan from a smartphone. Make sure the QR (Quick Response) Code is large enough for scanners to read. It'll automatically create a contact on the reader's phone.

REVIEWS

If you have any legitimate newspaper stories or reviews of your shows, then include them in your press kit. Keep these relevant to your comedy show. A Booker isn't interested in the reviews of your performance in the *Fantasticks* from high school.

Include the name of the newspaper for each story or review, especially if it is a notable newspaper.

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If you have a scanner, then add your reviews to your website. Make sure you have a link from your homepage to your review. As you perform more and get reviews, you'll want to take the less impressive ones out of the press kit and off the site and only include the impressive ones from prominent newspapers, magazines, etc.

People are impressed by real reviews. Tell the truth. The internet makes it too easy to search the review's original source.

* * *

In Conclusion

Press kits are a great deal of work and require constant updating. Again, pick a place in your residence to keep all the materials together. Buy some organizing shelves or boxes so everything will be visible, and you can select the items to assemble the proper press kit for the occasion.

CONTACT BOOKERS



You must set up a system for making calls, sending out press kits, and consistently following up. Use Windows' Outlook or the Mac equivalent or purchase some organizational software designed for phone sales to keep track of your contacts.

It's important to have a system so you can keep track of when you made your calls and who you talked to. It might not be the Booker; it might be the receptionist. Did you leave a message on voicemail or with the person on the phone?

If you talked to someone, you need to know when and to whom you sent the press kit. Later, you'll want to be reminded by your computer to make follow-up calls. Getting work is your job, so put in a certain number of hours per day.

WHAT YOU NEED

Assuming you have the show requirements to be an Opener, a press kit, and the time free to travel, you're ready to look for work.

Do Research Before Making Contact

Know the name of the club and the name of the Booker. Go online and do your research. Some club websites will tell you everything you need to know to send your press kit. The more you know about the club, the Booker, and requirements, the better you'll be received because they won't need to answer questions about information already available.

The Booker's Requirements

If you can't find the requirements by some other means, call the Booker and ask. Better yet, ask the receptionist so you can make sure you're right for the gig before talking to the Booker. Be ready with pen and paper or computer so you can record the information. Nothing will piss off a Booker faster than waiting on the phone while you look for something to write with. Have all your available information and materials accessible before making the call.

Your First Contact Will Probably Be Voicemail

Tell the voicemail or receptionist that you're a comic wanting to be considered for work in the club. If you get a receptionist, he or she will put you through to the Booker's voice mail. The Booker will probably not be available, even if they *are* there. They will want to listen to your message first to check you out. Bullet-point the things you want to say. For instance:

- Hello, my name is_____.
- I've been recommended by __.
- I'd like to apply for an Open position in your club and I'd like to send you my press kit.

- My number is ###-###-#### and my email address is screen-name@provider.com
- Thank you very much, and I'm looking forward to working with you.

Be honest and straightforward and keep the message *short*. If it goes on too long, they'll simply erase it and move onto the next message.

If the Booker Picks Up the Phone

Always assume that the person who answers the phone is the Booker. It'll probably be the receptionist, but you never know. Be polite even if the person who answers the phone is a little sharp in tone. The Booker could be stressed out because someone on their staff is ill, a food or liquor order didn't come in, or a myriad of other logistical problems. Their bad mood has nothing to do with you, so get past it and get to your bullet points swiftly and politely.

The Receptionist is Often the Ticket to Getting Work in a Club

The receptionist has Booker's ear, and if you make a good impression, your chances of getting work will increase. Ask the receptionist where to send a press kit and ask the best time to make a follow-up call. This person should have all the answers about when the Booker is most open to new people. With any luck, they'll say to call back in a week or so. You'll probably have to make a half dozen phone calls before you get a positive response. Be patient. Be persistent. Be nice.

Keep the First Contact Short

Whether it is by phone or email, make your first contact very brief. Clubs get dozens of calls a week from comics they know, comics they don't know, and comics they wish they'd never heard of. They are also fielding calls from agents, food and alcohol suppliers, building inspectors, cleaning crews, and so on.

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Remember, they are running a business, not just a stage for you to perform on. Everybody wants something from Bookers. That usually involves them giving money to someone else. (Except for customers, they don't want money ... they want free tickets!) If you're at a pleasant moment in their day, they'll be more likely to give you a look.

Don't Do Your Act on the Phone or in Person

If you bomb on the phone, you'll have completely killed your chances of getting work. Your show was designed for a nightclub stage, not a phone. This is a business call, so keep it straightforward and pleasant.

Set Up a Phone or a Voicemail That is for Business Only

Voice mail is very cheap now. You'll want a separate line for your business calls. If you have a roommate or a spouse, you certainly won't want them answering the phone in a bad mood when a Booker calls.

There are nightmare stories about a spouse answering the phone saying, "He's not here. I'm really busy cleaning up baby crap. Call back later." A job you spent a great deal of time and money to get just went down the toilet with the baby crap. Spend the extra couple of dollars a month to have a reliable voicemail you can access from anywhere 24/7.

Convince the Booker You Are Right for Their Club

This can be done three ways. One, have a good press kit with an excellent video with clean and funny material. Two, build a relationship with the Booker. This can be done on the phone if you're pleasant and persistent. At some point they'll begin to like you and respect your persistence and give you a shot. Be ready! Three, get a recommendation from someone they respect. This will convince a Booker to hire you quicker than anything else.

Go into a Club and Ask for a Guest Spot

Face to face is the best and scariest way to meet Bookers. Get to the club early before customers are coming in, so as not to be in the way. Ask the bartender if it's a good time to talk with the Booker.

TIP: Whenever you travel, find the local comedy clubs and drop in and ask for a guest spot. The spots are usually 10 minutes between the Opener and Feature. If you crush it, you have a much better chance of getting booked.

If the Booker has a chance to see you do a 10-minute spot, with no cost to them, they are much more likely to give you work. If the club is local, this is easy because you can drive over and perform. If it is out of town, then you must think ahead to set up an audition.

Here are some things to know about showcase auditions:

Do Only Clean Material

Play it safe and keep your show clean. Once you know what the Booker wants, you can add cuss words and include more edgy material. If you have a question about whether you should do certain material, ask the Booker or Club Manager.

Use Your "A" Material

A guest spot will probably be 10 minutes long, so be prepared to kill. Do only the best of the best.

Make Friends with the Staff

The club staff has the Booker's ear, so if they like you, it has some influence on the decision to hire you. If the staff dislikes you, it could be the factor that makes you lose the gig. Politeness must become a way of being.

Be Professional

There's nothing more horrifying for Bookers than to give a comic a chance, only to be repaid with grief. If you show up late, are unprepared, rude, do inappropriate material, disappear at show time, get wasted before the show, piss off the wait staff, get in the way of the servers, or any number of other offenses, you can rest assured you won't get booked for the paying gig. It's a guest spot, act like a guest.

After the Show, Ask for Feedback

If you're good, chances are Bookers will come to you and ask you to send your avails. If they don't approach you, then pick a time when they aren't busy and ask for feedback. Don't insist or force the situation, but if you can get them to talk, you'll learn why they want to book you or perhaps the reasons that they don't. They are both necessary information. Guest audition spots are a special opportunity for you to show your goods. Be prepared and behave as a guest because you'll get no better chance to prove yourself.

Get the Booker to Talk about Themselves

Most comics try to impress the Booker by talking about themselves. The booker constantly deals with comics talking about their new bit or how great they were at some club. Do yourself a favor and ask the Booker or receptionist some questions and get them to tell you about the things they like. Find out their hobbies and ask some questions to find out about their latest trip. You will be the most interesting person in the world if you enjoy simply listening.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Bookers are not bad people, but they can be tough. They've been burned by comics who misrepresent the quality of their act, are no-shows, or perhaps any of dozens of reasons I won't discuss

here. So, to avoid having their time and money wasted, the Booker has developed a tough hide. To penetrate these defenses, you must have a show they feel is safe to book. Here are some things to know about Booker psychology:

Bookers Are Overwhelmingly Busy

You must learn to be persistent and patient. If you get pissy because the Booker doesn't get back to you, that attitude will be the end of your chance of getting work. It may be an uphill climb to get work but keep on the path. If you're funny, you'll get work. It's not personal if the Booker forgets who you are—just remember they're overwhelmed.

The Bookers Will Make the *Safest* and *Easiest* Choice

They're getting more phone calls from good comics who need work than they have jobs to offer. Since they have so many options about who to hire, they'll go with what is safe. They need to know the person they hire will show up and put on a good show. They'll equally avoid anything that appears to have a snag or hitch just to do what is simplest. If you get in a Bookers' "safe" category by doing clean material, you're in a better position to get work.

Bookers Need to Fill Their Lineup

Bookers have a *problem*: Their job is a never-ending task of booking, un-booking, and re-booking comics because the club must offer fresh talent to get the locals to come back. If you're safe and easy and they can call you at the last minute to fill in for a cancellation, then you become their *solution*. If you're the *solution*, you'll work.

Bookers Need to Know You're Trustworthy

Bookers go through a great deal of stress because flaky comics screw up the dates, don't call when they get into town, show up late, take more than their allotted time on stage, get drunk before

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a show, and many more crazy things than you can imagine. If the Bookers learn that you're their solution and that you're reliable and will show up on the correct dates, check-in when you arrive in town, get to the show early, and do the assigned amount of stage time, then you'll get booked and re-booked. For Bookers, it's more important that a comic is trustworthy than merely the funniest.

Bookers Need Backup Comics When They Get Cancellations

One way to endear yourself to Bookers is to offer to fill in when they get last minute cancellations. This happens more often than you might think. When this happens, they quickly make a series of calls. Usually, the first one to respond gets the job. But if they know they can call you and you'll fill in on a moment's notice, you're the solution.

Most Bookers Book More Than One Club

Once you prove that you're funny, safe, and trustworthy, you'll often get multiple bookings. Conversely, if you screw up a gig, you may lose work for many months.

Most Bookers Are Men Who Book Men

I'm not sure why most Bookers are men, but it's often true. The ones I have talked with say they mostly book men comics because most women comics aren't as funny as men comics. They say this with disappointment, not hostility. They seem to genuinely want to book more women, but again, they must play it safe. To set the record straight, I don't subscribe to this sentiment, but am merely reporting the information I've gotten from some Bookers.

Bookers Work With the Same Comics Over and Over

Getting re-booked is good for you and good for the Bookers. Good for you because you have regular work and good for the Bookers because it is safe. Many Bookers like to book the same comics for several gigs during the year because they become friends and it

gives them a week to hang out after the shows. Getting work is also about relationships.

Booking Routines Go in Cycles

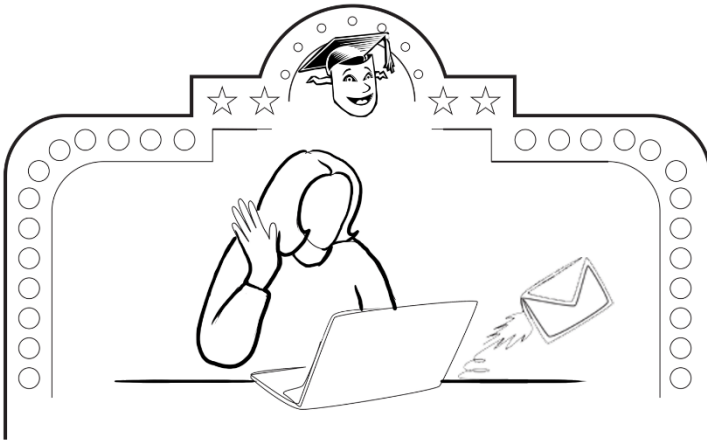
Many Bookers will do their bookings all at once during a particular week and then fill in as needed. They'll do this several times a year, usually about six months in advance of the actual dates of the gigs.

TIP: You must fit into their systems. This is the reason to call when they tell you to call. Find out the dates of their booking cycles and contact them during those dates. How do you find out what those dates are? Ask! It might be on the website, and you may need to ask the receptionist. For instance, some Bookers will sit down in September to book their January through March comedians. They want to get all these dates settled so all they have to do from January through March is deal with a few cancellations. Then in January, they'll get busy booking April through July. Contacting them at the right time is essential to getting work.

Being a Booker is a tough job. And since comics are a rather disgruntled group, Bookers get verbally abused, so they can become defensive or a little hostile. Having the pressure to make money is a heavy burden. Be compassionate, but also be persistent. If you're having a hard time convincing Bookers that you're right for their clubs, find a way around their objections by getting recommendations from someone they respect.

You're self-employed, so take care of your reputation because it *is* your business. Making calls to ask for work is a continuous process, and you must stay up on it to keep working. It will get easier the more you do it because the Bookers will know you and your work, so all you have to do is send in your avails and firm up the dates.

SEND PRESS KITS



This should all be prepared in advance. Spend some time composing the email and building your promo materials to come across as a pro. This is your job interview.

PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS

Send an Email With Links to Your Promotional Materials

If you have put your promotional materials online in an easy to access manner, then make sure you have links to those sites. This is extra work for you, but a breeze for the Booker. And that's the way it should be.

This is where that 30-minute video comes into play. You may not want your entire show to be public, so put the setting on YouTube

or Vimeo to *private*, and then you can get a URL so only those you send it to can watch the video.

Make Sure You and Your Materials are Ready

If you get a Booker to look over your promo materials and the show is sloppy, it'll be difficult to change their mind about you. That first impression must be one of confidence and competence. The email and materials must be of quality.

It's always good to push yourself, but make sure you're ready for that next step.

Make Personal Contact First

If the Booker isn't expecting your contact, the email will probably get erased. They need to recognize your name or the person recommending you. If you've gotten them to talk about themselves, then you can make a quick note about the wife and/or kids or a recent vacation to help remind them who you are. This is all about relationships.

Only send your email to those who ask for one, or if you've made personal contact, or if another credible comic has recommended you.

Send the Email and Link Immediately

When asked, if you send the email three weeks later, the Booker will have forgotten who you are. Bookers get a mass of calls and requests, so you need to get your materials to them right away. A slow response on your part will make Bookers think you just don't care and reflect a lackadaisical work ethic. If you can't be bothered to send a prewritten contact email right away, then you might want to get out of this business. This is part of the job, so suck it up and do the crap work.

Include Your Avails

Here is a trick-of-the-trade that will save you time and money. Phone calls are the usual means of follow up, but you can jump ahead by sending an email with your avails. If the Booker has a hard copy of your available dates, they're more likely to give you the job because you have made it easy to fill the dates they need.

Here are some tips:

Make the Calendar Easy to Read

If you send a long list of your avails, it might be too cluttered or confusing for Bookers to figure it out. Instead, send monthly calendar pages with the word "Available" written in the areas where you have openings. They will then have a fax sheet or email printed out of your calendar.

Then when the Booker is booking a particular month, they can refer to your calendar and see what dates you have free without having to call you. This is a big plus.

Use a Similar Format as the Cover Letter

To show consistency in all materials that you send to Bookers, keep the same font and letterhead as your press kit cover letter for your fax or email. Review the bullet point tips from *Step 3. Press Kit* for writing a good cover letter.

Here are a couple of things you need to know about sending an email:

When Sending Email or Text

Email is easy and cheap, but make sure the Booker communicates this way. There are some Bookers who only communicate by email and others prefer texts. Do your research in advance to know their preferences. Again, keep the same font and letterhead as your press kit cover letter.

Make sure your calendar is printable by using the print icon on the email program or sending it in an attachment in MS Word. If it isn't easy to print, there's less of a chance they'll use it.

Check your email several times a day; it's now part of your business communication. If the Booker has a question and contacts you by email, you'll want to get back to them ASAP. Often, it's the first one to get back to the Booker who gets to fill in the cancellation.

As for sending a fax, make sure the cover sheet is on the first page and that it includes how many total pages. If you're sending a cover letter and three months of your calendar, you need to write on the cover sheet 1 of 4 pages. Then mark each of the calendar pages, 2 of 4, 3 of 4, and 4 of 4. This way the Booker can easily keep track of all the pages you send.

Other Alternatives

There are several crafty ways to sneak your information into a Booker. Fax and email are only two. You could deliver it personally, send a candy gram, or bribe the receptionist with flowers. Be creative in your approach to getting work.

Be Careful With Mass Unsolicited Submissions

This can get you some bites, but make sure you don't overdo it. Only send a few at a time, so if there are responses, you can manage them. If you can't get back to everyone right away, then all you're doing is creating a bad reputation.

Sending out press kits is an easy step, but make sure you cover your bases because sometimes it's the little things that can go wrong and mess up an opportunity. You need to take care of the details personally because you're self-employed.

FOLLOW UP



It's not enough to make first contact and then just send an email with links. You must follow up. Bookers are overwhelmed with requests for work, so those who are politely persistent are going to be the ones who get the jobs. Consistency is key. If you call every Wednesday at 4:00 PM, the Booker will realize that you're organized and are committed to politely bugging them until they give you work.

To keep track of multiple submissions, you'll need to have a system for making calls and follow-up calls. Again, there are computer programs that will remind you who and when you're supposed to follow up.

DEVELOP A SYSTEM

Review the Bullet Points in Step 4

Much of the same advice from *Step 4 - Contact Bookers* applies to making follow-up calls. Review all the items in Step 4.

Maintain the Relationship

This process isn't just about getting work and making contact—it's about a relationship. As you get to know the booker, a great strategy is to keep detailed notes of the conversations. These notes will allow you to call back the subjects of your previous conversation.

For instance, if the Booker mentioned that his son made the baseball team, based on your notes, you can ask him how his son is doing on the team. This tactic goes a long way to establishing a relationship because he thinks you care just because you're a good note-keeper.

Create a Newsletter

It's easy to write a one-page *newsletter* every month with the dates you're performing and the dates you're available. Make it quick and easy to read and short. It's a great way to keep in front of Bookers without calling them.

Make Memes

Make memes with your performance date on them. Post them on Facebook groups and send them to Bookers. Put your picture on it to remind them of who you are. This tells the Bookers that you publicize your shows. Make sure the fonts are large enough to read on the screen and double check that the locations are visible.

TIP: Go to imgflip.com/memegenerator. Memes are stupid simple to make. They get lots of likes, shares, and retweets. Join the new era of marketing.

Keep Your Ego Out of the Process

Without making Bookers wrong, remind him who you are. It'll never serve you to get cocky and demand special treatment or become indignant because the Booker can't recall your previous conversations. Accept your low status and keep in mind that your goal is to get work. A good attitude now will pay off with more gigs in the long run.

Avoid Making the Booker Wrong

It is true that you're being ignored and avoided. It's not personal; Bookers just prefer to work with comics they know. It's your job to overcome this resistance. You must learn to dismiss this poor treatment. Don't write in an email, "Since I haven't heard from you" or "I'm contacting you, *again* ..." or other hostile comments. Bookers don't owe you anything and will give you work when it is to their advantage. Once again, be polite and persistent.

If You Don't Get a Call Back

Bookers are very busy, so if you don't hear back within 10 days, call or email or newsletter or meme them again and again and again. Persistent follow ups are part of being self-employed.

You May Need to Make Many Follow Ups

Bookers are more involved with the clients who've already worked for them, so you're a low priority. It shouldn't be that way, but the nature of the business causes this to be the case. Accept this with grace. You may need to persist for weeks, if not months, before an opening presents itself. If calling doesn't work, then email or show up in person. You won't get work until you establish some form of positive communication with the Bookers.

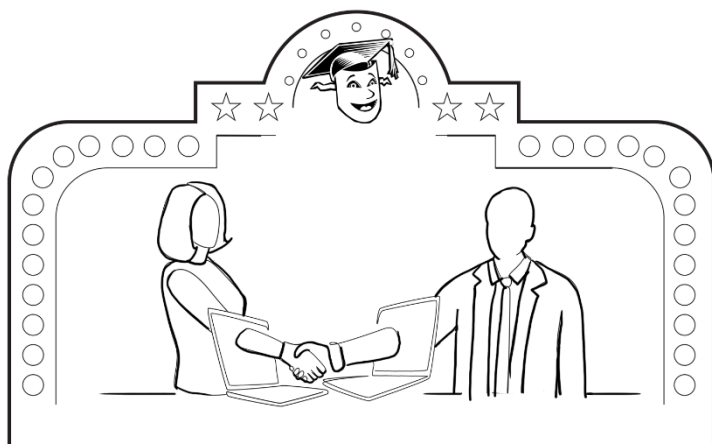
Be Extremely Patient

I've known comics who've waited six months for the Booker to get around to looking at their videos, but then they got the job. If they don't return your call or email, don't take it personally. They are either very busy or very lazy. Either way, it's got nothing to do with you. They have a lot to think about, like what other comics to put you with or how they can fit you into their special events. Make yourself available and be patient.

* * *

The follow-up call is where you'll get the work, so you must have the discipline to make these calls on a regular basis. This is now your job. No one is going to do this for you, so might as well learn how to do it well.

BOOK THE JOB



Once the Booker says you have the gig, a whole bunch of unexpected things will begin to appear that you'll need to deal with. These are things you can only learn by getting work. I have collected some of the important ones so they won't come as a complete surprise. Here are a few:

IMPLEMENT YOUR SYSTEM

Be Prepared in Advance

Have several pens ready or the computer screen open and your calendar ready so you can talk dates. This all needs to be set up as part of your home office. There's nothing worse for a Booker than to be put on hold while the comic finds a working pen or boots

up their computer. You should have your list of questions ready, so you make sure you get all the info you need in one pass. You don't want to have to call again and ask, "What time does the show start?"

Follow the Booker's Instructions

Comics not following their instructions was the number one complaint all Bookers I talked to had about booking comics. Read that sentence again. Be the one who follows instructions.

Every Booker has a system, and it's part of your job to fit into that system. If they said to call at a particular time, then you must call at that time. They're busy and only have a certain time frame to do bookings. If you call at a different time and you interrupt another task, you could lose the gig. Conversely, if they say they'll call you, make sure you're prepared to answer the phone and exchange information.

Be Clear About What is Expected of You

Ask your questions when you're booking the gig. Write everything down or take notes on your computer. Most of your questions will be answered when the Booker tells you about the gig. If they aren't, then you'll want to get the information so you'll know what to expect.

Here are some of the questions you'll want to make sure you have answers to: How much is the pay?

How many days?

How many shows per day? When are show times?

How many minutes will you be doing?

Are you the Opener only or are you also the MC? Where will you sleep?

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Do they want you to check in when you arrive? What is the food and drink policy?

How much in advance of the show do they want you to arrive? Will someone pick you up and return you to the airport?

Are you expected to do Publicity? (*Openers don't usually do PR.*)

Is there any subject matter you should avoid in your show? Are there any extra duties? (*Like helping to sell the Headliner's CDs.*)

If you have the answers to all the above questions, you'll be well prepared to handle the gig like a pro.

Contracts

This is an easy one. At the level of Opener/MC or Feature, a *Booker will almost never use a contract*. It is all done verbally.

The booker needs you as much as you need them. They must have a new lineup every week. So, going through the negotiations of a contract would take up too much time, so everyone must learn to rely on verbal contracts. Usually, Bookers will make a single offer, then you must decide whether to accept it or not. Therefore, there's no need to negotiate pay, lodging, airfare, etc.

Bookers also don't want a contract in case something comes up and they want to change their lineup. They need to have the flexibility to cancel without having to pay you for work you didn't do. This is unfair to you but may not matter to them. If you're an unknown comedian, you'll have to go along with the policy of those who will give you work.

Once you're a marquee name, you may need a contract because you'll want a share of the profits. This will be done by your manager, agent, or lawyer. By this time in your career, you'll have the experience to know what to get in your contract.

General Pay Scale and Accommodations

There are no exact scales or lists of accommodations, so I'll supply you with some general information of what to expect. For instance, the pay scales are for one-night, weekend, or for the week. By the way, "a week" can be anywhere from four to seven nights depending on the club's needs.

Opener/MC usually receives from \$0 to \$50 for a one-nighter, and from \$100 to \$200 for a week Wednesday thru Sunday. (Amounts will change over time.) Travel expenses are almost *never* offered. Don't expect a room unless they have a couch at the club's condo or hotel. Most Openers are local and are doing it for the experience, not the money. There's not much room for negotiating at this level. The gig is the gig, and the pay is the pay. You must prove you're committed before Bookers will move you up.

Feature or Middle acts often get around \$100 to \$200 for a one-nighter, from \$250 to

\$500 for a weekend, and from \$300 to \$600 for a week. (Amounts will change over time.) Often, there are *no* travel expenses offered, but ask just in case. You may or may not get a room, but don't count on it. If you fly in on your own dime, check if the club will pick you up at the airport. By now you should know the Booker and what is offered, so make this as easy as possible by knowing what to expect going into the negotiation.

Headliners have different rules depending on whether the audience has come to see a comedy show or to see them. If the Headliner is a draw, they can get more money because they are putting butts in the seats.

Headliners receive from \$200 to \$800 or more for a one-nighter, from \$600 to \$1000 for a weekend, and from \$800 to \$2500 for a week. Most clubs pay for all travel expenses and room, but there are a few that do not. Make sure this is part of the negotiations.

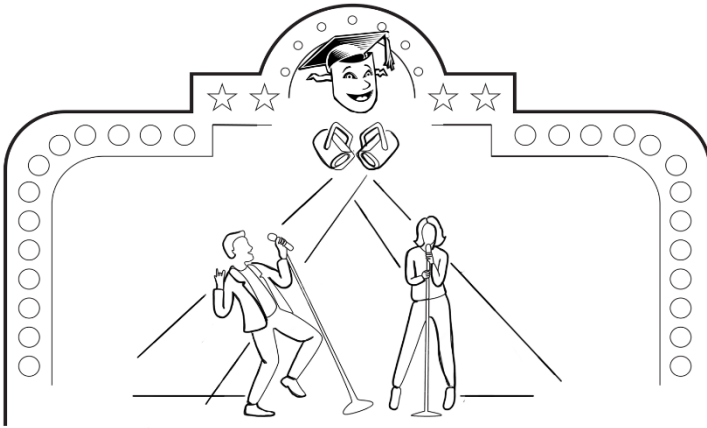
10 Steps to Be a Working Comedian

Headliners have some negotiating room, so ask for what you want, but don't get too demanding because it can deter the Booker from wanting you back. At the club's condo, you'll get the largest room or the entire condo or hotel suite to yourself. Not only will they pick you up from the airport, but also all the perks are reserved for you. You can get deals on golf, movie passes, etc. You've worked years to get here so enjoy every aspect of it while you can.

* * *

Knowing the customs of each Booker and keeping notes on it is one of the crappy parts of being a comic. But if you don't learn to do this and make it easy for the Booker, you may not get much work.

GET RE-BOOKED



If Bookers like you and your work, they'll rebook you right after they pay you or tell you to call with your avails. If they don't want to re-book you, they'll disappear, so they won't have to tell you so. Remember, being re-booked is the main ingredient to making a successful career.

Here are some things to know:

THE REAL WORK BEGINS

Make Yourself Available for Cancellations

Bookers must deal with comics pulling out of their lineup. These are called *fallouts*. If you call on a regular basis or send a newsletter to keep Bookers informed as to your avails, when they get fallouts, you'll be available and make their job easier.

Good Interviewees Get Re-Booked

I'll talk about this in more detail in the next section, but one of the skills you'll want to be good at is radio interviews for the club publicity. If you're funny on the radio interviews, it's a big plus for the club and increases your chances of being re-booked. Take care of the club, and the club will take care of you.

Network with the Other People

Be a joy to work with. One week in a club can net you up to four influential friends. If you're funny and professional, you could get a recommendation from the Headliner, the Feature, as well as the Booker and club manager/owner. You can turn one week of work into many weeks of work with a few recommendations. This is another reason for being ready when you begin performing in clubs.

Ask for a Recommendation

If a working comic or Booker says they enjoyed your show, ask them for a recommendation, so you know you can depend on them to give you a good review when you tell another booker that you worked at that club. If you've only seen one show, the chances are small that they would give you a recommendation, but if you've worked in a club for a weekend or more and you've done good shows, then ask if you can use them as a recommendation. If they hem and haw about giving you a recommendation, then let them off the hook. A recommendation is only good if the person is truly a fan.

Bookers Listen to Comics, but More So to Other Bookers

Any recommendation from a reputable source is gold. If it comes from a known comic, it'll carry a great deal of weight with Bookers. But the best recommendations will come from Bookers.

Greg Dean

First, Bookers often book several clubs, so will have secured weeks of work. Bookers know the other Bookers, so if one recommends you, others will be more willing to follow suit.

Bookers need to play it safe—when you get on that safe list, you'll work.

The real recommendations will come from your friends, whether they are comics, Bookers, agents, managers, etc. People like to work with the people they've worked with over the years. Once you're on the inside, because your show and attitude are good, work will perpetuate itself to the point where you'll be turning down the lower paying gigs for the higher paying gigs. Just having great material isn't all there is to being a working comic.

Getting re-booked will become automatic as you build your career. If the Bookers don't want to re-book you, then you must reevaluate your approach to make sure you're funny and a joy to work with. If you handle this situation correctly, you'll have a full calendar with very little effort, and you'll be working year round.

* * *

There is no exact formula, but these 10 steps are excellent guidelines for getting booked in a comedy club. You are self-employed, and how much work you get depends on how hard you work. You have the information, now get out there and make people laugh.

PART TWO - BONUS CHAPTER

BEING A WORKING COMEDIAN

Now that you know the 10 steps to getting your comedy career together, this section will teach you a variety of professional skills you need to know as a working comedian.

PUBLIC RELATIONS MOVING UP TO FEATURE REPRESENTATION

This is information that comics only know from years of experience. Insider information like this will make you look like a pro because you'll be prepared to deal with all these peripheral aspects of being a road comic.

PUBLIC RELATIONS

Some clubs will want you to do publicity by going on a local radio or television show. Don't consider this extra duty. This is an opportunity for you to learn to talk to the media. Take full advantage of it. When you're promoting a club, keep the primary goal in mind: *to get people to come to the club to see your show*. Putting butts in the seats means money for the club, which means more work for you later in the year.

LOCAL PUBLICITY

Mention the Club's Name and Show Times

This is a biggie. No matter how funny you are and how well the show went, if the audience doesn't know where to go and when to show up, they won't. Don't go overboard either because that is too

hard a sell. Just make sure you mention the club and times a couple times, especially at the end of the interview.

This is really the job of the radio personality, but if he or she doesn't make the plug for the show, remind them, or tactfully do it yourself. If the radio host doesn't mention the club's website, you should because the audience might not remember the times of the shows, so they can go online and get the information they need.

If You're Having Fun ... They're Having Fun.

You can't control how the interview will go, but you do have some say about your state of mind. And if you have a fun attitude, it'll affect them, and they'll enjoy hanging out with you. Conversely, if you are negative and a downer, they won't want to spend time with you. Remember the goal: butts in the seats.

Flatter the Interviewer

Interviewers are just as insecure as everyone else in show business. If you tell them they are good, they'll usually respond favorably. For instance, say to the interviewer things like, "You have the greatest job and you're very good at it," or "What a great outfit, you look great." They'll eat up shallow comments like this. Anytime you can relate the show to the interviewer, the more you'll build his or her ego.

Get them to talk about themselves and then relate it back to the show. Interviewers are mostly insecure egomaniacs, which is true on and off the air, so begin buttering them up before the show begins. If you show interest in them, they'll show interest in you.

Be Familiar with the Local Media

Read the town newspaper, watch the local news, and listen to the regional radio stations, especially if you know you're going to be interviewed by them. This way you'll be familiar with the local radio

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and talk show hosts and you'll know more about what to expect. You can find all this online. Also, you'll get to know what the local events are so you can write jokes about them.

Tailor the Interviews With Local References

The more you localize your interview, usually the better the response, as you've shown an interest in them. Like always, do your research. If you make a wrong choice, you could give the interviewer a reason to attack you. For instance, don't wear a Michigan State t-shirt around Michigan College. There is a big difference between the locals.

Be Prepared with Lead-in Topics

Often interviewers will ask you what you want to talk about. Have a series of topics or talking points so they can bring them up because you have a comedy bit for each. You want to set up the interviewer to become your straight man ... woman ... person. They will feed you the topics or even the setups and you do the jokes if you make it clear on an index card. But don't do too much of your show on the air as those same people will come to the show and they'll have already heard it. Funny interviews mean people will come to the club, which means more bookings for you.

Have Funny Answers for the Recurring Questions

There will be a bunch of cliché questions that these unimaginative interviewers will ask. You can either be irritated by these dumb questions or have funny answers for them.

Here are a few of the questions and suggested angles for funny answers: Q: Who is your favorite comic?

A: Senator (put a name here).

Q: How did you get into comedy?

A: Through the side door.

Q: Why did you choose comedy for a living?

A: People have been laughing at me my entire life, so I figured I might as well make money at it.

Have a Humorous Story About How You Got into Comedy

This is really a general comment because it is always good to have a bunch of humorous stories about what it's like to be a comic. Part of what interviewers want is human interest, so they'll want you to talk about your hometown, what jobs you had before comedy, what your family is like. If you have funny stories about all this, you'll be ahead of the game.

Different mediums have different requirements; here are some specific tips for radio, TV, podcasts, and newspaper interviews:

RADIO INTERVIEWS

This is the most used medium for comics. Headliners will almost always be required to do several radio interviews during a weeklong gig. It works very well if you have good jokes because people will be listening on their drive to and from work. Here are some things you'll want to know:

Put the Lead-in Topics and Jokes on Index Cards

Since no one can see what is going on in the booth, the interviewer can read right off the cards. They can ask questions, bring up topics, or even deliver your joke setups. Most interviewers are wannabe comics, so they'll want to be part of the act. If you're very clever, you can do some of the setups and give the interviewer a few punches. The best jokes are topical. Radio likes to have humor that follows current events. So, before you go, check out the newspaper or CNN so you'll know what the latest stories are in the news in case the interviewer asks you what you think about them.

Be Strong, but Not Overbearing

An interviewer needs to know you're willing to take over from time to time and fill the airtime with something funny. They will constantly talk because they don't want any dead time where the listener might change channels. So, jump in and do a bit. If you don't assert yourself, the DJ will steamroll over you because they're afraid you won't be funny. At the same time, it is the interviewer's show, and this is who the audience has come to hear. Find a balance between knowing when to listen and when to twist that funny bone.

Be Ready for the Interviewer to Attack You

This is a common ploy radio personalities use to create interest. If they can get you defensive or piss you off, it's going to be more interesting to their listeners. Remember, your goal is to get those butts in the seats, so if the interviewer makes you angry and you just yell at them, this certainly can't help you. The proper response is to playfully attack the interviewer back. Put them down in light and fun ways. They'll know you're on their level and will work with you. You may well need to prove yourself first.

Radio Interviewers Want You to Be Articulate and Congenial

Good microphone technique also applies to radio. Speak clearly into the microphone. If you mumble or move too far from the mike, the interviewer will take over and fill the time. Be a playful and funny guest, even if they attack you. Remember to keep the goal in mind, which is getting people to come to the show.

Most Interviews Will Be Very Early in the Morning

To reach the largest audience, you'll often do the 6 a.m. drive-time show. To make matters worse, you'll have to get up at 5 a.m. to get to the station early, you'll be jet-lagged, hungover, and just plain tired from traveling ... now be funny. You must put all these

issues aside because this is part of your job. You and the club have a reputation to uphold. Besides, if you give a bad interview, forget about ever getting work in that club again.

NEWSPAPER INTERVIEWS

This is usually a face-to-face interview, but sometimes it'll be done on the phone. Newspaper interviews are a different animal because what you say will be in the record forever. Here are some tips:

Don't Say Anything You Don't Want to See in Print

If you say it any time during the interview, it'll end up in print. Often, newspaper interviewers are digging for dirt. So be prepared with all those clichés you hear athletes say: “The club is an excellent organization” or “All the comics are professional” and other ordinary crap. Don't trust the interviewer. It's their job to get you to relax and trust them so you'll say what you wouldn't normally say. Especially if an interviewer says, “This is off the record,” keep all negative comments to yourself. Avoid that side comment about something you don't like about the town or the club. It will be in the article even if the journalist says it won't be. It will. Say only what you want printed.

Dress Nice Because You Will Be Described

Most newspaper articles begin with a description of the circumstances and a depiction of how the interviewee appears. You will want to project the image of a professional comic who loves their job and enjoys working in the club and that this town has the best audiences. The interviewer won't get what he or she wants, but the club owner will.

Take Your Time Answering the Questions

They are going to ask a lot of questions. Take a moment to think to make sure what you're saying cannot be misconstrued. They

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may try to trip you up and get you to say something derogatory about the club owner or other comics. Take your time; it's a newspaper interview, so there's plenty of time.

Be Prepared to Be Misquoted

This isn't about the interview, but later when you read it in print. You need to be prepared for the inevitable newspaper story that doesn't match the interview. No matter how careful you are, you'll still be misquoted and misconstrued. Not everything is within your control.

TV INTERVIEWS

Most of the tips for radio interviews will apply to TV, but here are a few more:

Lead-in Topics and Three or Four Stand-Up Bits

For TV, even if you just sit and talk to the host, they'll want to know ahead of time what is going to be said. Come to the station with ideas and several lengths of stand-up sets in mind. TV is a much more controlled medium than radio or newspapers, and they'll want to know what is supposed to happen every moment you're on screen.

A Producer Will Talk with You

Either in advance or in your dressing room, the producer of the show will talk with you about what you're going to do on the show. Give them your lead-in topics for the chat with the host and they may want you to go through the stand-up bits you plan to perform. Know how long each bit is; that will factor into their decision about which bits to choose. The producer will select the one or two bits they consider best for the show.

Clean and Non-Controversial

Your funniest bits may very well be the bluer material, but for TV, you must be squeaky clean. As with radio, you'll probably be doing local morning shows. *Good Morning Omaha*. Or the human-interest section on the noon news. These communities are usually very conservative, and you must be funny in a way that will bring people to the clubs.

Wear Clothes That Look Good on TV

Be well groomed. If you look like a bum, the audience isn't going to want to come and see you. Avoid black or white because they look bad on TV. Black is flat, and white reflects too much light onto your face. Solid colors look the best. Also, avoid small plaid, as it'll cause that rainbow effect, zipping up and down. If it's appropriate to wear a suit and tie, do so. Ask the producer.

Mention the Show and the Club

Remember the goal: butts in the seats.

These are only the basics of what you need to know to be a good interviewee. With this foundation as a start, you'll be ahead of all the other comics that are going in blind.

Keep these tips in mind and you'll avoid most of the major blunders and shine like a pro.

MOVING UP TO FEATURE

Once you've worked in a club as an Opener, you'll want to move up to Feature. Usually, the Booker will make the decision to move you up based on your personal behavior and quality of your show, or the reports they've gotten from club managers. If the Booker doesn't automatically move you up, here is some advice:

PLEASANT AND PERSISTENT

Ask to Be Moved Up to Feature

If the Booker doesn't offer, then you must ask. If you don't, it may not happen. Sometimes they'll do it, sometimes they won't. But one thing is for sure: If you don't ask, it won't happen. If you're good, most Bookers will be willing to move you up.

Make Sure You Can Do the Time

Be sure you're ready. If you push to be a Feature and you do a weak show, then you'll have done more damage to your career because you're now no longer trustworthy.

Avoid Being Arrogant

This is a major downfall for many comics. They want to move up the ranks faster than the Booker is allowing. It is good that you have confidence but check your ego at the door. Request to be moved up, don't demand. Look at it from the Booker's perspective, when a comic says, "I won't work in your club unless I'm Headlining," or some other ridiculous ultimatum. Bookers have plenty of patient and respectful comics to work with. They don't need to put up with this kind of self-importance.

This is not to say you shouldn't request to move up. You should, patiently, persistently, and respectfully. Bookers understand your need to move up. They will move you up when it benefits them, or when they believe you deserve the promotion. One of the major reasons for this conflict is that most comics have a higher opinion of their own work than the Bookers.

Remember, Bookers see thousands of comics a year, so they are much harder to please. Comics are just looking at their own shows and counting the laughs. Bookers have many more criteria to consider before moving a comic up a slot. Bookers admire ambition, not entitlement.

Apply all the basics for getting work in the first place to getting re-booked. The process is the same except that the Booker now knows you and is more likely to give you work. You are self-employed and this is your job, so take care of your business.

REPRESENTATION

This section will give you a great deal of information about the people who can help you with your comedy career. As your career in comedy develops, you'll begin to gather people around to do the work you have been doing for yourself. The more you know about the jobs of agents and managers, the easier you'll make it for them to assist you with your career.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE (PA) AGENTS

These agents specialize in helping comics get work in the 4 C's: *clubs, colleges, cruise ships, and corporate*. I have some bad news and some good news. The bad news is that until you're a Headliner, no PA agent will want to represent you. For now, you're your own agent.

A stand-up career is not like an acting career because actors must have an agent to get work. In stand-up, you'll only get an agent once you're already making enough money that an agent will want 10% of it. As an Opener or Feature, you'll make \$500 a week, and this means the agent only gets \$50. At that rate, to maintain an office and pay employees, the agent would need to represent so many comics that they would easily be overwhelmed.

Therefore, agents won't represent a comic until he or she is making thousands a week, and then the agent will get hundreds. The good news is that, as your own agent, you get to keep all your money. Until you're ready to get an agent, here are few things you need to know:

Many Bookers Refuse to Work with Agents

At the level of Opener and Feature, Bookers offer a single rate and nothing more, so they won't talk to agents because they are too demanding and take up too much time. Again, you must learn to be your own agent. Once you're at Headliner level, Bookers will deal with agents because they must, but until then, you're self-employed.

Make Sure You Are Ready

I've said this before about Bookers, and the same is true about PA agents. They have a long memory and if you showcase in front of them before you're ready and do poorly, they'll have that image of you forever. When you're making enough money to warrant getting a PA agent, you'll have enough comic friends that have a good agent. They'll be happy to take you on because there is enough money in it for them.

Get an Agent That Handles PA and Acting

Once your comedy career is going well, you'll want an agent to take on some of the burden of booking gigs. By then, it'll be well worth the 10% commission. If you have your sights set on a sitcom or movie roles, then you'll want to select an agent that deals with both PA work and will also submit you for comedic acting roles. These agents will get you work in clubs in the off season, then help you stay in town during pilot season so you can audition.

* * *

Getting proper representation is one of the last things to concern yourself with as you build your comedy career. Many beginner comics falsely believe that it's the first thing they need to do. As you learned in Part One, you need to work on your craft and

Greg Dean

develop 30 minutes worth of worked out material. If you can make audiences laugh at the right time an agent and manager will find you.

CONCLUSION

Get out there and Break a Funny Bone.

GREG DEAN'S COMEDY STORE

Step By Step to Stand-Up Comedy- eBook or Paperback

Don't already have this book? You're missing out on the best resource for beginner comedians! It's the book on which this workbook series is based. Plus, an eBook version is available for instant access.



Step By Step to Stand-Up Comedy- Audio Book

Too busy to read, now you can listen to the original book read by the author Greg Dean.



Step By Step to Stand-Up Comedy - Workbook Series

Workbook 1: How to Write Jokes

Learn and practice the skills of joke writing with Greg Dean's system, the Joke Prospector. Never written a joke? By the end of this workbook, you will.



Workbook 2: How to Improve Jokes and Routines

Now that you have jokes, learn the techniques of taking your already funny jokes and making them even funnier and then arranging them into a comedy routine.



Workbook 3: How to Remember Jokes Naturally

With your jokes formed into routines, learn to remember your jokes as if you're telling a story without memorizing the words.



Workbook 4: How to Be a Funny Performer

Before getting on stage, learn all the tricks of the trade only professional comedians know.

These performing techniques will make you look polished.



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Workbook 5: How to Get the Experience to Be Funny

Now you are ready to perform. Only stage time will help you learn how to apply all the techniques and skills you've learnt in this workbook series. Enjoy.



Get All 5 and Save! I'll Be Glad You Did.

ON DEMAND VIDEO COURSES

INTRODUCTION TO STAND-UP COMEDY

Dreaming of making audiences laugh and owning the spotlight? This on-demand course shows you the way, you'll:

- **Crack the Code of Joke Structure:** Understand the secrets behind jokes that hit the mark.¹
- **Write Hilarious Jokes:** Learn about joke writing and turn your ideas into laughs.
- **Harness the Power of Storytelling:** Use different POVs or points of view to craft engaging, funny scenes.
- **Rehearse Like a Pro:** Use Dean's unique method to practice your material naturally, just like chatting with friends.

Whether you're a newbie or looking to sharpen your skills, this course is your gateway to stand-up success. Ready to make your comedy dreams a reality? Enroll now and start your journey to becoming a pro comedian!



JOKE WRITING MADE SIMPLE

Want to make people laugh until they cry and get the applause you've always dreamed of? It all starts with the basics! Dive into our electrifying on-demand course and discover how to become a professional stand-up comedian from the ground up.

10 Steps to Be a Working Comedian

- **Master Joke Structure:** Learn Greg Dean's *5 Mechanisms of Joke Structure*-the secret sauce behind every great joke. Discover what makes jokes tick and how to craft them with precision.
- **Write Jokes Like a Pro:** With *The Joke Prospector Writing System*, you'll start by picking your topic and then build your skills step-by- step. From crafting compelling setups to delivering killer punchlines, you'll learn to create original one-liners that shine.

Whether you're a comedy newbie or looking to refine your skills, this course is your ultimate guide. No experience? No problem! We'll teach you everything you need to know to write jokes that'll leave your audience in stitches. Ready to turn your comedy dreams into reality?



HOW TO BE AN MC FOR STAND-UP COMEDY

Dreaming of owning the comedy stage and building a comedy career? Look no further! Our online course is your express pass to scoring stage time and honing your performance skills.

- **Fast-Track to Stage Time:** Learn how to snag those coveted MC spots at open mics and comedy rooms. With our course, you'll stand out from the crowd and land best gigs.
- **Become the MC Everyone Wants:** Most MCs are mediocre at best. With Dean's expert advice and easy-to- master techniques, you'll be the MC in your comedy community.

- **Faster Entertaining Techniques:** Discover simple yet powerful skills to run smoothly, engaging shows that keep audiences hooked and coming back for more.
- **Trade Services for Stage Time:** Use your new skills to negotiate quality stage time and practice your craft in front of real audiences.

Ready to elevate your comedy game and get the experience you need to launch your career? This course turns you into a sought-after comedy star! Enroll now and start your journey to comedy greatness.



7 INSTANT JOKE WRITING TECHNIQUES

Ready to be the star of the show? Our exclusive course isn't just a collection of tips-it's a complete guide to making any routine or show better* and transforming you into a professional comedian faster than ever before. These 7 powerful joke-writing techniques, once

only known to the comedy greats, are now at your fingertips, broken down into bite-sized, easy-to-follow lessons that anyone can master, even if you've never written a joke before!

- **7 Essential Joke-Writing Techniques** in one powerful course.
- **36 Instructional Videos** packed with exercises to hone your skills.
- **Step-by-Step Instructions** for each joke technique.

10 Steps to Be a Working Comedian

- **Placement in Your Script** to know the location for jokes.
- **Writing Setups** that lead to killer punchlines.
- **Writing Punchlines** for common knowledge setups.
- **Tagging Jokes and Tagging Tags** to keep the laughs rolling.
- **Adding Laughs to Storytelling** to increase the laughs per minute.

Learn from clips of Dana Gould, Stephen Wright, Taylor Tomlinson, Trevor Noah, Ali Wong, Jimmy Carr, and more. This course isn't available anywhere else-don't miss your chance to level up your comedy skills and take the stage with confidence!



10 STEPS TO BE A WORKING COMEDIAN

Ready to make your comedy dreams come true? This course is your shortcut to becoming a professional stand-up comedian, guiding you step-by-step from crafting a killer set to cashing in on your talent. Skip the years of trial and error by easily learning these 10 essential steps that get you on stage *and* in business faster than you ever imagined. Here's how:

1. **Create 30 Minutes of Material:** Build a solid, laugh-out- loud set.
2. **Establish a Business:** Learn the business and start earning.
3. **Record a 30-Minute Video:** Capture your best material to showcase.

4. **Master Self-Promotion:** Market yourself and build a loyal fan base.
5. **Build a Press Kit:** Highlight your talent and achievements.
6. **Contact the Bookers:** Network with industry insiders.
7. **Send Press Kit:** Land gigs by pitching yourself effectively.
8. **Follow Up Like a Pro:** Secure bookings with informed follow-ups.
9. **Book the Job:** Get paid to perform!
10. **Get Re-Booked:** Turn one gig into a career.

Stop wasting your time doing free shows. Start this 10-Step journey now and turn your comedy dreams into reality! Go To: gregdeancomedyacademy.com



Comedy is contagious. Pass it on!