

Doesn't a career sound better?

Working at the Gap is a job. God forbid you call that your "career" because that would just be sad. Would you want to tell people at a party that you're 36 and work at The Gap?

(AUTHOR'S NOTE: It sounds like I'm panning the Gap. I'm not. I used to work for The Gap and Banana Republic and even though they fired me and treated me like shit, I still love the clothes and shop there all the time. But I would never work for the fucking shitty ass company again.)

Anyway...Yeah. The Gap is a fucking job. Not a career.

So why are so many of you looking for a job?

"But Manny? Whatever do you mean?"

If you're out there peddling your shitty script looking to sell that script what you're really doing is looking for a job.

Not a career.

I know this sounds contradictory to what I've said in the past, but anybody can write a script. It's like playing the lottery. Anyone can win it if you play enough. But does that mean that your entire financial plan is to keep playing the lottery until you win?

That's pretty fucktarded.

So why do you keep trying to "play" the script you have? Writing a script and selling that script doesn't make you a writer.

It makes you a lottery winner.

And hey, guess what? "Selling" a script in this town isn't really winning the lottery. We're talking like minimum wage here. Take out lawyer fees, guild fees, agent fees, manger fees, my-bitch-ass-girlfriend-has-a-shopping-problem fees (or the my-fucktard-boyfriend-is-a-musician-and-thinks-his-band-named-"Taint"-is-going-to-hit-any-day-now fees), taxes and rent? Congrats...ya got like 12 dollars and fiddy cents left.

Yup. You've hit the big time. You've made it. You can now call yourself a writer.

Yeah fuck that. You're not a writer. You managed to navigate well enough to sell a script.

Doesn't mean you can do it again.

Let's use this as an example:

Let's say you write a script based on your family. Everyone one knows one of those fucktards. "Oh. My family would make such a great movie. They're so crazy and kooky."

Calm down Tyler Perry.

No one gives a fuck.

BUT...for arguments sake, let's say they DO care about your living-in-a-trailer-park family.

They buy your script.

You make \$12.50.

Now what?

Gonna write a hit sequel to your personal story?

"My Family is Fucked Up 2: Electric Boogaloo?"

What's that? Oh you don't have any original ideas? You just wrote what you knew? Oh you didn't realize that to be a writer in this town you had to NOT be a one trick pony?

Cool. You can now tell your grandkids that you USED to write movies. They'll look at you in awe. Then be ashamed when you welcome them to Wal-Mart.

You go with that.

What I'm talking about is setting up a career. Thinking 5 steps ahead ALWAYS. Sometimes you're going to have to do shit for free. Sometimes you're going to have to see an opportunity and jump ALL over it. Make shit happen for yourself, cause no one is just going to HAND it to you.

Here's a story that BLEW my fucking mind. I have to kind of talk in code...but here's the jest of it.

I knew a guy who had started in this town fairly young and within ten years had climbed up through a big company and made somewhat of a name for himself on the executive front.

But he really wanted to be a screenwriter.

So he works on his own script of his for a while in his spare time. He lands himself a manager and an agent, and then decides to start shopping it around. He announces that he's leaving the company to go be a screenwriter.

In the process of his leaving, one of the scripts that the company owns gets a little heat behind it. Let's say the script is called "Blowing Bush." (Get your head out of the gutter people. I mean the president. Not an actual bush. Jesus. What's wrong with you?)

Anyway, this is a script HE brought into the company and knew like the back of his hand. Well, a little luck falls into his lap and an A-List director who just made a VERY successful film, decides that he wants to make "Blowing Bush" his next project. So it starts happening. And the A-lister brings new notes to the table and there's a lot of excitement and yadda yadda. So our guy, in the middle of this, decides to go off and be a writer.

He leaves and a new guy comes in and picks up developing "Blowing Bush."

In this process, they decide they want someone to do a re-write on this script based on the A-Lister's notes. They decide, "Hey! Why not ask Our Guy? He knows the script like the back of his hand and he claims he's a writer. Let him do it!"

So they go to him.

He says no. He wants to focus on HIS script and will NOT do a re-write on "Blowing Bush." Not for free.

"Pay me and I'll THINK about it."

Wow. Really?

So let's see. An A-list director asks YOU to do a re-write for free on HIS next movie and you won't do it? Are you fucking insane!?

This shit FELL INTO YOUR LAP!

And you don't think that if you do a good job this A-lister isn't going to remember you? Why are you looking at right now and not looking at 2 years from now? That's some deep down fucktarded shit.

And I know, like myself, many of you are reading this story and slapping their heads going WHAT?!

Yup. So was I. I was pissed. An opportunity falls in your lap and you immediately go after the pay check? Fuck...I'll do it for free and cash in LATER.

Do you see why I get so agitated?

(END OF STORY: He did make a deal and DID do a re-write. He'll get paid if the script sells to a studio but he kicked and screamed through the entire process and burned a lot of bridges very fast. And you know what? Technically he was a "first time writer." Way to go dipshit.)

Here's a different story:

I mentioned a couple of weeks ago that I had sorta got a writing gig. Many have asked about it but I really can't talk about it. Not now. But here's how it happened and here's why it's a "sorta" writing gig.

A few weeks ago, someone at Kopelson asked me a random question about some old movie. I said that I hadn't seen it in a LONG time but remember it being very "dark." We're shooting the shit and he says, "Yeah so I have this idea for a 'futuristic re-telling' of this story with like this and that."

I was like, um...yeah. No that sounds really cool. (FYI: I didn't think it sounded cool.)

I go home that night and like every night, chat with the GF and mention the idea. So we chat about it and the more we chat about it the cooler WE make it. And then I get all passionate about the shit and say "Oh, WE COULD DO THIS!" and "And then THERE'S THIS!"

By the end of the conversation, I now have my own TAKE on the idea.

So the next day, I go into the office and I say: "hey, I wanna take a crack at this."

He goes, "Oh yeah? You like it?"

I tell him "Yup! Wanna here my take on it?"

He says sure....I sit down and pitch him my version of his idea. He really liked and it and says go for it. So I am.

What am I going to get out of it? My writing and my ability to create will get out there. He knows some motherfuckers that know some motherfuckers. So at the end of the day, I'm writing, for free, to get in the door. And that's why I'm doing it.

Five steps ahead.

Always.

Next time we'll explore this whole "take" thing and talk a little bit more on getting your career going, not finding you a job.

Till next week...