

Inc.Some people don't let
their salaries get sick. Do you?**unum**
Better benefits at work.
ROLL OVER TO WATCH VIDEO**GROWCO SOUND BITES** 12 Must-See Clips from the Grow Your Company Conference [Watch Videos](#)

SEARCH THE LIST

Company Name

[More options](#) ▾[SEE THE FULL LIST](#) ▶**ROARING OR BORING** | Kevin Daum

Jun 7, 2013

4 Great Leadership Lessons from the Arts

Math and science are noble endeavors, but real leadership is taught in the arts. Here are four powerful lessons taught best by artists.



2013 Eugene Gologursky

Emilia Clarke and Cory Michael Smith attend 'Breakfast At Tiffany's' Broadway Opening Night Curtain Call

The **Tony Awards** for Broadway Theater are Sunday night, showcasing artists across America. As much as people spend money for movies, television, theater and music, why do business experts continue to ignore the incredible leadership teachings that come from the arts?


Several years ago, I published a journal article called *Entrepreneurs: The Artists of the Business World*, after discovering through an anecdotal survey that more than 15 percent of the **Entrepreneurs' Organization** membership had arts backgrounds, compared to less than 5 percent who studied business. (As a member and theater arts grad I figured I couldn't be the only one.) Since this elite organization requires applicants to show \$1,000,000-plus revenue, its members must be doing something right. Below are four leadership lessons taught regularly in the arts.

1. Lead a Project from Start to Finish


Many B-school programs culminate study with the writing of business plans that rarely lead to funding or success. Meanwhile, performing arts students must create a concept from scratch, refine it so they can **articulate a compelling vision**, recruit skilled labor, and manage everyone to completion on time and on budget, since moving opening night is never an option. They also get to sell their product and collect immediate customer response in the form of ticket sales and applause. This process is completed

PATHS TO GROWTH


GOING GLOBAL
CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE
SUPPLY CHAIN
SUSTAINABILITY




Taking Motorcycle Clutches Globally
See how Rekluse grew its export business 50 percent faster than its U.S.-based business in 2012.



Makerbot Makes a Global Mark [WATCH THE VIDEO](#)



From One-woman Show to Worldwide Marketer



Building a Global Presence

WE ♥ LOGISTICS

ADVERTISEMENT

THE BEST OF THE INC. 5000

 America's fastest growers by state, industry, metro, and much more.

STORIES OF THE INC.5000

 Meet No.1 Oleg Firer of Unified Payments

 Guts and Optimism: What It Takes to Make the 2012 List

by millions of students several times a year, all over the world.

2. Manage Dynamic People Effectively

People like to describe artists as eccentric and strange, and many are. So imagine trying to manage an entire company of these weirdos. And yet somehow, unlike your company, these people [happily](#) and consistently deliver highly creative and effective product, even with strict time and resource constraints. And the work they deliver almost always considers a powerful customer experience as the primary objective. Most artists are drilled repeatedly on how to lead their artistic colleagues in a [collaborative manner](#) to achieve an effective experience. And despite the frequent presence of professional egos that would crush a Goldman Sachs exec, they learn how to bring all people forward together, or no art would ever be created.

3. Ensure Total Accountability

Let's say you are a stagehand in a simple community production of *Hamlet*. And you are given the job of placing the skull for the famous Yorick scene. The first time you forget, everyone in the production will chastise you. The second time you will be fired. And you will forever be known as the guy who screwed up the scene, or the violinist who went flat in Beethoven's Ninth, or the dancer who fell in the *Nutcracker*. Artists live and die by their dependability--yet non-artists consider them flaky and irresponsible! Artists develop in an environment where the production is only as good as its weakest participant. Individual performers with both big and small parts are inherently motivated to bring up the entire company rather than showboating personal performance like the sports players business people love to exalt. Even most stars in the arts know they shine best against a rich and unified background.

4. Implement Big Picture Thinking

From the day you take a role in a production, art project or film, you immediately understand that you are part of something much bigger than yourself. The size of your contribution only matters as far as it contributes to the quality and impact of the whole. Artists willingly accept this approach as the entire success of output is dependent upon the merit of what they can deliver. Nepotism, longevity and cronyism may provide opportunity, but only true connection with the customer creates longevity. That forces all successful artists to submit their often-large egos to the service of the overall experience. Those who lead others collaboratively to do the same are rewarded with continued opportunity and success. Those who are selfish or stuck in their own vision are doomed to poverty and dissatisfaction.

You can gain these same lessons by [engaging in the arts](#). Community theater, orchestras, galleries and dance companies are all amazing laboratories for creativity, communication and yes, leadership. People in the arts have these leadership concepts ingrained into them through repetitive, practical application. So if your engineers, sales people and managers are coming up short in these leadership areas, perhaps you should consider hiring a few theater, dance, art or music graduates to show them how it's done.

Like this post? If so, [sign up here](#) and never miss out on Kevin's thoughts and humor.

Want to become a better, smarter, more effective team builder and communicator? Join us at Inc.'s upcoming Leadership Forum June 10 to June 12 in San Diego. Visit [leadership.inc.com](#) for details.



An Inc. 500 entrepreneur with a more than \$1 billion sales and marketing track record, **Kevin Daum** is the best-selling author of *Video Marketing for Dummies*. [@awesomeroar](#)

Read more

From The Web

Sponsored content by



Is Your Company an IT Company at Heart?

WHO ARE THE INC.5000



Life After the 5000: Fortune, Flameout, and Self Discovery



My Story: By the Inc. 5000 CEOs



Images of the Inc. 5000



Galleries: Top Women, Fastest Growers, Biggest Companies & More



Inside the Minds of the Top CEOs

TWITTER FEED

[jedwardbecker](#) I saw Guy Kawasaki speak last fall at the [@incmagazine](#) [#inc500](#) conference ... here is the same speech - YouTube [buff.ly/1b0WEzI](#)
5 days ago · reply · retweet · favorite

[jamaican_nathan](#) [#DontPassUpOnAGoodInvestment](#) [#Opportunity](#) [#StartYourOwnBusiness](#) [#Proof](#) [#WallStreetJournal](#) [#Inc500...](#) [instagram.com/p/aLZKOSkydE/](#)
5 days ago · reply · retweet · favorite

[maimoon](#) 8 Ways to Be Re-inspired At [#Work](#) by [@kevindaum](#) is a [#joke](#) [#inc500](#) [#bored](#) [pocket.co/sE_wq](#)
4 days ago · reply · retweet · favorite

[derrdom](#) [@RocketLawyer](#), recently ranked No. 5 [#software](#) company by [#Inc500](#) is

ARCHIVES

▶ 2011 ▶ 2010 ▶ 2009

[12 Non-caffeinated Ways to Wake Up at Work](#)

[8 Ways to Be Re-inspired At Work](#)

[6 Things *Really* Happy People Do](#)

[Why Employees Stay \(and Why They Go\)](#)

[Marketing Through Awards: 3 Simple Tips](#)

[8 Surefire Ways to Demotivate Your Employees](#) NFIB

[15 Things You Should Never Do at Your Desk](#) Salary.com

[Student Loans: 5 Things You Need to Know](#) U.S. Department of Education

[10 Insanely Overpaid Public Employees](#) The Fiscal Times

More On Inc.com

[Branson Up Close](#)

[Coolest College Start-Ups](#)

[Founders Forum](#)

[How I Did It](#)

[Trep Life](#)

Tomorrow's big business may be today's dorm room invention. Here's the 2013 class of the most-promising college start-ups.

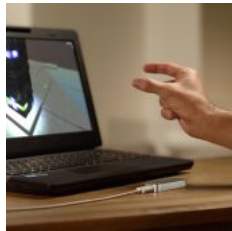
[Read more](#)



Today on Inc.com



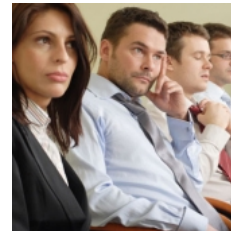
[John Besh: Your Career Isn't Everything](#)



[One Giant Leap for Mankind](#)



[Great Leadership Lessons from the Arts](#)



[The No. 1 Way to Kill Productivity](#)



[5 Negotiation Tips From Steve Jobs](#)

[HOME](#) [MAGAZINE](#) [CONTACT US](#) [ABOUT US](#) [ADVERTISE](#) [EVENTS](#) [LEGAL DISCLAIMERS](#) [PRIVACY POLICIES](#) [SUBSCRIBE](#) [BUSINESS OWNERS COUNCIL](#)

Copyright © 2013 Mansueto Ventures LLC. All rights reserved.