

How to Achieve
Remarkable Performance
in Anything You Do

The

Encore Effect



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What if . . . ?

These two powerful words usually conjure up the results of past decisions—how things might have been different and better if only

But they are equally powerful when applied to the future. We can't change the past. But the future? That's a totally different story.

What if a CEO or organization leader had such a reputation for effectiveness as a leader-manager that she never had to go looking for new employees? There was always a long line of job applicants ready to do whatever it took to work for her. (Example: In 2006 Google received one million job applications and made 5,000 hires.)

What if a speaker was known for making such engaging and entertaining presentations that people had to be turned away every time he spoke due to lack of space? (Example: If you want to attract a standing-room-only crowd, just announce that the speaker will be Pat Summitt, long-time coach of the championship Lady Vols basketball team at the University of Tennessee.)

What if a teacher was so extraordinary that many of her students stayed after school for tutoring, not because they needed to but because they wanted to? (This happens to teachers like Jaime Escalante, subject of the film *Stand and Deliver*, who changed the lives of his inner-city student's at East L.A.'s Garfield High School.)

What if a pastor was so effective at communicating that first-time church visitors came back the following week, and brought others with them? (Example: By his own admission, the first few rows of seats at Pastor Tommy Barnett's Phoenix First church in Phoenix [weekly attendance: 15,000] look like "the bar scene out of Star Wars," so diverse is the eclectic crowd that comes to hear him preach.)

I know—at this point you're probably saying, "But those are the exceptions to the rule—the superstars. I'm not sure I could ever develop that kind of reputation in my line of work."

Why not?

What if you were so good at your work, such an asset to your company, that your employer would do almost anything not to lose you?

What if you performed in such a way that people buzzed about your remarkable performance and wanted more of the product, service, or ideas you provide?

If you knew how to consistently get people to demand more and more of you and whatever it is you do, it would be because of *the encore effect*.

You've seen an encore. In fact, you've probably been partially responsible for a couple. You go to a concert and are so moved by the performance that you, along with the rest of the clapping, cheering, "Bravo!"-yelling, bouquet-tossing crowd absolutely refuse to let the artist leave. You are prepared to applaud all night if need be, just to hear one more number.

But after the artist relents and performs one more time, it all starts again. What you thought would satisfy your need to be moved one last time by the amazing performer—it wasn't enough. A second and third encore is called for and the weary, but appreciative, artist complies.

After the third, the concert promoter appears and begs the audience's indulgence. The concert must come to a close. As a humanitarian gesture to the artist's need for rest, you and the rest of the audience comply and begin gathering your things to leave.

But the first thing you do when you get home (after buying a couple more CD's in the lobby as you leave) is check the artist's web site to see if the next night's concert in a neighboring city is sold out. You place your order online for one of the remaining balcony seats. You'd stand if you had to, just to get more of what this amazing person has to offer.

What if, my friend, that artist was you? I don't mean "artist" as in singer or musician or actor—not all of us are gifted to be on a performing stage. But you do have a stage. Your stage is an office, a sales floor, a home, an assembly line, a pulpit, a classroom, a playing field, a government agency, a showroom, or a hospital. The stage on which you perform everyday is just as likely to be the scene of an encore performance as any concert hall in the world.

Your goal (and mine) should be to have people shouting for more of whatever it is we do. If we imply we're ready to move on, we should have people clamoring for us not to leave. The world is desperately looking for those people who make such a difference, produce such results, have such a positive impact, that they make themselves indispensable. Whatever their stage, they simply will not be allowed to leave.

And that person can be you.

The Encore Effect:

How to Achieve Remarkable Performance in Anything You Do

By Mark Sanborn

***** Sample Chapter with Bonus Material... Enjoy!*****

William Shakespeare's *As You Like It*—Act II, Scene 7:

“All the world's a stage,
And all the men and women merely players.
They have their exits and their entrances,
And one man in his time plays many parts,
His acts being seven ages.”

The words of the melancholy Jaques in Shakespeare's satire have turned off many a student of leadership. “I don't want to be an actor. I want to be myself,” they say. And that is admirable.

But let's not throw the Bard out with the bath water. In his play, the character Jaques seems to think we move through life controlled by a preordained script, moving through our “seven ages” of life with little or no control, making our “exits” and “entrances” by divine cue. While I believe in the idea of the Divine, I'm also more than comfortable with the idea that life is, in many ways, a performance that I'm in charge of.

You and I must perform in order to succeed in our objectives for the day, the month, the year, and for our life. But that doesn't mean we violate our conscience and become someone we're not. No one can sustain that kind of charade indefinitely. The truth will eventually come out.

But it does mean this: Our performance should be a public display of our very best self. Being true to one's self means never having to remember who we were with whom. It means that when we're called back for an encore we don't have to check our notes to see what the people are expecting from our call-back performance.

But here's something else great performances mean: We all have roles to play. After being moved by an actor in a movie, I'm sometimes amazed to see an interview with that same actor on television and meet the “real person.” I have to remember that who a person is on screen for 120 minutes is not the same as who they really are. It's a temporary role.

No leader is better known for playing his role well than the legendary founder of Southwest Airlines, Herb Kelleher. His zany antics, dressing up in costumes and entertaining his employees in various roles, are legendary and have resulted in creating a corporate culture envied around the world. (Southwest employees are known to come in, without overtime pay, on their day off to fix something that needs fixing.) Fortune magazine called Kelleher perhaps the best CEO in America and Southwest consistently ranks as one of the most admired companies.

Some people thought Kelleher is crazy—and he was. Crazy like a fox. His craziness has made Southwest the most consistently profitable airline in America. He is worshiped by Southwest employees for creating a company where they love to work. And how did Herb Kelleher integrate his role-playing with his ongoing performance when he was the active CEO of the company?

I'll let him tell you:

“What’s the secret to building a great organization? How do you sustain consistent growth, profits, and service in an industry that can literally change overnight? And how do you build a culture of commitment and performance when the notion of loyalty—on the part of customers, employees, and employers—seems like a quaint anachronism? I can answer basically in two words: *be yourself.*”

When it comes time to change roles and make your performance even better, Kelleher says you “change your practices, not your *principles.*” All the while remaining who you are and giving people the best of who you are.

Herb Kelleher, trained as a lawyer, learned that two radically different people can both be successful at achieving the same goals if they stick to who they are. Again, his words:

“My best lesson in leadership came during my early days as a trial lawyer. Wanting to learn from the best, I went to see two of the most renowned litigators in San Antonio try cases. One sat there and never objected to anything, but was very gentle with witnesses and established a rapport with the jury. The other was an aggressive, thundering hell-raiser. And both seemed to win every case. That’s when I realized there are many different paths, not one right path. That’s true of leadership as well. People with different personalities, different approaches, different values succeed not because one set of values or practices is superior, but because their values and practices are genuine. And when you and your organization are true to yourselves-when you deliver results and a singular experience-customers can spot it from 30,000 feet.”

Let's agree on this point: we all perform various roles on the stage of life. We're "competing" with others as well as with ourselves, striving to find the very best we have to give be the unique quality that makes people ask us back for more of who we are. ("Competing" is in quotes because when everyone is unique there is ultimately no competition. Every person contributes his or her best performance which is unlike anyone else's.) And we have roles to play at times, but those roles never create a different person. They are just different expressions of our best self.

You and I both know that performances have powerful impacts. Our performance as parents impacts our children. Our performance at work impacts co-workers and customers. Our performance over the backyard fence impacts our neighbor and thus our neighborhood.

Remarkable Performances

(bonus material not in the book)

When I was 16 I learned that Og Mandino was speaking in Akron, Ohio, about a 90-minute drive from my home. Og was one of the bestselling self-help authors of all time, and I had already benefited from some of his books like *The Greatest Salesman in the World* and *The Greatest Miracle in the World*.

Driving 90 miles and entering the full-court-press of Akron traffic was a challenge for a rookie driver like myself, but I went. If Og's performance in person was anything like his books I knew I didn't want to miss out.

He talked about his troubled past and how he reached a point where he seriously considered ending his life. Then he spoke about how reading good books lifted him out of the pit of despair and set him on the road to remarkable achievement.

His delivery was low key, but his message was so powerful and his demeanor so passionate and sincere that his performance touched my young soul. I felt challenged to make different choices and take different steps in order to create better possibilities and results in my life. And I was not alone. At the end of his talk, the listeners gave Og a standing ovation. I didn't know it at the time, but I was witnessing the Encore Effect in action.

What do I remember about Og Mandino's talk? His performance—the ideas and the way he presented them—planted the seeds of change in me. Og Mandino's performance made me *act*.

Many years later my wife, Darla, and I took a vacation to New York City. While we were there we saw three very different Broadway plays.

The first was *Steel Pier*. This light-hearted and high-spirited musical about love at a marathon dance in 1933 Atlantic City evoked fun, energy and enjoyment. The audience cheered with delight and brought the cast out for thunderous curtain call.

What do I most remember about *Steel Pier*? The performance made us *feel good*.

The next play was *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*. This musical farce, set in the days of the Roman Empire (and thus a bit bawdy at times), was absolutely hilarious. It's no wonder that it ran for nearly a thousand performances. It was filled with puns, satire, jokes, and great music by Stephen Sondheim. When it was over the audience leaped to their feet and applauded uproariously—including my wife and me. It was another encore performance.

What do I remember about *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*? The performance made us *laugh*.

The last play we saw starred one of my favorite actors, Rip Torn. It was the American theatre classic, *Death of a Salesman*. First produced in 1949, *Death of a Salesman* put playwright Arthur Miller and main character, Willy Loman, on a first-name basis with the nation. It was seen as a stinging rebuke to the idea of success at any cost, of prosperity without principle. Loman was an individual who was not what he appeared to be, and the play was a warning: examine your life . . . judge yourself . . . take heed lest you fall. The audience was mesmerized by the performance and applauded until the cast returned for a curtain call.

What do I remember about *Death of a Salesman*? It made us *think*.

Four performances, four impacts: Act. Feel good. Laugh. Think. It is an exceptional single performance that can do all four, but every performance does something. In my case (one speech, three different Broadway plays) each performance had a positive impact on my life. But that's not always true. Sometimes speeches and plays disappoint—and sometimes personal performances do as well.

To protect the guilty, I won't cite the names of disappointing performances I've witnessed. But I've seen plenty of them, and so have you—in restaurants, car rental agencies, retail establishments, churches, ticket counters and security lines at airports, corporate offices, and every other conceivable venue where I travel.

And yes, I've seen them in the mirror. I've been guilty of disappointing performance.

It's coming face-to-face with my own disappointing performances that spurs me on to act differently and better. My disappointing performances take me back to Akron and that 16-year-old kid listening to Og Mandino. They make me remember what I felt that day. They make me want to perform so I am called back to the stage for a repeat performance.

What Kind of Performance Do You Give?

Maybe you've never thought about your life as a performance. But I hope you will. Because my vocation as a professional speaker puts me on stages several times every week, the issue of performance is a frontal-lobe reality for me. I've experienced a little of what Broadway actors must feel when someone reminds them that "the show must go on."

Hit Broadway plays require actors to be at the top of their game as much as eight times a week—seven nightly shows plus one matinee.

What if they're tired?

The show must go on.

What if they've lost interest in the material?

The show must go on.

What if they're preoccupied with the disagreement they had with their spouse?

The show must go on.

What if they got bad reviews the day before?

The show must go on.

What if they think they're underpaid?

The show must go on.

Your life and mine are the same. We are called to be "on" all the time, to give our best performance as individuals, spouses, parents, employees, bosses—whatever our stage, we are called to it every day regardless of how we feel.

Our show must go on.

This book is all about your performance and mine—about how much of an Encore Effect there is to our life; about how frequently we are being called back for more of what we do. Bottom line? Performance counts. And we need to ask the question, How are we doing?

If I asked three people—your boss, a customer, and a family member—to use one word to describe your performance, what word would they choose?

I've often solicited feedback about various individuals' performance in private consultation with those that know them well. When I ask, "How is their performance?", these are the most typical responses:

Good.
Okay.
Not bad.
Excellent.
Disappointing.
Marginal.
Fair.
Great.

While those adjectives run the gamut from the negative to the positive, there is a response that I don't hear very often. And that is the response (from, say, a boss) that says, "This person's performance is so amazing that I would do whatever it took to keep him (or her) on my team."

What kinds of words would describe such a performance? How about . . .

Amazing!
Remarkable!
Unbelievable!
Totally unique!
One-of-a-kind!
Inimitable!
Awesome!
Extraordinary!
Phenomenal!
Incredible!

Those are the words we use to describe a concert where the performer was called

back for two or three encores. And they are the kinds of words we should want people to use to describe our performance on the given stages of our life.

Out of the list of words above, there is one that I have heard more than others, and one I have come to appreciate for its power. It's a calm, sober, but deeply meaningful way to describe an encore performance—a word that doesn't need an explanation point. It's a word you utter when you sit back in your seat, exhale, shake your head, and whisper out loud, "That was . . . remarkable."

I imagine every person, including you, would like to have their performance described as remarkable. I know I would. Because when that word is used I know a person has been touched in the deepest part of their soul. They've been made to appreciate the experience they've just had. And they very likely would pay to have it again.

If you are the reason those around you are touched in a remarkable way, then you are living with the Encore Effect.

Larger Than Life

How often have you heard someone referred to as "larger than life?" We often use that phrase to describe someone who has a big or bold personality—someone who lives large.

My friend Charlie "Tremendous" Jones is larger than life. He is loud and loving, boisterous and caring, all at the same time. When people first meet Charlie, I think most of them probably wonder, "Is this guy for real?" (I did.) Trust me—Charlie is for real. He is totally authentic. He subscribes to Herb Kelleher's philosophy of "be yourself"—and his "self" is Tremendous.

Charlie is a big man in size and in spirit. He loves people and he believes that—as his nickname of many years suggests—life is tremendous. Charlie Jones is one of the most remarkable people I know.

Larger than life people often have something important to teach us. They demonstrate that life can be larger than we typically experience it. Their personalities and behaviors jar us out of ordinary thinking and show us that, if we choose, we can be bigger, better, and bolder than we've been. These larger-than-life people can snap us out of our plain-vanilla existence and invite us to live on a higher plane.

I challenge you to evaluate how you perform—on all your stages—and ask

yourself, “Can I make my performance bigger, better and bolder? Can I make it larger than life? Can I make the important performances of my life remarkable?”

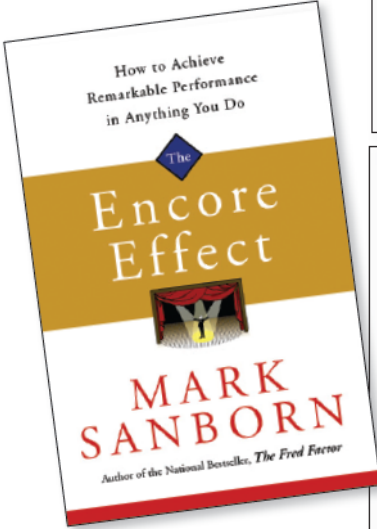
I’m not calling you to be an actor—to be someone you’re not. I’m calling you to walk out on every stage to which you are called and give your audience what *only you can*. Nobody can do what you do when you do it remarkably! Your performance may cause people to feel good today, laugh tomorrow, think deeply the next day, and act differently for the rest of their life.

If that happens, they’ll call you back for more. And you’ll experience the Encore Effect.

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Mark Sanborn CSP, CPAE
DEVELOPING LEADERS IN BUSINESS AND IN LIFE

Remarkable performances
are about moving people!
Mark Sanborn



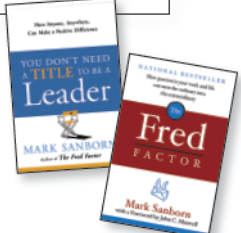

**A new kind of PDA:
Performance Development Agenda**

THE PROCESS

- Prepare:** This is where remarkable performance always begins
- Practice:** It won't make you perfect but it will always make you better
- Perform:** Be the performance and engage your audience
- Polish:** Keep making it better
- Pitfalls:** Avoid them when you can and be prepared to handle when you can't

Passion is the fuel for remarkable performance!

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