

# Venture Theater

A Stage Play for  
High School Students  
on How to Start  
and Run a Business

Written by  
Charles Welty



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An Original Stageplay

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*LIGHTS UP as CURTAIN OPENS. We see an open stage, empty except for the bare essentials. A work table, about eight feet long, is positioned at an angle on the right side of the stage, toward the front; behind the work table are three director's chairs. On the work table are three boxes of unsharpened pencils, three boxes of rubber bands, and three electric pencil sharpeners. The pencil sharpeners are connected to an electrical cord which stretches off stage to an electrical outlet. Also present is a waste basket which sits on the floor between two of the director's chairs. A second work table, also about eight feet long, is positioned at an angle on the left side of the stage, toward the front; behind the second work table are three more director's chairs and a telephone; a lectern with the Venture Theater logo is positioned on the right side of the stage, toward the front, but a bit to the right of the work table; a tall director's chair is positioned behind the lectern. To the rear of the stage is a stack of boxes holding pre-sharpened pencils. Also to the rear and above the stage is a large screen, upon which will be flashed various images as the play progresses, including the Venture Theater logo and the words "Sponsored by Farmers and Merchants Bank of Long Beach." The THEME MUSIC for Venture Theater plays (instrumental version of Frank Sinatra's "I Did It My Way") and the HOST enters. As the MUSIC FADES OUT, the Host addresses the audience.*

HOST

Welcome to Venture Theater! I'm your host, \_\_\_\_\_. You know, we've all been taught that when we get out of high school, we'll all have to either go to college or we'll have to go out and "get" a job. And even if we do go on to college, they hammer it in again -- you've got to get those high marks. Make the Dean's list, maybe even Phi Beta Kappa. You've got to make a big splash so those big companies will see you and hire you. You've got to go out and "get a job!"

*On cue, the 50's song "Get a Job" plays. After a beat, it FADES OUT as the Host continues.*

HOST (CONT'D)

There's a real benefit to that, but not what you may have been taught. We'll talk more about that later.

(MORE)

HOST (CONT'D)

But we're here mainly to point out that there is an alternative to going out to "get" a job. And that alternative is to go out and "create" a job. That's right, with a little bit of effort many of you have the potential to identify a need in the marketplace and to start a new business to meet that need. That's called "being an entrepreneur" and it's not for everybody. But if you've got what it takes, it doesn't matter if you are male or female. Your race doesn't matter. You might have a physical handicap, like a blind man I met who makes canes for the blind by hand. The only thing that matters is you have to believe in yourself and the product or service you want to provide. And we're going to demonstrate what it takes to do all of this, right here on this stage, over the next 30 minutes or so. We've selected a number of people from our audience and spent a little bit of time working with them so they know what Venture Theater is all about. But bear in mind, what you are about to see is, for the most part, spontaneous and unrehearsed. We are working with what we call a "semi-script," meaning that only the main points of what we want to accomplish are planned out. The rest will happen as a real business happens... you never know exactly what to expect. But that's part of the fun. And to make it even more fun, we're going to provide you with a little bit of an incentive to participate. Let's watch...

*On the screen above the stage appears a brief video short introducing Farmers and Merchants Bank of Long Beach's incentive prize.*

HOST (CONT'D)

Farmers and Merchants Bank of Long Beach will provide a student bank account with \$200 cash in it AND a Visa debit card to help you build and use your new credit wisely.

(MORE)

HOST (CONT'D)

If you are under 18, Farmers and Merchants Bank of Long Beach will provide the account to you on your 18th birthday. And how about this? KFI AM 640 More Stimulating Talk Radio will contribute a dozen free radio spots to promote your new business just like they promoted our play. And your professionally produced spot will be voiced by KFI promotions director Mr. Neil Saavedra. To be eligible, it's all in the cards. Just fill out one of these cards and pass it in at the end of the show. And you don't have to buy anything, either. But you do have to print so we can read your writing and the cards have to be filled out completely. We'll announce our winner at the end of the show.

*While the Host introduces the student entrepreneurs, some of the other cast members hand out cards to the audience, making certain that all of the audience members get a card.*

HOST (CONT'D)

So let's meet our players. First, our entrepreneurs. Ladies and gentlemen, won't you please give a warm "Venture Theater" welcome to Student #1 and Student #2.

*Student #1 and Student #2 ENTER from stage right. They each wear wireless microphones.*

HOST (CONT'D)

(to Student #1 and  
Student #2)

Are you ready to start your own business?

STUDENT #1 AND STUDENT #

Yes!

HOST (CONT'D)

And do you know what business you're going to start?

STUDENT #1 AND STUDENT #

(together, enthusiastic)

Yes!

HOST  
(to audience)  
Oh, yeah, that part was easy. We set  
that up as part of the script.

*The Host takes out a package of pre-sharpened pencils.*

STUDENT #2  
For the purpose of our demonstration,  
we're going to manufacture and market  
the best labor saving product to hit  
the business market in 20 years.

HOST  
(to audience)  
And what is your new marvel of  
ingenuity?

*They hold up the pencils so the audience can see them.*

STUDENT #1  
Per-Sharpened pencils, sold in a  
package of six, with a convenient  
band to hold them together.

HOST  
Now, don't laugh! You know how much  
time people in an office spend  
sharpening pencils? Venture Theater's  
pre-sharpened pencils will save time,  
and that means they'll save money.  
And look! They come pre-printed from  
the pencil supplier with our Venture  
Theater logo and the name of our  
sponsoring bank, Farmers and Merchants  
Bank of Long Beach and KFI AM 640,  
More Stimulating Talk Radio. We just  
have to sharpen them, package them,  
and take them to the marketplace,  
which for the purposes of our  
demonstration, will be you, the  
members of our audience.

(to Student #1 and  
Student #2)  
And now a question. Do you have a  
written... and that's a key word...  
written business plan that sets forth  
exactly what you intend to do?

STUDENT #1 AND STUDENT #  
(together, less than  
enthusiastic)  
Uh, no...

HOST  
(to Student #1 and  
Student #2)  
Well, actually, you do. Normally, as  
entrepreneurs, you would do this  
yourselves because nobody but you  
knows your business as well as you  
do. That's why Venture Theater doesn't  
recommend that you hire the  
development of a business plan out  
to someone else, except under very  
special circumstances. But for the  
purposes of our demonstration today,  
I've prepared it for you in advance.  
We have seminars you can attend that  
will show you how to prepare one.  
So... here is your business plan.

*The Host hands the business plan to the entrepreneurs.*

HOST (CONT'D)  
We'll have you study it in just a  
little bit. But now the BIG question.  
Do you have any money to set up this  
new business?

STUDENT #1 AND STUDENT #  
(together, less than  
enthusiastic)  
Uh, no...

HOST  
(to Student #1 and  
Student #2)  
No money? That can be a problem for  
an entrepreneur. You have to buy  
materials, rent an office and factory  
space. But guess what? It's really  
not much of a problem. There's always  
a way to finance a new business. You  
just have to be creative. Let's start  
with the bank.  
(to audience)  
Now we'll meet some more of our cast.  
(MORE)

*THEME MUSIC UP as the rest of the rest of the cast members  
ENTER. Three WORKERS dressed in casual clothing take their  
places behind the work table and sit down. The BANKER, the  
LAWYER, and the GOVERNMENT BUREAUCRAT - all dressed in  
business suits - take their places behind their respective  
chairs; they stand and do not sit down at this time.*

*The Host approaches the Banker, a young woman.*

HOST (CONT'D)

And you are?

STUDENT #6

Student #6.

HOST

Welcome to Venture Theater. Attached to the back of your chair is a little sign that tells us your role. Why don't you fold that sign over so we can see who you're going to be today?

*Student #6 flips the cloth sign over. It reads "BANKER".*

BANKER

I'm the Banker.

*SOUND EFFECTS: the CHORUS from the 1930's song "We're in the Money" plays for a beat, then FADES OUT.*

HOST

Well, Ms. Banker, it looks like you work for Farmers and Merchants Bank of Long Beach. Is that right?

BANKER

That's correct.

HOST

I'm \_\_\_\_\_. How do you do?  
(shakes her hand)  
I'd like you to meet some friends of mine, Student #1 and Student #2. They have a bit of a problem. They want to start a business, but they don't have any money.

BANKER

Well, that can be a problem. Do either of you have an account with Farmers and Merchants Bank of Long Beach?

STUDENT #1 AND STUDENT #

(together, hesitantly)

No...

BANKER

Well, do you have any assets? Real estate, a car completely paid for? Anything like that?

STUDENT #1 AND STUDENT #

(together, hesitantly)

No...



BANKER

Hm-m-m. That is a problem.  
(to Host)

Mr. \_\_\_\_\_, are you willing to  
back your friends with an investment  
in this new business?

HOST

Well, they look honest.  
(to entrepreneurs)  
So... make me an offer.

*The entrepreneurs discuss it privately among themselves for  
a moment. Then:*

STUDENT #1

We've decided to offer you 50% of  
the profits of the business for the  
\$1,000 we need to set up the business.

HOST

I don't know... sounds pretty risky  
to me. Keep talking...

STUDENT #2

Do you need to invest cash?

HOST

Very good question. Cash is helpful,  
given the fact that you need money  
to run this business. But you're  
right... who says I need to take  
cash out of my bank account? Ms.  
Banker, how's my credit with Farmers  
and Merchants Bank?

BANKER

Sterling, Mr. Welty.

HOST

(to entrepreneurs)  
Well, looks like we may have a  
possibility. I could take out a line  
of credit.

(to Banker)

How much is this loan going to cost?

BANKER

About 8 percent A-P-R.

HOST

Banker's talk for annual percentage  
rate. On a \$1,000 loan, eight percent  
translates to a "cost of money" of  
\$80 over one year.

STUDENT #1

Can you afford that?

HOST

Actually, the question is: "Can you afford that?" You see, I'll invest the \$1,000. But you have to cover my cost of money -- that's the 80 bucks this loan is going to cost me. And 50% of the profits is fine, but you'll have to pay me back my \$1,000 out of the first money in. And you'll have to clear all expenses with me before you pay them. That way I know how much we have to make in sales before you spend all the profits in what may be unnecessary expenses. Deal?

STUDENT #1 AND STUDENT #

(together, with  
enthusiasm)

Deal!

HOST

Not so fast! You'd better consult with an attorney first, to see if what I'm offering makes sense for you.

STUDENT #1

But we don't have an attorney.

HOST

You do now. Please excuse us for a moment. We've got to go see a lawyer.

BANKER

Of course....

*The Banker sits down as the Host and the entrepreneurs step over to the right, where the Attorney is waiting. As they walk, the Host pulls an agreement out of his coat pocket and hands it over to one of the entrepreneurs.*

HOST

(to entrepreneurs)

Here's a written agreement with all the terms we just discussed. You'll need to hand it to your attorney.

(to audience)

I didn't "just happen" to have that with me, by the way. I planned it that way. Remember, always get it in writing.

(MORE)

HOST (CONT'D)

That's not just to protect an investor from an unscrupulous entrepreneur. I've found most are honest, hard working men and women who want to make a fair profit on their ideas. But the fact is that many deals are very complicated, and if you get it in writing, you'll remember what you promised to do. I can't tell you how important this is. Always get it in writing. If you are an investor, get it in writing before you invest any money and, if you are the entrepreneur, get it in writing before you accept any money. And always discuss the agreement with an attorney who represents your interests and not the interests of your investor, before you sign it.

*They step over to the Attorney, a young woman.*

HOST (CONT'D)

(to Attorney)

And you are?

STUDENT #7

Student #7.

HOST

Welcome to Venture Theater. Fold your sign over so we can see who you're going to be today.

*Student #7 flips the cloth sign over. It reads "ATTORNEY".*

STUDENT #7

I'm the Attorney.

*SOUND EFFECTS: Two drawn-out, descending notes of a FOG HORN.*

HOST

Well, Ms. Attorney, I'm \_\_\_\_\_, the host for Venture Theater, and you would know your clients, Student #1 and Student #2.

ATTORNEY

That's correct. What can I do for you?

STUDENT #2

We have an agreement here for an investment which Mr. Welty intends to make in a business we're starting. We need you to review it.

*The Attorney takes the agreement and begins to read it silently.*

ATTORNEY

(to Student #1)

Hm-m-m. Manufacturing and distribution... do you have any experience doing this?

STUDENT #1 AND STUDENT #

No.

ATTORNEY (CONT'D)

Do you have any of your own assets in this business?

STUDENT #2

Just our time and enthusiasm.

ATTORNEY

I'm afraid I'm going to have to recommend that you not do this.

STUDENT #1 AND STUDENT #

(together, incredulous)

What?!

HOST

Don't panic. She's just covering her tail.

ATTORNEY

I resent that, Mr. \_\_\_\_\_.

*The Host ignores the Attorney, who gets madder and madder as the Host speaks.*

HOST

(to audience)

In my experience, I have found that if a lawyer says "no" too quickly, it's because he figures "If I say no, and the business fails, I'll still have a client, because I warned him and he ignored me; if the business succeeds, he'll still stay with me just so he can say "I told you so;" but if I say "Yes," and the business

(MORE)

HOST (CONT'D)

fails, I've lost a client; so I'll say "No," because two out of three times, no is better for me."

STUDENT #2

Give me back the agreement.

ATTORNEY

I don't recommend this...

HOST

I'm not saying to ignore your attorney. I'm saying that we entrepreneurs must consult an attorney not so he will tell us what to do, but rather to tell us how to do it. Just tell us how to avoid the pitfalls. We know there are snakes out there, so don't tell us to stay out of the field. Tell us what we can expect to find so we can deal with them when we find them. But it's our decision.

STUDENT #1 AND STUDENT #

(together, firmly)

We'll sign.

STUDENT #2

(to Attorney)

Thank you for your time.

ATTORNEY

Speaking of which...

*The Attorney hands the entrepreneurs a piece of paper.*

STUDENT #1

What's this?

ATTORNEY

My bill for services rendered... 50 dollars.

*The Host and the entrepreneurs walk back to the Banker. The Attorney sits down in the chair.*

HOST

Lawyers... don't you just love 'em? But let's not get too cynical here. You will find that your lawyer will come in useful later on. You can count on it.

(MORE)

HOST (CONT'D)

(to Banker)

All set. We have an agreement. You can set up an account here at Farmers and Merchants Bank for my new friends. I'll sign the loan documents now.

(to entrepreneurs)

Do you see what we've done? I don't have to put up any cash. Farmers and Merchants Bank does that for me. But in return, I want you to take out the loan. That will help build your credit.

(to Banker)

I'll guarantee it.

BANKER

No problem. Your credit's good with us.

HOST

(to Banker)

Thank you.

BANKER

(to Host)

Just sign this loan document where it says co-signer approval.

(to entrepreneurs)

Just fill this out... and you'll both need to sign here.

*The Host initials the form and passes it to the entrepreneurs. As the entrepreneurs fill out the form, the Host addresses the audience.*

HOST

(to audience)

Do you see what we've done? A lot of first time entrepreneurs think that the money is the toughest part of starting a new business. But that's not necessarily true. You see, if you have a good idea, and if you have a written business plan which spells out what you intend to market-- that is, what your product or service is--and how it's unique, and how you're going to sell it, what it will cost, what you intend to sell it for, and who you're going to sell it to, you will find that money will follow a well thought out strategy.

(MORE)

HOST (CONT'D)

And look how easy this deal is for everybody! The entrepreneurs are using what we call O-P-M -- other people's money. As far as the entrepreneurs are concerned, they put up no money at all. And as far as I am concerned, neither did I... well, not unless the business fails and I have to pay the money back to the bank. But for now, my bank balance remains the same as before because the bank put up the money. And they pay all of my costs. Everybody wins. Marvelous! Now while our entrepreneurs are filling out the paperwork and setting up the account at Farmers and Merchants Bank, let's go meet the rest of the cast.

(to entrepreneurs)

When you're ready, just come over and join me.

*The Host steps over to the GOVERNMENT BUREAUCRAT.*

HOST (CONT'D)

(to Bureaucrat)

And you are?

STUDENT #8

Student #8.

HOST

Welcome to Venture Theater. Fold your sign over so we can see who you're going to be today.

*Student #8 flips the cloth sign over. It reads "BUREAUCRAT".*

STUDENT #8

I'm the Bureaucrat.

*SOUND EFFECTS: The SOUND of a CASH REGISTER RINGING. The two entrepreneurs join the Host.*

HOST

The entrepreneur's nemesis. The faceless government worker who tries to tell an entrepreneur what's best for him in the name of safety, government regulation, or whatever. And it always costs money.

STUDENT #2

I don't understand.

HOST

(to entrepreneurs)

The term "bureaucrat" comes from the French word "bureau," meaning "desk." A bureaucrat is a desk jockey, someone who sits behind a desk and rules his little kingdom and tries to rule yours. Bureaucrat is an appropriate term, don't you think?

(to Bureaucrat)

Your role in Venture Theater is very important. You get to throw up all sorts of obstacles to our entrepreneurs. You're just doing your job, you understand.

BUREAUCRAT

Just doing my job. Stand in line, please.

HOST

Never any malice.

BUREAUCRAT

Never. Next!

HOST

Lost in the role already. You will play two roles in Venture Theater today. On your seat are two hats. Please show us the first hat in your collection.

*The Bureaucrat puts on a plastic hard hat and puts it on. He picks up the clipboard and smiles.*

HOST (CONT'D)

You will play an inspector for OSHA, the Occupational Health and Safety Administration. When you are the OSHA inspector, you will wear your hard hat and carry your clipboard. Whether state or federal, your job is to inspect the workplace and make sure it's safe for the workers. And if you don't think it's safe, you can shut the workplace down just with a stroke of your pen.

STUDENT #1

What if the place is safe, but the inspector is wrong?



HOST

You mean, what if there's a dispute between you and the OSHA inspector? You read the regulations one way, he reads it another? Too bad. You lose. If you fix a non-existent problem, it'll cost you money and you'll probably have to pay a fine on top of the "repair" money you spent. If you fight it, it'll cost you money in legal fees.

ATTORNEY

(off mic)

I'm over here! Gotta make my Mercedes payment this month!

HOST

And if you win, you still lose, because you can't get your legal costs back. So, if it costs more to fight it, you might as well fix it and pay the fine. The fine, in effect, becomes a tax forced on you to cover his salary and bureaucratic overhead.

STUDENT #2

That sucks.

HOST

Tell me about it. And we're running a business here, so we'll say "That's unacceptable." Means the same thing.

STUDENT #1

Can we get our money back?

HOST

Not in this life. Just kidding. There's only one way.

STUDENT #2

How's that?

HOST

You have no choice. You have to pass the costs along to the customer or make the product cheaper.

(to Bureaucrat)

What's your next hat?

(MORE)

*The Bureaucrat puts down the clipboard and takes off the hard hat. He puts on an accountant's green eye shade.*

HOST (CONT'D)

Ah, yes... the tax auditor. You also play an IRS agent, representing the full power of the federal government to audit and tax the entrepreneur.

BUREAUCRAT

I love my power.

HOST

(to entrepreneurs)

Never forget that after you have paid all the expenses of your business, you have to pay the taxes.

STUDENT #1

How much are they?

HOST

Mr. Taxman, how much in federal taxes on a corporation after expenses?

BUREAUCRAT

38 percent. Almost half, when you count state taxes. Going up to more than 50 percent federal now, under the new administration.

ATTORNEY

(off mic)

Hey! I got a yacht payment to make, too!

HOST

A good tax lawyer and accountant can show you how to legally avoid paying many of those taxes. But the rules are very complicated. You'll need professional help to do it right. But you'll find the fees for your lawyer and accountant are generally a lot less than paying the taxes without benefit of counsel.

*The Host and entrepreneurs walk back to see the Banker.*

HOST (CONT'D)

Now, before we meet your work crew, let's check with the fine folks at Farmers and Merchants Bank and see how your account is coming. Well, Ms. Banker, how's the loan coming?

BANKER

All set up. Just sign here.

(MORE)

*The Host signs on the piece of paper that the Banker provides.*

BANKER (CONT'D)

Thank you. Here's your loan, Mr. Welty.

*The Banker places \$1,000 in cash (one dollar bills) on the table. The entrepreneurs are astounded.*

STUDENT #1

Oh, my gosh, that's real money.

HOST

You bet it's real money. You can't learn the real world of business unless you work with real money.

STUDENT #2

I can't believe this!

HOST

Go ahead, count it.

STUDENT #2

(counting)

There's a thousand dollars. Ten stacks of 100 one dollar bills.

HOST

That's right. Numbered consecutively from one to one thousand. That's for your benefit. I want you to see that this is no game. This is real money and real money is at stake right here on this stage. If you make a mistake, I will lose it all and it took a long time to earn this.

*The entrepreneurs handle the money for a beat, then:*

HOST (CONT'D)

Never forget that there's real cash in your new business and we're not handling play money up here. That's for your benefit and never forget that this is about real profits, real losses and lessons in real life.

(beat)

And now for lesson number one. Give me eighty dollars.

STUDENT #1 AND STUDENT #

(together, shocked)

What?

HOST

Eighty bucks. My interest cost, remember? The A-P-R the bank is charging me?

STUDENT #2

Then we really only get to use 920 dollars out of the thousand, because it's costing us 80 bucks, right?

HOST

You catch on fast. Never forget to factor in your cost of money as an expense to your business.

*The entrepreneurs count out eighty dollars and hand the money to the Host.*

HOST (CONT'D)

Thank you.

*The Host hands the money to the Banker.*

HOST (CONT'D)

Please put this into my savings account here at Farmers and Merchants Bank.

BANKER

Right away, Mr. Welty.

*SOUND EFFECTS: The SOUND of a CASH REGISTER RINGING. The screen above the stage displays an accounting graphic showing how much of the money is left. \$1,000 minus \$80 leaves \$920. The \$80 is marked as "Expense: Interest Owed".*

HOST

That leaves you with 920 dollars. Count out 50 dollars and put the rest into your cash box.

(to audience)

In a real business, you would never... let me repeat that... you would NEVER pay expenses like this with cash. You want a paper trail. Use your checking account or Farmers and Merchants debit card. But for our purposes, so you all can see that we are dealing with real money here, we're going to use cash.

*The entrepreneurs place the money in the cash box. They keep 50 dollars.*

STUDENT #1

Why?

HOST

Lesson number two, why else?

*They step over to the Attorney's chair.*

HOST (CONT'D)

(to audience)

You'll note that on the screen above our stage, you can follow exactly how much the business has left in its bank account by following the transactions as they are posted.

(to entrepreneurs)

And now for lesson number two. Ms. Attorney, how much did you say that bill was?

ATTORNEY

(coldly)

Fifty dollars.

HOST

(to entrepreneurs)

Pay the woman 50 dollars.

*SOUND EFFECTS: The SOUND of a CASH REGISTER RINGING. The entrepreneurs hand the fifty dollars to the Attorney, who pockets it without saying "Thank you." The screen above the stage displays an accounting graphic showing how much of the money is left. \$920 minus \$50 leaves \$870. The \$50 is marked as "Expense: Legal and Accounting".*

STUDENT #2

Does this ever stop?

HOST

It only gets worse, trust me. Shall we meet your work force?

STUDENT #1 AND STUDENT #

(together, enthusiastic)

Yes!

HOST

Let's do it!

(MORE)

*They step over to the three workers who are seated on the chairs at the right side of the stage. The workers stand as they approach.*

HOST (CONT'D)  
(to entrepreneurs)  
Here are your workers. Let's find  
out who they are.

*The Host asks each student to give his or her name.*

HOST (CONT'D)  
(to Student #3)  
And you are?

WORKER #1  
Student #3.

HOST  
(to Student #4)  
And this is...?

WORKER #2  
Student #4.

HOST  
(to Student #5)  
And you are?

WORKER #3  
Student #5.

HOST  
Welcome to Venture Theater. You've  
met your employers, Student #1 and  
Student #2. Do you know what you're  
going to be doing here?

WORKER #1  
Well, not exactly.

HOST  
(to entrepreneurs)  
Do you really expect your employees  
to know how to make your product  
without telling them? You have to  
train your workers.

STUDENT #1  
How do we do that?

HOST  
I just so happen to have a written  
training manual. Would you like to  
review it?

STUDENT #1 AND STUDENT #  
(together, enthusiastic)  
Yes!

HOST

No problem. It'll cost you 60 bucks.

STUDENT #1 AND STUDENT #

(together, shocked)

For what!?

HOST

Training materials. And on top of that, you have to budget the hourly wages of your employees as you train them. For the purposes of our demonstration, budget one hour of training at ten dollars per hour for each of your three hourly employees. The total is 140 dollars. Pay me 60 dollars from your cash box.

STUDENT #2

Then we're really losing money before we start to make a profit.

*SOUND EFFECTS: The SOUND of a CASH REGISTER RINGING. The entrepreneurs hand the sixty dollars to the Host. The screen above the stage displays an accounting graphic showing how much of the money is left. \$870 minus \$60 leaves \$810. The \$60 is marked as "Expense: Personnel Training Materials".*

HOST

You catch on fast. Don't forget to set aside the 30 dollars for the wages for your employees.

*SOUND EFFECTS: The SOUND of a CASH REGISTER RINGING. The screen above the stage displays an accounting graphic showing how much of the money is left. \$810 minus \$30 leaves \$780. The \$30 is marked as "Expense: Personnel Training Wages".*

HOST (CONT'D)

(to entrepreneurs)

Are you ready to train your workers now?

STUDENT #1 AND STUDENT #

(together, enthusiastic)

Yes!

HOST

(to workers)

Are you ready to learn what you need to know to make this product?

WORKERS

(less than enthusiastic)

Sure, why not?

HOST  
(to entrepreneurs)  
Then get to it! I'll step aside while  
you do your thing.

*The Host takes a few steps to the side while Student #1 and Student #2 begin to show the workers how to make their product.*

STUDENT #2  
Our product consists of a package of  
three pre-sharpened pencils, bound  
together with a rubber band. On the  
table in front of you are a box of  
unsharpened pencils, a box of rubber  
bands, and an empty box. There is  
also an electric pencil sharpener.  
(picks up a pencil)  
To sharpen your pencil, just put it  
into the opening on the sharpener  
like so...

*The entrepreneur sharpens the pencil.*

STUDENT #2 (CONT'D)  
When you have sharpened three pencils,  
put a rubber band around them and  
put the package of three pencils  
into the box. Put twelve sets of  
three packages of pencils into each  
box. Any questions?

WORKER #1  
Got it.

WORKER #2  
No problem.

*Worker #1 and Worker #2 begin to sharpen the pencils and assemble the packages. Worker #3 has other ideas.*

WORKER #3  
When do we get a break?

*The Host steps over to the entrepreneurs.*

HOST  
(aside, in a STAGE  
WHISPER)  
Hm-m-m. I think we're going to have  
trouble with this one.  
(MORE)



HOST (CONT'D)

(to Worker #3)

You can have a ten minute break after two hours and an hour lunch after four hours.

(to entrepreneurs)

That's the law.

STUDENT #1

Let's see how many you can make.

*Worker #3 takes out a pencil and begins to examine it carefully. After looking the pencil over carefully and slowly, he picks up the sharpener, examines it carefully, and traces the cord back to the power strip on the stage. He unplugs the sharpener and looks at the plug.*

STUDENT #2

What are you doing?

WORKER #3

Don't look safe to me.

STUDENT #1

It's perfectly safe. Look, you're behind the others.

*Worker #3 just shrugs his shoulders.*

WORKER #3

Whatever...

*He plugs the cord of the pencil sharpener back into the power strip and stands up.*

WORKER #3 (CONT'D)

I gotta take a leak.

*The entrepreneurs look at the Host helplessly.*

HOST

Don't look at me! I didn't hire him!

STUDENT #2

What are we supposed to do?

HOST

You gotta let him go. It's the law.

(to Worker #3)

It's down the hallway and to the right.

WORKER #3

Can I use the phone?

STUDENT #2

Just go!

*Worker #3 EXITS the stage.*

STUDENT #2 (CONT'D)

(to Host)

I know we're going to have trouble  
with this one.

HOST

You have no idea.

*The telephone beside the BUREAUCRAT rings once. He picks up  
the phone and listens for a beat.*

BUREAUCRAT

I'll get right on it.

*He hangs up the phone, puts on the plastic hard hat and grabs  
his clipboard. The Bureaucrat, now dressed as the OSHA  
inspector, steps over to the work table where the two workers  
are sharpening their pencils.*

BUREAUCRAT (CONT'D)

OSHA inspection. Step aside.

STUDENT #1

Hey, wait a minute!

(to Host)

What is this?

HOST

You heard the man. OSHA inspection.  
The government is about to protect  
us from ourselves.

*Student #2 steps over to the Bureaucrat. The Host just shakes  
his head.*

HOST (CONT'D)

I wouldn't...

STUDENT #2

(to Bureaucrat)

Don't you need a warrant or something?

HOST

...too late.

BUREAUCRAT

A warrant? Puh-leeze! I don't need a  
warrant. I got a tip!

STUDENT #1 AND STUDENT #  
(together, incredulous)  
What!

BUREAUCRAT  
That's right. An anonymous phone  
call. Now step aside.

*The Bureaucrat steps over to the table and begins to examine  
Worker #3's pencil sharpener. Worker #1 and Worker #2 continue  
to sharpen their pencils.*

STUDENT #1  
How'd he find out? Who would have  
called OSHA?

*Worker #3 steps back on to the stage as the Bureaucrat traces  
the cord to the power strip.*

WORKER #3  
(all smiles)  
Whoa-ho! I'm ba-a-ack!

*The Bureaucrat continues to examine the work area. He looks  
at the power strip. Worker #3 takes his seat at the work  
table.*

WORKER #3 (CONT'D)  
(to entrepreneurs)  
Never mind! I found the phone.

*The Bureaucrat pulls the cord from the power strip as Worker  
#3 takes his seat at the work table. Worker #1 and Worker  
#2 continue to sharpen their pencils.*

BUREAUCRAT  
And I found a code violation! This  
equipment isn't grounded.

*Worker #3 examines the work table.*

WORKER #3  
Gee, that's funny. Doesn't seem too  
sturdy to me.

*The Bureaucrat pulls out a tape measure and measures the  
distance from the top of the table to the floor.*

BUREAUCRAT  
Unh-huh. Just as I thought. A half  
an inch too short. And with all that  
repetitive motion, there's gotta be  
a potential for R-S-I.

STUDENT #2  
(to Bureaucrat)  
R-S-I?

BUREAUCRAT  
Repetitive Stress Injury.

STUDENT #1  
(sarcastic)  
R-S-I... wonderful.

BUREAUCRAT  
Oh, we take R-S-I very seriously at  
OSHA. Now let's see...  
(checking off clipboard)  
Faulty wiring, unsafe grounding,  
unsafe working conditions...

STUDENT #2  
(to Bureaucrat)  
Now just a minute!

BUREAUCRAT  
(eyes him coldly)  
...and resisting inspection. Your  
fine will come to \$380.

*The Bureaucrat tears off a sheet of paper from the clipboard and hands it to Student #2.*

BUREAUCRAT (CONT'D)  
You got thirty days to pay or appeal.  
Have a nice day.

*The Bureaucrat heads back to his seat and pulls out his chair.*

BUREAUCRAT (CONT'D)  
I love the smell of N-C-R paper in  
the morning!

*The Bureaucrat sits down and takes off his hardhat as the entrepreneurs turn to the Host. Worker #3 begins an animated discussion with Worker #1 and Worker #2, who ignore his comments, which are not heard by the audience. After a beat, Worker #3 gives up and angrily exits the stage.*

STUDENT #2  
Now what do we do?

HOST  
Maybe you ought to fight it.

STUDENT #2  
How much will it cost us in legal  
fees?

HOST

At least four hundred dollars. Welcome to the real world. Pay the fine.

*SOUND EFFECTS: The SOUND of a CASH REGISTER RINGING. The entrepreneurs hand the four hundred dollars to the Bureaucrat. The screen above the stage displays an accounting graphic showing how much of the money is left. \$780 minus \$380 leaves \$400. The \$400 is marked as "Expense: Fine."*

STUDENT #2

I can't believe this. Over half our money is gone.

HOST

Yeah, well it's going to get worse. Looks like you have some labor problems.

*Worker #3 ENTERS carrying a picket sign which reads "Venture Theater - Unfair to Workers."*

WORKER #3

We're on strike. We want higher wages and less work.

STUDENT #1

Less work? You haven't done anything!

WORKER #3

Union! Union! Union!

STUDENT #2

What do we do?

HOST

You have to shut down production. But first, find out how many units your workers have made.

WORKER #1

Ten.

WORKER #2

Ten.

HOST

OK, do the math. Ten units in five minutes. How many in an hour?

STUDENT #1

60 minutes divided by 5 is 12. Twelve times 10 is 120 units. Right?

HOST

Not quite. Remember, they work only about 50 minutes each hour. You have to allow for breaks.

STUDENT #2

So then, 50 minutes divided by 5 is 10. Ten times 10 is 100 units.

HOST

Very good. And at ten dollars per hour, your labor costs are?

STUDENT #1

Ten dollars divided by 100 units is ten cents per package, right?

HOST

Correct again. Those math classes you've had to take over the years really do come in handy. That's 10 cents for labor. Your costs for the pencils and rubber band are 10 cents. Packing and shipping costs per unit add another 5 cents to the cost. And the total is?

STUDENT #2

Twenty-five cents per unit.

HOST

Your retail price should be at least ten times your cost. How much is your retail price?

STUDENT #1

Two-fifty. That's a little high, isn't it?

HOST

Maybe. You have to cut costs. Got any ideas?

STUDENT #2

We can't cut labor. We're at minimum wage now. Do we have to make it here?

HOST

Very good! You can make your product elsewhere and sell it here.

STUDENT #1

Elsewhere? You mean like overseas?

HOST

Not necessarily overseas, but that is an option. Remember, you have to concentrate on what you do best. Maybe selling is what you do best, not manufacturing.

STUDENT #2

But if our products are made overseas, won't that take jobs away from American workers?

HOST

No, that's a myth. First, this is your business and it exists to create a profit for you, your partners and stockholders... not for your workers. Second, any jobs you create arise solely out of what you need to make the product or provide the service. Third, you are only to create the minimum number of jobs needed to generate the maximum amount of profit at the least amount of cost to you. Let me emphasize this point again. This is your business. It exists only for your benefit and the benefit of your partners. Now you have the opportunity to create a new type of job. This new job is based not on manufacturing a product, but on selling a product.

STUDENT #1

So, you're saying that if we can make the product elsewhere, we can eliminate a dull \$10 an hour assembly job and replace it with a commissioned sales job.

HOST

Well, that's the effect, yes. But remember, the jobs you are creating first are your own! You don't owe anyone else anything, except for your investor, of course. And remember, a motivated salesman or saleswoman can make far more money on commissions than the ten dollars an hour you pay your assembly line workers. So what's it gonna be?

*The student entrepreneurs step over to the three workers.*

STUDENT #1 AND STUDENT #  
(together, all smiles)  
We've got some good news and bad  
news.

STUDENT #1  
The bad news is... we're shutting  
down our manufacturing division. Too  
many headaches. You're all out of  
work.

STUDENT #2  
The good news is... we have room for  
two... and only two... sales  
positions. Now, who do you think  
we're going to hire?

*The entrepreneurs shake hands with Worker #1 and Worker #2.  
They turn to Worker #3 and escort him off the stage.*

STUDENT #1  
Hit the road, Jack.

*The student entrepreneurs turn to the Host, who gestures to  
the boxes stacked up at the rear of the stage.*

HOST  
I've taken the liberty of ordering  
your product for you. Let's take a  
look.

*The Host and all the student "workers" step to the rear of  
the stage. Each brings a box forward to the work table as  
the Host addresses the theater audience.*

HOST (CONT'D)  
What you've seen here today is a  
simplification of the key elements  
of creating your own business. But  
all the pieces are there and they  
are just as we have outlined them  
here in Venture Theater. We couldn't  
have done this without the help of  
our cast. Let's show them our thanks.

*The Host and the audience applaud the cast.*

HOST (CONT'D)  
Now there's one last element left.  
Our business has a product which has  
to be sold. And we're going to sell  
that product right now... to you.  
(MORE)

*Student #1 hands a package of pencils to the Host.*



## HOST (CONT'D)

Thank you. This package contains three pre-sharpened pencils. They have the logo of Venture Theater and our bank sponsor, Farmers and Merchants Bank of Long Beach, and the logo of KFI AM 640, More Stimulating Talk Radio. Our cast is going out now into the audience, and we're going to ask you to buy them for the very reasonable price of one dollar. The proceeds - that is to say, all the money left over above our actual costs - all of that money stays right here at your school. Now, what we'd like you to do is turn in the response cards with your purchase when our cast members come down the aisles to you. Whether you make a purchase or not, when you turn in that card, you're telling us if you want to attend our follow-up seminar. We'll email you a reservation form for our next seminar. Now that seminar will cost you ten bucks, but it'll be well worth it. And just for filling out the card, someone is going to win one of our prizes. Farmers and Merchants Bank of Long Beach will provide a student bank account with \$200 cash in it AND a Visa debit card to help you build and use your new credit wisely. If you are under 18, Farmers and Merchants Bank of Long Beach will provide the account to you on your 18th birthday. And how about this? KFI AM 640 More Stimulating Talk Radio will contribute a dozen free radio spots to promote your new business just like they promoted our play. And like I said earlier, your professionally produced spots will be voiced by KFI promotions director Mr. Neil Saavedra. To be eligible, it's all in the cards. Just fill out one of these cards and pass it in at the end of the show. And you don't have to buy anything, either. But you do have to print so we can read your writing and the cards have to be filled out completely. And don't forget your email address. We'll announce our winner in a few minutes.

*The Host collects the cards from the cast members, picks out the winner and announces the name. He presents the bank certificate to the bank winner and tells the winner to take the certificate to any Farmers and Merchants Bank office to redeem the bank prize. The Host dismisses the audience.*

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