

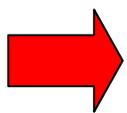
# The Ten **FATAL** Mistakes Made When Planning Entertainment for Special Events

*Eliminate these mistakes and expect massive success!*

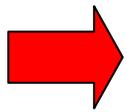
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I've had the pleasure of entertaining audiences all over the world in many different settings. The vast majority of my shows were great fun for everyone. On several occasions, however, my program was lackluster because of simple mistakes made by the event planner or by me. Avoid the 10 fatal mistakes that follow and your audience and entertainer will thank you!

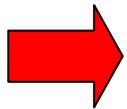
**These mistakes create scenarios that are difficult for any entertainer to manage:**



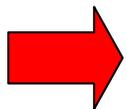
**Dance Floor:** A large space between the stage and the audience is the quickest way to make an entertainer's blood run cold. Positioning a dance floor in the middle of the room and moving the audience away from the entertainer is guaranteed to kill the energy of the performance. Entertainers and speakers feed off the audience's energy as they work. Get your audience as close to the stage as possible.



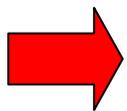
**Performing During Dinner:** No one cares what else is going on when they have hot, yummy food in front of them. Planning to have entertainment while people are eating (and talking!) is the kiss of death. If your schedule is so tight the entertainer or speaker has to deliver their program while dinner is occurring, allow them to begin as the meal is coming to a close.



**Open Bar During Performance:** Simple rule of thumb here...if the bar is open, people will stand around it and talk. My biggest nightmare of a show was for a client who left multiple bars open in the back of the room during my performance. The people at the back bars were so loud they distracted the entire audience (and the performer on stage) that night.



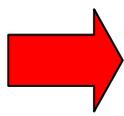
**The Boss Gives Bad News Right Before the Entertainment:** It's almost comical in a very dark way when the big boss steps on to the stage to give bad news to the assembled group. I've seen bosses announce that "our beloved co-worker has passed away" or that "...the company is being forced to make cuts in the next few weeks" minutes before they announce the entertainment and tell everyone to..."Have fun!" Remember, there is a time and place for everything.



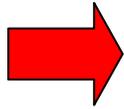
**Performer Can't be Seen From Back of Room:** Does your entertainment need to be on some sort of stage or riser? Simply put...yes. Even small groups have people in the audience who are sitting behind someone. If any of your guests have to strain to see the person who is delivering your program, you are going to lose them at some point. Don't make your audience members strain to be a part of the fun.

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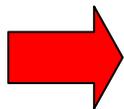
Jason Michaels is a magician/illusionist, sleight of hand artist, multi-time TEDx presenter, inspirational speaker, and entrepreneur. He uses magic, illusion, comedy, and theater to create fun, customized programs for conferences, meetings, special events, and performing arts centers. From after dinner entertainment to fully integrated and branded events, Jason prides himself on creating unforgettable experiences.



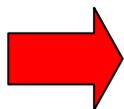
**Performer Can't Be Heard:** On a similar note, if your presenter cannot be heard by everyone, audience members will check out faster than you can say, "We should have rented a better sound system." Unfortunately, when your audience mentally checks out they will then try to find things to occupy their time. Talking to their neighbor is one of those things. Make sure everyone can hear what is going on and you will keep your guests engaged.



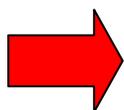
**Program is Too Long:** There is an old saying in show business that you should, "Leave them wanting more." Adopt that saying as your mantra and you will be just fine. Audiences only have so much focus and attention before mental fatigue sets in. Once they tire, they can't wait for the program to be over. It should be music to your ears to hear people say, "Wow! That was fantastic! I wish it had been longer."



**Being Too Budget Conscious:** If you are going to ask your guests to sit still and give some stranger their most valuable resource (their time), you owe it to them to get the very best entertainment or speaker possible. Sometimes you can find the perfect program and it is in your budget - Hooray! Other times you may have to spend more money than you were planning, but (good news!) you will get a superior program. At the end of the day, you can always make more money. You cannot make more time.



**Dim the Lights:** If possible, always plan to dim the lights in the room a few seconds before the program begins (the lights on the stage should be left on or brought up to full strength.) From the theatre to the movies, when the lights dim in the house, everyone knows to quiet down and pay attention. When you dim the lights it also makes it easy for people in the audience to get up and out of the room without being a distraction.



**No Pre-Show Music:** What type of music are you going to play before the program? Music helps build energy in the room while waiting for the program to begin. Good energy = good audience = good program. You can also use the music to cue the audience that the program is getting ready to start by gradually increasing the volume until it is loud enough that people have to stop their conversations and focus their attention on the stage.

Final Thoughts: You are putting a lot of time, effort, and money into your event. By avoiding these 10 fatal mistakes you will be setting your program up to succeed. Also, be sure to ask your entertainer or speaker what their specific needs are in order to provide the very best presentation possible. Remember, at the end of the day your entertainment is a direct reflection on you.

Questions? Contact me at 888-212-2863 or [jm@jasonmichaelsmagic.com](mailto:jm@jasonmichaelsmagic.com).

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