
EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

Independent Arts, Communications and Development Consultant (2015-Present)

I currently am doing executive search and planning work on a contract basis for arts groups throughout the country. In this role I maintain a robust network of key influencers in nationally renowned theater, dance and opera companies, following trends and helping organizations perform at the top of their game. I also offer communications and development consulting services through my own firm, *Specs, Words with Vision*.

Director of Communications (2012-2015)

Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation • Scottsdale, AZ

As a senior member of the Development and Communications team, I led all internal and external communications efforts for the organization founded by Frank Lloyd Wright during his life to maintain, promote and steward his architectural legacy. With an budget of \$10 million and a staff of 100 full and part-time employees, the Foundation works to preserve and restore Taliesin (Spring Green, WI) and Taliesin West (Scottsdale, AZ) while promoting architecture and design at the highest level through higher education, outreach and community education, advocacy and public discussions. My key activities by category were:

Planning and Infrastructure

- Led formation of a centralized communications team and created and managed strategies and practices, internal and external communications plans, marketing plans, and advertising schedules
- Updated and documented brand strategy and practices in an Internal Resource Guide
- Launched new website in concert with contracted designer and web programmer

Writing, Publishing and Editorial

- Wrote executive correspondence, articles, marketing copy and general information copy
- Served as Editor of The Frank Lloyd Wright Quarterly, a national publication devoted to exploration of Frank Lloyd Wright's legacy of work
- Developed editorial ideas and curated articles with scholars and freelance writers

Fundraising

- Wrote grants and corporate solicitations
- Served as a senior member of planning team for cultivation events
- Planned and executed end-of-year giving plan for Membership

Marketing and Public Relations

- Wrote releases and established strong working relationships with local, regional and national media
- Created concept and copy, collaborating with designers on all print and online collateral pieces
- Integrated successful social media strategies for Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation building its social media following from 100 followers to over 80,000 within 9 months
- Served as spokesperson for media inquiries

Budget and Financial Management

- Created communications budget and tracked expenses (\$400,000)
- Worked collaboratively with program managers on managing allocations related to communications within departmental budgets

Human Resources Management

- Managed 2 full-time designers, 1 full-time communications associate, and freelance consultants and specialists contracted for project work

Managing Director (2008-2012)

Sunset Playhouse • Elm Grove, WI

Served as Management and Artistic leader of Sunset Playhouse, a 52-year-old community arts theatre producing in two performance spaces and offering a year-round education and children's theatre touring program. During my tenure with the organization, I successfully increased the theatre's operating budget from \$580,000 to \$700,000 and expanded programming. Key accomplishments by category included:

Strategic Planning

- Developed and successfully implemented plan for sustainability, redefining and refocusing staffing and volunteer structure
- Successfully established brand identity and oversaw implementation of all brand identifiers (logo, artwork, ad copy)

Programming

- Planned, programmed and produced a season of plays, musicals, cabaret events and readings (21 live productions annually)

Fundraising

- Solicited new trustees for Board of Directors with strong community ties
- Successfully executed annual and capital giving campaigns that surpassed goals
- Developed long-term sustainable relationships with foundation executives, corporate giving planners, and individual donors
- Motivated staff, patrons and volunteers to meet matching grant challenges
- Worked collaboratively with Board volunteers on individual and corporate giving solicitations

Marketing and Public Relations

- Implemented a new, more robust and sophisticated system of external communications
- Cultivated new relationships with local media
- Guest speaker at Rotary, Kiwanis, university, business association and high school special events
- Created and gave presentations on use of social media as a benefit to small businesses

Budget and Financial Management

- Created and managed all operational budgets
- Negotiated commercial loan on building owned by organization

Human Resources Management

- Managed a staff of 10 full-time professionals and 200 volunteers

Producing Artistic Director (1997-2006)

Bialystock & Bloom • Milwaukee, WI

Founded and managed Bialystock & Bloom Theatre Company, a popular professional theatre group that was a fixture on the Milwaukee arts scene for 11 years. Key achievements included:

- Managed a \$350,000 operational budget in company's final season
- Fostered growth of company from a transient, late-night theatre troupe to a professional company employing a mix of Equity and non-Equity performers producing an annual 5-play subscription series
- Established important local, regional and national connections with directors, playwrights and technical artists
- Directed over 40 stage productions
- Interviewed and hired artisans and technicians for production and presentation work
- Negotiated contracts with Actors Equity Association
- Developed sponsorships with groups such as Miller Brewing, Sanford Restaurant Group, and Point Brewing Company
- Planned all marketing and a series of special fundraising initiatives and events

Marketing and Development Manager (1995-1997)

Next Act Theatre • Milwaukee, WI

Served as key member of staff of mid-size Equity theatre company producing contemporary plays for Milwaukee audiences. I was responsible for writing all media releases, grant requests and marketing appeals. Developed all print collateral pieces with freelance designers and coordinated photo shoots for archival and promotional uses.

Assistant to The Managing Director (1993-1995)

Milwaukee Repertory Theater • Milwaukee, WI

I served as Assistant to Managing Director Sara O'Connor in her final years as administrative leader of Milwaukee Repertory Theater. Wrote executive correspondence, helped prepare materials for Board distribution, completed and processed contracts and gave general administrative support.

RELATED EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS

- Served as **The Pfister Narrator**, the in-house writer for the Historic Pfister Hotel
- **Head Writer** for HOTEL MILWAUKEE, a bi-monthly one-hour radio variety show on Wisconsin Public Radio
- Published **author, columnist** and **arts journalist** (writing samples available upon request)
- **Directed and coordinated special events** such as Gathering on The Green, a collaborative arts presentation of The Milwaukee Ballet, Florentine Opera Company and Skylight Opera
- **Freelance Stage Director** (resume available upon request)
- **Equity Actor** (resume available upon request)
- **Public speaker** and sought after arts advocate and mediator

AWARDS AND HONORS

- Neighbor of The Week – Bay View Community Association (2008)
- Milwaukee Business Journal – “40 Under 40” (2001)
- Panelist on state of the American Theatre with monologist Mike Daisy during his New York run of HOW THEATRE FAILED AMERICA
- Past member of steering committee for American Association of Community Theatre National Management Conferences

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Arts in Theatre Administration and Directing, New York University Gallatin School for Individualized Study (1992)

PERSONAL

I am married to opera and theatre director Paula Suozzi and am father to daughters, Dorothea (13) and Carmela (10). I once ran a marathon but now am content with shorter distances and fewer running shoe purchases.