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# FOREWORD

One of my favorite quotes is, “Talent is the constant desire to practice.”

I’ve had the privilege of working in casting for the past thirteen years, and I think one of the best ways to practice is to be consistently learning. I’ve always been an advocate of actors continuously remaining a student of their craft. That’s one of the biggest reasons why I’m excited to write this foreword. When Arthur told me that he was writing this book, I knew it would be an excellent tool for all actors and artists looking to thrive! Arthur has had great success managing and representing actors, and I’m thrilled that he’s put some of those lessons and principles into this book!

Arthur’s straight-to-the-point approach is very much needed in the acting arena. So often, we focus on the craft and the technical aspects of mastering a performance, but we don’t consider how vital the “mindset business” is to actors’ and artists’ success! I particularly love the chapter about playing out the end before the beginning. So many actors want success but have not detailed what a successful acting career looks like for them. Following the steps in this book will help you rethink your approach to acting and your artistic career.

This book contains keys that are not only principles for

x **ARTHUR G. SMITH**

actors, but these are principles for LIFE. I know that one of the keys to succeeding as an actor is leading a full, balanced, and purposeful life. I'm grateful that Arthur took the time to write this book, and I pray that this book sets you on a path of breakthroughs, bookings, and blessings!

—Rhavynn Drummer  
*Head of Casting, Tyler Perry Studios*

# PREFACE

I was inspired to write this book after reading Grant Cardone's *The Millionaire Booklet: How to Get Super Rich*. If you have not read it, I strongly encourage you to do so, especially if you, like me, aspire to be super-rich. That booklet recommends ten basic principles to becoming a millionaire or multimillionaire, whichever you prefer!

One of the fundamental principles mentioned in the booklet is the ability and willingness to help people. "If you want to make a billion dollars, simply help a billion people," Grant states. What a profound statement. I thought about that for days on end: What is it that I can offer people to help them? And then it occurred to me that my greatest strength lies in my ability to lead and inspire people! It is in that spirit that this book is written. I love helping people achieve their objectives, and I especially enjoy assisting creatives.

More on that shortly.

When I was approximately twelve years old, growing up in Atlanta, my father committed suicide. He was a Vietnam War veteran and suffered PTSD from the effects of Agent Orange. My mother, an educator, and a newly single mom, sought out various community organizations for my brother and me to be involved. She chose the Atlanta graduate chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. to help guide us. One

particular weekend Darryl M. Bell, an actor from the NBC sitcom *A Different World* and member of the fraternity, came to address one of the leadership classes held for our group. He talked about the pursuit of one's goals in the face of adversity. His message moved me, and it changed my world. He signed my March of Dimes hat, which I still have to this day, and I credit that moment, in no small part, to pointing me toward a career in entertainment.

Years later, I started my talent management company, AGS Media. I count this as one of my greatest joys in life. Helping a first-time actor book a feature film, or having an industry veteran land a lead role in a TV show, is of equal importance to me. Suffice it to say that I love being a talent manager in the entertainment industry. So, if you are unfamiliar with what a talent manager is or does, please watch the television show *Entourage*. Try to view the entire series, but, minimally, check out a few episodes from season one. The character Eric "E." Murphy, remarkably played by Kevin Connolly, personifies the job to a tee.

As a talent manager, one of my roles is to help clients establish strategic directions to think beyond a particular moment while not disappearing from the experiences of that moment, be they good, bad, or indifferent. The entertainment industry, much like life, is often met with failure, and temporary disappointment, even for established or "named" actors. But there are lots of highs too! One must be willing to experience both.

I'm particularly sympathetic to helping women, people

of color, and underrepresented voices. I certainly want to help them break into the entertainment business, but I am confident the principles and strategies in this book, properly applied, will work for anyone.

As Shawn Carter, my favorite musician, once rhymed, “Over here, we measure success by how many people successful next to you/Here we say you’re broke if everybody is broke except for you! Boss!”

My goal for aspiring creatives is to:

1. Help you understand how the entertainment business operates
2. Help you perfect your craft
3. Help you accomplish your objectives of starting and maintaining a career in the entertainment industry

Equally important, I want to help you to be great! So, let’s go!