

8 Ways To Maximize Your Booking Rate

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By David H. Lawrence XVII

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8 Ways To Maximize Your Booking Rate

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I wonder why they say that sort of thing on blank pages. Or even have intentionally blank pages. Which aren't really blank if they have that title.

It's usually that way in government documents. Which explains a lot.

At this very moment, I feel so much like that guy Chuck Lorre, that produces Big Bang Theory and a million other TV shows and writes funny stuff on his end credit single card. He even uses my font, American Typewriter.

OK.

On with the book.

8 Ways To Maximize Your Booking Rate

Intro

Hi! I'm David H. Lawrence XVII. I'll be your author and narrator for this VOHeroes eBook. As to why me, well ... I've been an actor and VO artist for most of my life, beginning in my teens.

I also teach award-winning voiceover classes around the world. I teach the **art**, the **commerce**, the **science** and the **mindset** of storytelling. Each is extraordinarily important to the success of your career: fall down in any one or more, and you will fail.

I love helping actors, on camera, on stage and on mike, make the most of their storytelling practice.

(Yes, I refer to this as a **practice**. Why let doctors and lawyers have all the fun?)

I often tell my clients and students that **my job is to defend the success of their careers**. That means not only identifying and steering them towards best practices, but also helping them avoid the pitfalls that can derail their efforts.

So, what I'd like you to do is have an open mind about what I'm about to tell you. It's not a bunch of academic classroom talk; I've spent decades both working in studios and watching others work in studios.

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I've seen people do little tiny things, and really big things, to increase their booking rate.

And I want to share those best practices, those world class habits with you.

I want you to have the best voiceover practice you're able to achieve.

And although I could spend a year with you in my curriculum giving you training on what to do (and I can, actually, at <https://voheroes.com/pro/>), I thought I'd spend some time showing you what the great voiceover artists do when they approach the business.

I have a definition of success I'd like to share with you.

It takes just three simple actions:

1. Identify what **works**.
2. Identify what **doesn't work**
3. Do **more** of what works, and **less** of what doesn't.

If you follow that plan, and really pay attention to the observable realities around you, you can't help but experience more success than someone who fumbles around, determined to do it their way, blissfully unaware of a better way.

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You might find yourself saying, “Wow. I made that mistake. I guess it’s too late to fix it.”

Wrong.

It’s never too late to improve on your processes and your product.

I’m here to help you do just that. I’ve got eight very real, very actionable improvements you can make right now, today, while reading this book.

Let’s get started—and let’s create some real success for your VO practice.

Hope this helps.

David

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1. Make The Numbers Work For You

If you're on any audition site, like Voice123.com, voquent.com or acx.com, you are given the opportunity to audition for hundreds of projects each week.

The numbers might tempt you to audition for everything you can.

Don't.

If you carefully select those projects that are right up your alley, and ignore the rest, you'll stand a far better chance of booking those projects.

Don't waste your time trying to stretch yourself. Play to your strengths and to your brand.

The right project is so much easier to book than the wrong project.

Plus, on Voice123 in particular, if you audition for too many of the projects they send you, they'll start to notice, consider you greedy, and throttle back the number of projects they send you.

Remember: **make the numbers work for you.**

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2. Make Bolder Choices in Fewer Takes

As I direct people in class, and in demo and production sessions, I really appreciate the talent that make quick and accurate adjustments for me.

Some make very minor adjustments, and we just have to do a lot more of them to get to where we would have gotten anyway.

Take that idea, and use it in your auditions.

Here's what I mean.

Say you listen back to your first take, and it really isn't speaking to a large enough space – the script calls for you to be outside, in a stadium during a football game half-time. When you listen, you sound more like you're in a studio.

(This actually happened to me on a Hardee's/Carl's Jr. spot I booked a few years ago. The producer said I was the only one he heard that had the right (LOUD) volume level.)

So, on your second take, instead of raising your voice just a wee bit to see how that fits, make the bold choice, and put yourself in that stadium where you'd have to yell to be heard. Do it NOW rather than 5 takes down the road.

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You'll get your audition done faster, with the same awesome quality of performance.

And that will leave you more time to move on to other audition opportunities, raising the chances that you'll book more often.

Remember: **make bolder choices in fewer takes.**

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3. Make Sure Your Auditions Sound Amazing

This example is part of the **science** aspect of your voice over career.

And for this, you need to be ruthless.

To the best of your ability, get the best gear you can get, make your room as quiet as you can, and be relentless in cleaning up your recordings.

Oh, and perform better than anyone in the world while you're at it.

It's tempting to cheap out on your gear, to save a few bucks on your mic, but all that will do is frustrate you when you listen back. Make it a point to get the right mic for your work.

It's also tempting to record in a room that isn't as quiet as it needs to be, and that means playing the mic closer than you might want to to cover that noise.

Kill the fan, the fridge, the lights, whatever. Add foam or drapes.

Move the dog out of your studio. Move to a quieter room or a closet.

Pull a comforter over your head. Do what you need to do.

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Don't leave room noise at the tips and tails of your MP3 files. Trim your auditions so that they are clean, start right away, and don't leave a trace of noise at the end.

Encode your MP3s at a reasonable rate (128k mono and above) to show off that lovely voice of yours. Don't think that saving file size is important to anyone these days. It's not.

And there are a million other production and performance details that bad habits can create and creep into your process.

Stamp those out one by one, and slowly and surely raise the bar on the technical quality of your auditions (and of your work).

Remember: **make sure your auditions sound amazing.**

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4. Stop Trying To Figure Out What They Want

This is a big one. And one that's really difficult to let go of for some talent.

They read the breakdown, and they see the phrase “relatable,” or “Morgan Freeman-esque,” and they immediately make the mistake of worrying about what the casting people want.

Don't worry too much about that – just give them **you**.

You wouldn't have been asked to audition if they didn't hear something in your brand that they might be able to use.

So give them you.

They might not even know what they want – that happens far more than you might think.

So just give them you. Bring your brand to their VO shindig and wow them with it. Don't try to be what you think they want – just be you.

Remember: **stop trying to figure out what they want.**

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5. Have A Bias For Action

A great way to have more time, to audition more, to increase your chances of booking, is to get your work done ASAP, not later or whenever.

The moment an audition comes in, drop what you're doing and do it.

The moment a pick-up comes in, do it.

The moment a booking happens, voice it.

Don't wait. Because you want as much freedom as you can to spend your time the way you **want** to, not that you **have** to.

Say your Internet access goes out. It never happens on a schedule, it happens unexpectedly.

Say your hard drive crashes. Or there are massive changes in a script. Or you catch a cold and can't match your past voicing.

You can avoid panic and client disappointment by not waiting to do the work.

Remember: **have a bias for action.**

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6. Keep Your Marketing Tools Up To Date

When potential clients come to your profiles on casting sites, or review your resume, what are they seeing?

The one time you updated everything three years ago?

Or are they seeing your up-to-the-moment credits as they should be?

If you aren't showing your best, most recent credits, you may be shooting yourself in the foot: producers want to work with people who are working.

And they'll look at you with more respect if you look like you pay attention to your housekeeping.

Get in the habit of updating your tools when you get a copy of your work, or when you get the payment. Go to every site and update your experience. And resume.

And just to be sure, create a monthly reminder to sweep up those times when you forget to update your demos, resume, profiles etc.

Remember: **keep your marketing tools up to date.**

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7. Put Your Slate To Work

They say that you only have one chance to create a first impression.

And what's that first impression when you audition for someone?

Your slate.

See, it's not just a brief, throwaway moment where you identify who's speaking...

It's actually a golden opportunity to make an amazing, positive impression on your potential employer. Don't waste that opportunity.

Truth is, I've heard thousands of auditions in the time I've been working in VO, and I'm just gobsmacked at how lazy, how uncaring, unfeeling, and throwaway many of them sound.

Your slate is the first thing your client hears. Don't squander that moment: be friendly (but not too friendly), brief (but not too brief), and give them the impression that you'd be easy and lovely to work with.

Not that you're an entitled actor who couldn't care less.

Remember: **put your slate to work.**

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8. Follow Up With Existing Clients

This is a biggie. And it's part of the **commerce** of running your VO practice.

Once you do get booked, do you ever follow up with those people and let them know you're available for more work?

When I ask that question in class, I rarely get a raised hand.

It's a no-brainer.

These are a very select group of people, who you've already spent time and effort convincing them to hire you.

And they did.

They don't have to be sold again – they (hopefully) had a great experience with you already.

So, take advantage of that.

Create a follow up plan that has you touching base with them after the project is produced, as it airs, once it's finished.

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Then, get in touch every few months or so to re-connect, ask them what they're up to, let them know what you're doing, and to subtly let them know you're available for more work.

I've been working for a production house in Minneapolis for the last 12 years, voicing, among other things, a monthly audio version of a newsletter for a client of theirs, a credit union.

And I always make it a point to find out what else they are doing. As a result, just being on their radar, they've booked me for 6 or 7 project with their other clients. Some I had to audition for. Some not.

It's a lot easier than the initial process of convincing them that this stranger they knew nothing about should be trusted with that first job.

I'm a known quantity to them.

Become that known quantity to your clients, and treat them like colleagues. Help them hire you back.

Remember: **follow up with existing clients.**

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Thank You.

I want to thank you for spending some time with me, exploring 8 ways voice over talent can maximize their booking rate. And, of course, by “voice over talent,” I mean **you**.

My goal was to open your eyes to ways to increase your booking rate, converting more auditions into paid work, that you might be overlooking, ways you might not be taking full advantage of, and ways you might not be thinking about.

I hope that helped.

How Else Can I Help You?

How else can I help you? I teach a full curriculum of award-winning classes, and I'd love to teach you.

<https://voheroes.com/learn/>

Start there, and you can become one of my Pro members, and get that full curriculum in voice over with monthly instruction, special benefits, discounts and instant access to me, whenever you like.

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I hope you will take this advice I've given you, ask me for more when you need it at davidlawrence@gmail.com, and create a profitable and satisfying voice over practice.

Hope this helps.

David

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Who Is This Guy?



After a 30+ year career in radio, David H. Lawrence XVII moved to television, and has been seen on ABC's epic series LOST, CBS' legendary CSI and military thriller The Unit and on The Mentalist, NBC's spy comedy Chuck, Good Luck Charlie and ANT Farm on Disney, Touch and The Finder on FOX, and is best known as the creepy evil puppet master Eric Doyle on NBC's smash hit Heroes.

His film career includes on-camera and VO work on Pixar's CARS 3, Men in Black III, Pizza Man, The Changeling, The Hulk, Iron Man, Percy Jackson, Unstoppable, Too Big to Fail, A Special Relationship and countless others.

Lawrence helps actors create their own voiceover careers with his award winning VOHeroes (formerly VO2GoGo) voice consultancy, and was BACK STAGE's Readers' Choice for Favorite VO Teacher and Favorite VO Demo Producer for the last four years. He also teaches voicework workshops at various studios around Los Angeles.

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Lawrence has voiced over 180 audiobooks, and teaches specialized courses in audiobook production, with a concentration on ACX and Audible work. His ACX Master Class students have produced over 3500 books to date in the Audible marketplace.

Lawrence created the 5-star rated industry standard Rehearsal app for the iPhone, iPad and iPod Touch, allowing actors and VO talent to have a digital rehearsal studio right in their pocket.

On radio, the Emmy-award winning and Clio-nominated Lawrence hosted The David Lawrence Show, Online Tonight, and anchored The Net Music Countdown, heard on over 300 radio stations and both XM and Sirius Satellite Radio. Lawrence is widely considered to be the very first podcaster, having delivered daily RealAudio and MP3 "podcasts" via email from early 1994.

To explore the voice over classes David offers, visit:

<https://voheroes.com/learn/>