

SOCIAL CAPITAL

Worksheet for John Heffron | The Laughs You Deserve (Episode 692)

A successful comedian knows how to generate rapport with his or her audience in a way that seems natural and off the cuff to the casual observer. But this, like any other skill, comes with its own expenditures of time and effort that can take years to master.

Comedian John Heffron, who got his big break when he won the second season of NBC's *Last Comic Standing*, had been practicing comedy for years before he got his time in the spotlight -- and he's never taken this victory as permission to put the brakes on his comedic progress since.

On [episode 692](#), John uses his nearly 30 years behind the mic to help us read and work a crowd.

SOCIAL CAPITAL

NLP vs. Stage Fright

Whether we've performed in a grade school play or presented a pitch at the office, most of us know what it's like to have butterflies in the stomach before addressing an audience -- and even someone who's been at it as long as John experiences this.

To overcome the initial surge of stage fright that comes from hearing his name announced and enter the scene with a cool head, John uses a bit of NLP (neuro-linguistic programming) not just backstage, but throughout the day as preparation.

First, he makes a fist with his thumb at the center.

"I squeeze that thumb...any time I'm in a good mood or when I come in the house and my dogs are all excited to see me," says John. "It's almost like a bank account, where I'm putting positive...energy into that thumb. It's conditioning.

SOCIAL CAPITAL

So before the show...I take a moment...and do that as I'm walking on stage."

Have you ever used some form of NLP to modify your own behavior? If so, what was it, and did it have the intended effect?

If you've never tried it, can you think of a behavior you'd like to change that might benefit from NLP? Reminder: it might seem hokey at first, but some people find it highly effective.

SOCIAL CAPITAL

Anchor Management

Past the introduction and throughout the body of his act, John will move to different parts of the stage depending on the material he's doing to psychologically shape the audience's reactions -- this is known as anchoring. He'll have one spot where he delivers tried-and-true jokes he's done a thousand times. Another spot is for trying out new material. And still another spot is reserved for engaging in two-way communication with the audience. When he's ready to switch gears, he simply moves to another spot.

"Anchoring with standup is so huge; everybody does it, but nobody really notices," says John.

This technique can even be applied to gestures meant to provoke a certain response. For instance, John points out how fellow comedian Ron White is known for holding a drink onstage and taking a sip when he's delivered a punchline so people instinctively know when to laugh.

SOCIAL CAPITAL

Caution: done poorly, anchoring can come off as obviously manipulative and prompt a response directly opposite to the one intended.

How might you use anchoring in your own interactions?

Can you think of a time when someone's used anchoring on you? Was it effective?

SOCIAL CAPITAL

Tell, Don't Ask

Rather than coming out on stage and asking an audience some variation of the tired "How y'all doing tonight?" question, John takes the initiative by validating the crowd's wise decision to come to the show, expressing his appreciation for that decision, and letting them know that they sound like they're having a great time.

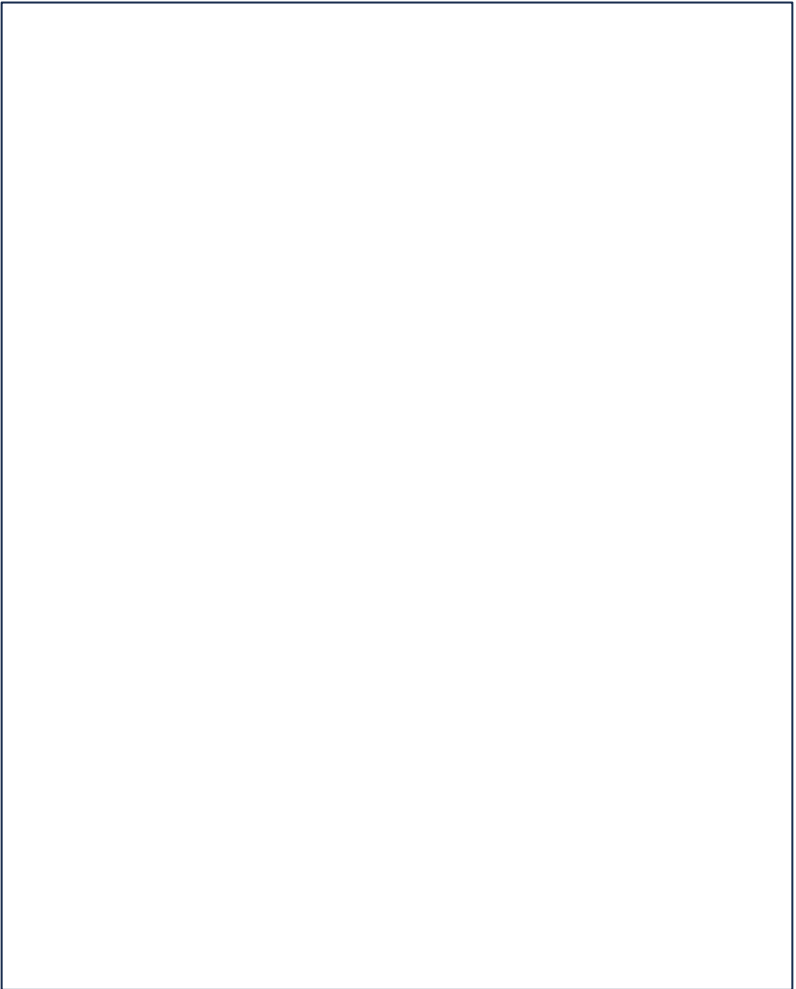
In this way, he genuinely guides a positive reaction from the audience. And when he tells a story, he prefaces it with the seed of an idea that makes it personal for each member of that audience.

For instance, before a bit about his own father on a childhood family trip, he might begin by saying, "Do you remember how your dad looked the night before you went on vacation? Think about that guy for a second."

"After my shows," says John, "I would have people come up to me going, 'That bit you did about traveling with your dad? You described my dad perfectly!'"

SOCIAL CAPITAL

The next time you tell someone a story, try to guide their perception by prefacing it in a way that makes it personal. Do they find your story more vivid and relatable as a result? Jot down your experience here.

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for the user to write their experience.

SOCIAL CAPITAL

The Charisma Pattern

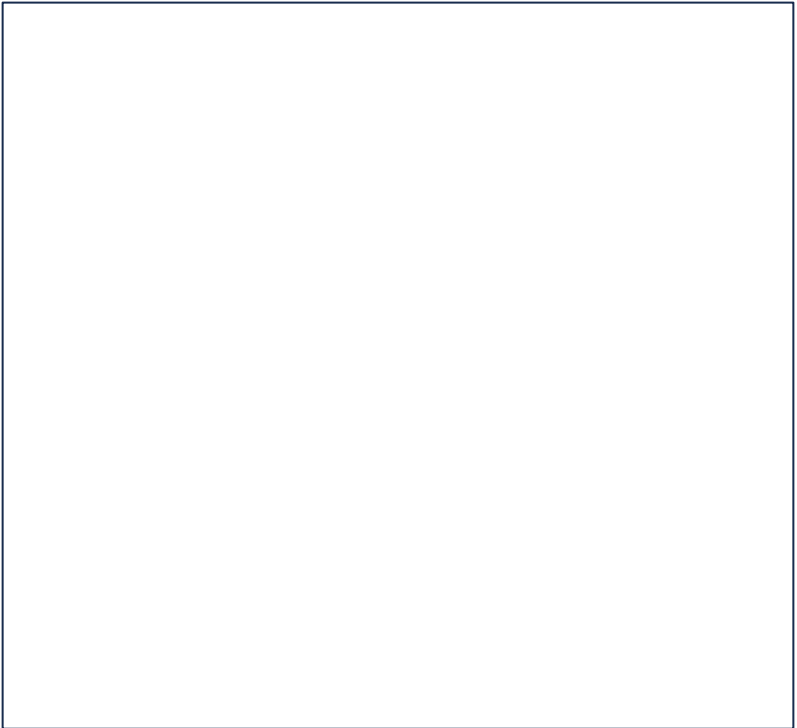
John says there are three archetypes that comprise any audience, and it's your job as a speaker or entertainer to ensure that each is paying attention to you. There are many ways you can remember these three, but since John is from the world of comedy, he presents three archetypes you might find in a typical comedy club: people who are high on pot, people who are drunk on booze, and people who are cranked up on cocaine.

"When I'm on stage, what I try to do is move in and out of [the energy level of] those three my whole show," says John. "Because if you stay in one too long, you lose the other two."

What three archetypes do you observe in your daily life? Are they different between the home and the office?

SOCIAL CAPITAL

Do you find yourself able to hold the attention of all three archetypes in a group scenario? Do John's methods work for you? If not, why do you think they don't, and what seems to work better for you?



Full show notes and resources for this episode [can be found here.](#)

SOCIAL CAPITAL

MEET THE ART OF CHARM TEAM



Jordan Harbinger is a Wall Street lawyer turned talk show host, social dynamics expert, and entrepreneur.

He's the owner and co-founder of The Art of Charm, a consulting and coaching company — as well as a top 50 podcast on iTunes — which he's been hosting for over a decade. Jordan has spent several years abroad in Europe and the developing world, including South America, Eastern Europe, and the Middle East, and speaks several languages. He has also worked for various governments and NGOs overseas, traveled through war zones, and been kidnapped — twice.

He'll tell you the only reason he's still alive and kicking is because of his ability to talk his way into (and out of), just about any type of situation.

SOCIAL CAPITAL

THE ART OF CHARM PODCAST

Our Top 50 iTunes Podcast will teach you to:

- Become more charismatic in any situation
- Master your career by becoming a “super-connector”
- Revamp your love life and intimate relationships with reborn confidence

Popular Toolbox Episodes

- + AoC Toolbox | Perfecting Your Elevator Pitch (Episode 550)
- + AoC Toolbox | Attraction (Episode 406)
- + AoC Toolbox | Social Capital Basics (Episode 469)

**Subscribe in iTunes or
Android**



SOCIAL CAPITAL

MEET OUR SUPPORT TEAM



MJ



KRISTY



MADA



AUDRA



BROCK



GENE

SOCIAL CAPITAL

MEET OUR SUPPORT TEAM

Chat with us live on
our website any
time,
or email us

support@theartofcharm.com

SOCIAL CAPITAL

JOIN THE CHALLENGE

Join our free 30-day challenge to help crush your social anxiety

- Daily techniques to control more outcomes at home and work
- Command more respect from your friends, team, and network
- Video tactics to create deeper connections
- Learn the ability to walk up to ANYONE and start a conversation

theartofcharm.com/challenge

SOCIAL CAPITAL

JOIN THE CHALLENGE

30-DAY CHALLENGE CALENDAR

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
3	4 CHALLENGE 1	5 Facebook Check-In	6 CHALLENGE 2	7	8 Weekend Challenge	9
10	11 CHALLENGE 3	12 Facebook Check-In	13 CHALLENGE 4	14	15 Weekend Journal Activity	16
17	18 CHALLENGE 5	19 Facebook Check-In	20 CHALLENGE 6	21	22 Hobby Immersion Weekend	23
24	25 CHALLENGE 7	26 Facebook Check-In	27 CHALLENGE 8	28	29 Weekend Challenge	30
1	2 CHALLENGE 9	3 Facebook Check-In	4 CHALLENGE 10	5	6 Challenge COMPLETE!	7

Get Started

theartofcharm.com/challenge

SOCIAL CAPITAL

Social Capital
14525 SW Millikan Way #34470
Beaverton, OR 97005
United States

1.888.413.7177

support@theartofcharm.com

**SHARE THIS WITH
YOUR FRIENDS!**



Share This