**Question 1: How did Orson Welles get his start?**

**Answer:** Using a small inheritance he gained from his father, Orson Welles started in UK theater. He traveled to Ireland, where he became a lead actor and director, only via insistence (by himself) that he was a reputed director from America. When he returned to America, he insisted that he was a great director from Ireland and got jobs. Welles created the perception that he was already great.

**Question 2: What similarities are there between Orson Welles and Jerry Weintraub?**

**Answer:** Both Welles and Weintraub were very charming (and charismatic) and knew how to get the attention of their listener. If after all, they couldn’t grab the attention of their listener, how could they grab the attention of four-hundred movie goers, in a dark theater room? It was also pure chutzpa followed up with great appeal, and more importantly, followed up with great storytelling techniques, that gave both the opportunity and finally helped propel Welles and Weintraub in to the limelight in their respective careers.

**Question 3: How was Jerry Weintraub hired at Warner Brothers?**

**Answer:** According to legend, Weintraub was waiting in an interview room to be interviewed as a production assistant. He was the only one in the waiting room when a secretary popped in and asked for a “Joe”. Weintraub raised his hand and interviewed to be a development executive. Through confidence and charisma, Weintraub landed the gig. His guest appearances in “The Firm” and the “Oceans 11” films show him to be a very firm, yet charming and influential individual.

**Question 4: Aside from shaking hands confidently, what else can you do to convince people that you know what you’re talking about?**

**Answer:** Showing evidence of preparation, maturity, using the listener’s name constantly, making eye contact, using confident body language, quickly checking the listeners’ surroundings and making them comfortable, and, most importantly, showing a keen and vested interest in the listeners and their needs, combining that with what my pitch can provide them, will help me convince people that I know what I’m talking about. Preparation is the key. Preparation will help me build the ability to properly influence my listeners.

**Preparation for Your Journey – Essay**

**Read "Shooting to Kill" by Christine Vachon and write a 1000 word article on the producer’s role.**

The producer’s role starts during development of a project and ends when the film has found an audience. We have seen that the producer is the head of any film, while the director is the soul of the film. However, to ensure that the director becomes the soul of the project and is protected from external (negative) influences, the producer throws a veil around all the artists (director included), to ensure the film is driven to completion and finally finds an audience.

During development, the producer ensures that the proper script is picked up. After the script has been approved/selected, the producer ensures that the financing for the project is procured. After financing, the producer looks for cast via casting directors and a line producer. Then the director and crew come in. The producer is available during several months of preparation work, during production and during editing. The producer does all of this, under the big umbrella of the almighty dollar, constant union shakedowns, catering to the distributors’ needs and most importantly, by not compromising the director’s vision for the project.

The mindset required to ensure all phases of the film is completed properly, is that of paranoia, which drives the producer to be always prepared (it’s really a positive trait of being very vigilant), problem-solving, which helps efficiently handle all aspects of film-making, including people-management and resource-management (including assets) and delegation of authority, ability to prioritize on a moments’ notice (quick-thinking on feet), and most importantly, to stay calm and provide the artists, actors, heads of departments and the director, a sense of security, so that the project gets delivered properly.

During development phase, the producer thinks about what audience the project/script is going to cater to. This helps determine the next step: budgeting. A large audience can warrant a large budget, while a miniscule, niche market, will take a micro-budget in to consideration. This also helps the producer make an educated guess about how to handle marketing, which comes much later in the phase of film-making. The budgeting also helps keep track of cost reports, during production, if the line producer does the job properly. During budgeting, the producer checks all options related to using union (or not) actors/actresses. Union (or not) crew members. Shooting in locations that require unions (or not). These considerations and much more (locations, wardrobe, make-up, equipment) are taken in to consideration depending on the script, and spelled out clearly in the budget.

After proper budgeting, the producer sets out to procure financing for the project. Dealing with talent agencies and casting directors to find the right fit for the project, pitch it to several hundreds of financiers, finding other key producer, whose name, if attached to the project, can bring in more financing, networking to ensure that the film is properly funded, are all things that the producer does for the film.

After the actors and director are attached to the film, the producer (with input from director) will hire all the artists required for a film: director of photography, production designer, costume designer. Additionally, more crew members in the directorial department and production department are hired, based on the size of the production. The producer oversees these hires in very excruciating detail. At times, some action items are delegated but that comes to anyone, only after earning the trust of the producer. The producer ensures that the proper chemistry exists between various departments on the film set. The most important being, the relationship between the director, the assistant director and the director of photography. This informal triumvirate can either make or break a production, and so, finding the proper team with the proper chemistry goes a long way to help the film. The producer always asks, “is this person going to help the film or someone else?”. In other words, anyone with a selfish agenda is to be excluded from the film-making process.

Using tech scouting, the producer also oversees the preparation work required by all the heads of departments (along with the director). This is vital to ensure the production goes smoothly in terms of time and money.

During production, the producer is only a stone-throw away from the artists to help with any logistical issues. Most importantly, the producer remains calm during the entire process, no matter how difficult any given situation might be. The bottom line for the producer, is to provide an environment, where all the artists can thrive for the project. So, remaining calm and exuding that sense of calmness is vital for a producer. The producer also differentiates between a problem that can be resolved (that is, one that does not halt production) and a crisis (that is, one that will halt the production). The producer is also in-charge of all the safety of everyone involved in the production of the project.

After production is wrapped up, the producer aligns all the resources required to finish the post production process for the project. If allocated in the budget, a post-production supervisor is hired. If ADR is required, the producer oversees that it happens smoothly by ensuring all the required parties show up. The producer also hires a music director, a sound mixer and finally, pays all the licenses required, to play music copyrighted by others (if any).

If the talent and the director can be called artistic ambassadors for the film, the producer will be called the financial and logistical ambassador for the film. If the talent pulls the film from the front (the tangible portion of the film, for the audience), the producer pushes the film from the back scenes (a role that most audience members don’t fully understand). The producer makes deals to ensure the film gets proper screening in film festivals, gets proper distribution rights, is properly marketed and that the vision of the director, is finally delivered to the audience.

No wonder then, that the Oscar for Best Picture is handed to the Producer of the film – the head of the film.