

= Did I Stutter ? =

" Did I Stutter ? " is the 16th episode of the fourth season of the American comedy television series The Office , and the show 's sixty @-@ ninth episode overall . Written by Brent Forrester and Justin Spitzer , and directed by Randall Einhorn , the episode first aired in the United States on May 1 , 2008 on NBC .

The series depicts the everyday lives of office employees in the Scranton , Pennsylvania branch of the fictional Dunder Mifflin Paper Company . In this episode , Michael Scott (Steve Carell) is shocked when Stanley Hudson (Leslie David Baker) yells at him , and is unsure how to handle the situation . Michael tries to assert his power over Stanley , by pretending to fire him , but that only makes matters worse . The two eventually end up alone in the office . Meanwhile , Jim Halpert (John Krasinski) receives a warning about his job performance , Pam Beesley (Jenna Fischer) is forced to wear her glasses , and Dwight Schrute (Rainn Wilson) buys Andy Bernard 's (Ed Helms) car .

Originally , episode writers Justin Spitzer and Brent Forrester were supposed to write two separate episodes . However , the effects of the 2007 ? 2008 Writers Guild of America strike forced the two to share an episode . " Did I Stutter ? " contained several pop culture references . It received largely positive reviews from critics , who praised the interaction between Carell and Baker . The episode earned a Nielsen rating of 3 @. @ 9 in the 18 ? 49 demographic , being viewed by 7 @. @ 76 million viewers .

= = Plot = =

Michael Scott (Steve Carell) calls an emergency meeting asking everyone to come up with an idea to " re @-@ invigorate " the office . Michael asks Stanley Hudson (Leslie David Baker) for ideas , but Stanley is preoccupied with a crossword puzzle and says he 's busy . Michael keeps asking him , and Stanley finally snaps at Michael , and says the titular " Did I stutter ? " in a very loud , threatening tone . Michael , who is visibly shaken , ends the meeting . Toby Flenderson (Paul Lieberstein) encourages Michael to take disciplinary action against Stanley , and Michael , initially resistant , decides to pretend to fire him to teach him a lesson . Michael first tells everyone in the office that he is not really firing him , and does so in front of all of them . Stanley responds by threatening to sue him and tell corporate of Michael 's antics . When Michael tells Stanley that the firing was actually an attempt at teaching him a lesson , Stanley is angered and goes on a rant , yelling and insulting Michael . Michael suddenly barks at him to stop it , and tells everyone to leave the office , making everyone think he 's about to berate Stanley . The camera crew sneak back in to film the exchange , where Michael tearfully (much to Stanley 's annoyance) but calmly asks Stanley why he picks on him . Stanley states that he simply does not respect him , and when Michael suggests that Stanley doesn 't know him very well he replies " Michael , I 've known you for a very long time . And the more I 've gotten to know you , the less I 've come to respect you . " Michael then takes an uncharacteristically professional tone with Stanley , and says that , while he accepts that Stanley doesn 't respect him , he can 't take such a disrespectful tone with him , because he is his boss . Stanley responds by saying , " Fair enough , " and the two shake hands .

Pam Beesly (Jenna Fischer) , after spending the night at " a friend 's " (Jim 's) house , forgot her contact lens solution , so she must wear her glasses all day . She finds it difficult to handle Michael 's criticism and Kevin 's sexual advances , and spends the rest of the day without her glasses , reducing her productivity . Ryan Howard (B. J. Novak) comes to Dunder Mifflin 's Scranton branch , and after a talk with Toby , Ryan tells Jim Halpert (John Krasinski) that he is giving him an official warning about his job performance . Ryan denies that his action is motivated by Jim 's previous complaints to David Wallace , saying he thrives on constructive criticism (while Toby 's comments to the documentary crew indicate he 's not upset about the warning , owing to his envy of Jim 's relationship with Pam) . Meanwhile , Andy Bernard (Ed Helms) is selling his 2001 Nissan Xterra for \$ 8 @, @ 700 , and Dwight Schrute (Rainn Wilson) pressures him into selling it for \$ 1 @, @ 500 less than the asking price , because according to Dwight , " (the) car is crap " . Dwight assures

Andy that he will only use it as a wagon and dragged by a mule on Dwight 's beet farm . Andy then sells it to Dwight , who , in a passive @-@ aggressive method of getting back at him for dating Angela Martin (Angela Kinsey) , washes it and posts a sign asking for \$ 9 @,@ 995 for the vehicle , which upsets Andy when he finds Dwight 's advertisement posted on the cabinet in the office kitchen . Dwight declares that it is already on Ebay which he claims is the subject of a three @-@ way bidding war .

= = Production = =

The episode was the fourth episode of the series directed by Randall Einhorn . Einhorn had previously directed the third season episodes " Initiation " , " Ben Franklin " and " Product Recall " , as well as the ten summer webisodes " The Accountants " . It was Einhorn 's idea to show the cameramen sneaking back into the office after Michael told everyone to leave . This aspect of the episode was praised by fans as wells as the cast and crew . Brent Forrester , the co @-@ writer of the episode , noted that Einhorn 's " energy doubled when shooting that " scene .

" Did I Stutter ? " was written by Justin Spitzer and Brent Forrester . Although the two writers initially planned to write separate episodes , the 2007 ? 2008 Writers Guild of America strike forced the two to share an episode . Forrester and Spitzer initially disagreed about what the episode 's title should be . Forrester wanted to name it " Did I Stutter ? " ? a phrase popularized by Judd Nelson 's character Bender in the 1985 film *The Breakfast Club* ? while Spitzer wanted a name like " The Reprimand " or " Insubordination " . Gene Stupnitsky and Lee Eisenberg wrote the scenes featuring Andy and Angela playing Mad Libs . Justin Spitzer called the sequence " amazing " .

In the opening scene in which Michael puts his face in cement , the wet cement that was used was actually putty . The crew was planning to do only one take of Steve Carell putting his face in the putty , so he was instructed to hold his breath as long as he possibly could . But the crew forgot to tell the other actors about that , so during the filming of the scene , the actors thought he was actually stuck and there was a rush to pull him out . Kim M. Ferry , owner of the Nissan Xterra featured in the episode , is the show 's Department Head Hairstylist . After it was used on the show , she decided to sell it on eBay . The listing was first put up on eBay on May 1 , 2008 , the night the episode aired .

The Season Four DVD contains a number of deleted scenes from this episode . Notable cut scenes include Michael trying to convince Jim , Pam , and Kelly , while they are in the break room having lunch that Stanley talks badly about everyone behind their backs , Michael making Pam stand up during the meeting and confessing that she wears glasses , Jim talking to Toby about the warning (in contrast to how Toby seems happy that Jim is getting in trouble during the broadcast episode , here the HR head makes it clear that Jim 's sales performance is good and that Ryan is the sole person who isn 't happy with his work) , and Ryan saying that " going after Jim " is " a risky move " , since CFO David Wallace likes Jim .

= = Cultural references = =

Andy and Angela play Mad Libs , a phrasal template word game where one player prompts another for a list of words to substitute for blanks in a story , usually with funny results . Ryan chides Jim for being a fan of the Philadelphia Eagles , a professional American football team . While Daryl is telling Michael how gang members deal with problems , he mentions that he was a member of the Newsies (the name of a 1992 musical drama) and The Warriors (the gang in the 1979 cult action film of the same name) . Near the end of the episode , Michael does a succession of comedian impressions . These include badly performed spoofs of Rodney Dangerfield , Henny Youngman , Jeff Foxworthy , Sacha Baron Cohen as Borat , and Jerry Seinfeld .

= = Reception = =

" Did I Stutter ? " originally aired on NBC in the United States on May 1 , 2008 . The episode

received 3 @. @ 9 / 10 in the ages 18 ? 49 demographic in the Nielsen ratings . This means that 3 @. @ 9 percent of all households with an 18- to 49 @- @ year @- @ old living in it watched the episode , and ten percent had their televisions tuned to the channel at any point . The episode was watched by 7 @. @ 67 million viewers .

The episode was highly acclaimed by critics , with many praising the performance from Leslie David Baker . Nathan Rabin of the A.V. Club gave the episode an " A " , citing the dynamic between Michael and Stanley as its main strengths . He was also complimentary towards the cold opening and the realistic way in which Michael and Stanley 's confrontation was filmed . Ultimately , Rabin concluded that the interaction between Carell and Baker was reason to " love the Stanley / Michael dynamic " and that the episode " was all about rage and conflict " . M. Giant of Television Without Pity awarded the episode an " A ? " .

Rick Porter of Zap2It said that even though " it (the episode) was long on uncomfortable and even disturbing behavior " and " only out @- @ and @- @ out funny in a few spots " he found himself " respecting it a fair amount at the end " . BuddyTV Senior Writer Oscar Dahl said that " the insubordination of Stanley was a necessary plot point to cover " because " without it , too much Stanley being Stanley becomes unbelievable " . Furthermore , he wrote that there " was a lot of really funny stuff tonight " and highlighted " the scene between Darryl and Michael " due to Robinson 's acting . Aubry D 'Arminio from Entertainment Weekly stated that " Mike 's embarrassment , and his unwillingness at first to admit he is disliked , was very very well played on Carell 's part . " Furthermore , D 'Arminio praised several of the episode 's lines of dialogue and wrote " I cannot even come near to picking a favorite quote [...] for this episode "