

= Business School (The Office) =

" Business School " is the seventeenth episode of the third season of the American comedy television series The Office , and the show 's forty @-@ fifth episode overall . Written by Brent Forrester , and directed by Buffy the Vampire Slayer and Firefly creator Joss Whedon , the episode aired on NBC on February 15 , 2007 .

In the episode , Michael is invited by Ryan to speak to his business school class . When many of the students question the usefulness of paper in a computerized world , Michael attempts to inform the class of how essential paper is . Meanwhile , a bat becomes trapped in the office , leading Dwight and Creed on a mission to protect the employees .

= = Plot = =

Ryan Howard (B. J. Novak) invites Michael Scott (Steve Carell) to speak at his business school class . Michael is excited , but Ryan admits in a talking head interview that he has only invited Michael because his professor promised to bump up the grade of any student who brings his boss into class . During his introduction of Michael to his classmates , Ryan predicts that Dunder Mifflin will become obsolete within five to ten years . However , Michael could not hear him and proceeds to ruin the event with his antics (including tearing pages out of a student 's textbook to prove you " can 't learn from textbooks ") . Michael is then taken aback when one of Ryan 's classmates asks for Michael 's opinion of Ryan 's prediction . Infuriated and hurt , Michael punishes Ryan by relocating his desk to the " annex , " where Kelly Kapoor (Mindy Kaling) works , who babbles uncontrollably in excitement .

Meanwhile , Dwight Schrute (Rainn Wilson) discovers a bat in the ceiling , and accidentally lets it loose into the office , sending the employees scurrying for cover . Stanley immediately goes home . As many of the employees hide , Dwight enlists the help of Creed (Creed Bratton) to expel the bat . Jim Halpert (John Krasinski) exploits Dwight 's paranoia , and pretends that he is turning into a vampire . Dwight eventually catches the bat with a garbage bag after it lands on Meredith 's head .

Pam Beesly (Jenna Fischer) , in the meantime , invites her co @-@ workers to her art show after work , but few show any enthusiasm , leaving her feeling alienated and sad . The art show doesn 't go as planned , and she begins to doubt her abilities . When Oscar Martinez (Oscar Nunez) shows up with his partner Gil , they critique her art , and note that Pam 's art has been let down by her lack of courage , not realizing that she is standing right behind them . As she begins to take her work down , Michael appears and , in a moment of sincere kindness , compliments her work and asks to buy her drawing of the office building . Pam embraces him as her eyes tear up . Michael soon places Pam 's drawing on the wall next to his office .

= = Production = =

" Business School " was the second Office episode written by Brent Forrester . Forrester had previously written " The Merger " . The episode was the first to be directed by Joss Whedon . Whedon , who is a friend of both producer Greg Daniels and Jenna Fischer , and also met most of the production staff prior to the episode , stated that he chose to direct the episode " because I already know the writing staff and a bunch of the cast , and I adore the show . " When informed that the episode was about a bat entering into the office and one of the characters pretending to be a vampire , Whedon thought that it was a joke , stating " Didn 't I just leave this party ? " in reference to Buffy the Vampire Slayer . In an interview featured on the third season DVD , Whedon joked that the " Business School " episode and his former TV show were very similar because " Buffy [...] was sad and depressing but ... it was funny . Especially when people died . And a lot of people do die in [' Business School '] . " But upon completing the episode , Whedon stated " That was just coincidence . But that 's how that happened . God , it was fun . " Whedon stated that he was surprised with the amount of input he was allowed with the script . " I wouldn 't say freedom to do things with it ... But way more input was asked for than I would have ever anticipated . " At Pam 's

art show , the pieces which she was supposed to have painted didn 't suit Whedon . " I got to the set and saw Pam 's art , and I was like , ' This is not right . ' " Whedon said that he held up filming for over an hour until the staff was able create new pieces of art .

For the scenes which involved filming with a bat , the production team used an actual bat , an animated bat , and a mechanical bat . When around the actual bat , Kate Flannery , who portrays Meredith Palmer , stated that " we had to be extremely quiet around [it] , basically pretending to scream . " California State University , Northridge served as the backdrop for Ryan 's business school and the art show .

= = Reception = =

The episode received generally good reviews from critics . Brian Zoromski , of IGN , stated that " ' Business School ' was an exercise in what works best in an Office episode . " Zoromski also praised Joss Whedon 's directorial debut for the show , stating that " Whedon 's direction and sense of humor was both excellently put to use and alluded to in the scenes in which Jim hilariously pretended to become a vampire . " Zoromski went on to say that the acting of John Krasinski and Rashida Jones , who portrays Karen Filippelli , helped to make the vampire scenes the funniest parts of the episode . He gave the episode a 9 @. @ 1 out of 10 . Abby West , of Entertainment Weekly , stated that " This show has always been able to turn on a dime and take the comedy to a soul @- @ stirring dramatic climax with just the lightest of touches , and last night was no different . " West went on to praise Michael and Pam 's scene at the art show as one of these moments .