

ACTING SKILLS OVERVIEW

STORYTELLING

WHO are you (CHARACTER)? Who are you talking to, and what is your strong feeling or opinion about them (RELATIONSHIP)?

WHAT type of story is this (STYLE)? What is happening in this scene (STORYLINE)? What do the characters say to each other and about each other, and is what they say true (DIALOGUE)? What does each character physically do (STAGE DIRECTIONS)?

WHEN does each strong feeling or opinion change (BEATS)? When in the scene do you try different ways to get what you want (TACTICS)?

ALIVENESS

WHY are the important parts of the story alive in you (PERSONALIZATION)? Why is it immediately, passionately, personally necessary that you get what you want in this scene right now (STAKES)?

TECHNICAL

WHERE are the borders of what the camera can see (FRAME)? Where will you be standing and moving so the camera can see you (MARKS)? Where are you imagining the places, objects and people in relation to where the camera is (EYELINES)?

HOW do you learn your lines (MEMORIZATION)? How do you avoid rehearsing verbal or physical displays of emotion (INDICATING)? How do you speak and move in ways that look and sound at ease on camera (BELIEVABILITY)?

ACTORS FOOD CHAIN

PRODUCER

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In charge of the money and all aspects of production. Make final decisions.

CASTING DIRECTOR

10

In charge of choosing who gets an audition, and in watching those auditions and selecting some to forward to producers.

TALENT AGENT

200

Responsible for marketing actors to casting directors, arranging details of auditions, and negotiating contracts with producers.

ACTOR

20,000



You

Responsible for yourself, your work, your materials, your working relationships.

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CASTING DECISIONS



The red circle is the part you have some influence over.

EXISTING CASTING

Have they already cast someone who looks like you? Do you need to match (or contrast) another character? Do they need someone taller, shorter, of a different ethnicity, who speaks a different language, has a special skill, with a different hair colour?

FINANCES

What's the budget of the production? Are they hiring mostly locals or do producers have the budget to hire their favourite actors from LA, NYC, London, etc? Is it a Union or a Non-Union production? Which casting director do they hire and how much have they budgeted for casting? Can casting directors afford to see lots of tapes, or only from actors they are already familiar with?

STYLE

How good a fit are you for the style of the show being cast?

TYPE

How does the way you look and sound on camera fit with the story being told, with existing film+TV stereotypes and conventions, and with the personal preferences of the decision makers?

SKILL

Does your audition tell the story, feel like "you", and seem easy, confident, natural, effortless?

RELATIONSHIP

Do casting directors and other decision makers expect "bookable" work from you? Do you or your reps have a personal connection with them?

WHERE THE WORK IS

The actor must have enough skill to tell the story, fit the style, and come across as real/easy/natural on camera.



TYPE

How the way you look and sound on camera fits film+tv stereotypes



ESSENCE

All the many aspects of who you are as a person.