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The School for **Film & Television**

Category: Acting - General Information

Subcategory: Acting - General Information

Tip: Actors, Love Your Life!

One of the biggest tips on acting you'll need to carry you through your career is this: You must love what you do. True acting is an art form, not a vehicle toward fame. As an artist, you'll need conviction in your craft and an unwavering love for theater and film. Once you begin to see acting as just another way to get attention or earn money, you've lost the battle. You'll become frustrated at the first setback. Treat acting like an art and yourself as an artist. That way your lifetime work will be satisfying, regardless of outward "success."

Subcategory: Acting Information

Tip: Acting

Acting is playing. Remember when you were a child and you played cops and robbers or house or acted like your favorite superhero? You were acting. Actors become completely absorbed in the characters they play, just as children do when they play. While there are many schools of technique available to hone an actor's craft, the essence of acting is the same: You are portraying a life. Your job is to convince your audience that you are the person you are playing. It's a natural process. Just look how easily it came to you as a child!

Tip: All the World's a Stage...

Any kind of life experience can benefit your acting talent as long as you learn from it. While you need solid, tangible roles and training to build your resume, any project that you undertake that helps you reflect on yourself can be considered a victory. There's no substitute for work experience and training, but life experience adds the seasoning that makes a better actor. Pay attention to all that happens in your life -- good and bad. Living your life fully and with open eyes will make any role you play richer and more real.

Tip: Choosing an Acting Monologue

When picking a monologue, remember that you are essentially choosing a tool to sell yourself as an actor. Select material that brings out your acting strengths and shores up any weaknesses that you may have. The monologue should be just right for your level of training. Always (as in, ALWAYS) read the entire script from which the monologue is extracted. Not only will you get a better insight into the character, you may be asked by the casting director to discuss the play (or film) and its themes. This is their way to see if

you will be able to work through the themes of the piece for which they are hiring you.

Tip: The Joy of Acting

Don't be afraid to enjoy yourself while acting. Yes, you should be serious and professional about the business aspect of your profession, but remember that acting is an art you practice because you love it. Your own joy while acting will help to feed your peers creativity, and help to build your own confidence. The bulk of your time as an actor will be spent looking for work, so don't spoil the reward. Learn to enjoy acting and enjoy your success.

Category: Acting Agents And Agencies

Subcategory: Acting Agents And Agencies

Tip: How to Find an Agent

Here are the top three most common ways of how to find an acting agent: Word of mouth. If your actor friends have agents, talk to them. Find out who represents them, then see if he or she can put in a good word for you. This will allow you to get your foot in the door for an interview. Be seen. Every time you're in a show or even a showcase, send agents postcards inviting them to come to see you perform. These postcards should ideally be miniature postcard versions of your headshots, but you can also send theatrical postcards from the show itself. (Be sure they get comped!) Attend talent agent seminars. Check Backstage newspaper on a weekly basis to see where there are seminars in your area. Check listings of local agents in the yellow pages or in publications like Backstage. Send blind mailings to agencies with a cover letter, headshot, and resume.

Category: Acting Auditions

Subcategory: Audition

Tip: Acting Audition Interviews

A crucial part of the interview process is conforming to current industry trends. Right now, commercials and film are often given a very "natural" look. (Perhaps this is the result of the popularity of reality television programs!) Keep this in mind and be comfortable with yourself and your identity during your interview. Allow your natural personality to show during the interview. Have trust in yourself, and you will come across as confident, calm, and poised.

Tip: Acting Audition Readings

Always come prepared to a reading. Make sure that you know the material that you have been given beforehand. If necessary, ask pertinent questions about the character you are about to portray. It's expected you have done your homework, so keep any questions brief. You don't want the auditioners' time to be wasted. If you are given direction during or after a read, follow it exactly, even if you disagree with it. Directors sometimes work in mysterious ways, so it's best to go with the flow.

Tip: Acting Audition Slumps

Don't panic if you find yourself in an auditioning slump; acting auditions can be tough. Slumps usually present themselves following a period of auditioning success. After you have found what works to land a few roles, your auditioning can become mechanical, leading to a slump. Get back in the game by focusing your training regimen and attacking each new audition. Slumps can also result from disillusion with the auditioning process. When this happens, it is best to take a week or two off to refocus other aspects of your life before returning to acting.

Tip: Audition Dress Code

When dressing for auditions, keep in mind the role you're auditioning for. There's no need to go all out and wear full costume, but dress with the essence of the character. If you're auditioning for the role of a young suburban mother, you may wear a nice twiset and slacks or a skirt. For a business man role, you might wear a suit or at least a sports coat. If your audition is a screen test, steer clear of wearing white, as it washes you out. The best color for screen is a medium blue. Remember the audition is to showcase your acting talent, not your wardrobe (they hire people for that!).

Tip: Audition Like a Professional

When you go to an audition, what's your goal? If you said, "To get the part," you're only partially right. Auditions are an opportunity to accomplish several goals at once. Sure, you want the part. But you should also be aiming to build your reputation as a talented professional, foster relationships with casting directors and their assistants, and hone your auditioning skills. Follow these audition tips, and turn casting auditions into multitasking opportunities:

- Foster relationships:
- Be nice to assistants. Today's assistant is tomorrow's casting director, so be careful not to burn any bridges. Avoid snapping or otherwise being rude.
- Ask people about their projects—and listen when they talk! But only do this if you're truly curious. People hate brown-nosers, but they appreciate genuine interest.
- Nurture your reputation:
- Be confident. An actor who expresses his opinion with assurance yet keeps an open mind and listens to others will come across as charismatic and together.
- Be on time and reliable. Be supportive of other people, including rival actors.
- Communicate when you have a problem. Refrain

from gossiping. ·Keep your inner diva in check. We know the film business is full of spoiled brats, but nobody likes working with them. Hone your auditioning skills: ·Adapt the character to you. Film auditions are about naturalness. If you try too hard to get a certain image of the character across, you'll end up overacting. ·Stick to the information in the script. Don't look for hidden meanings or motivations in your lines. Play the part straight, and trust your abilities. By having several goals when you audition, you'll stay positive, build your reputation, and improve with each rejection. And oh — you'll land some parts, too!

Tip: Material for First Time Auditions

The material you read in an interview affects the impression you make. Use material that is representative of you, in terms of both age and type, and that will make you look your best. Vary the material that you use in an interview; reading the same piece over and over again will make your performance lose its edge. Concentration is key during the reading phase of the interview. Some general auditions ask for a classical and a modern piece. It's best to have two of each in case you are asked to perform another.

Tip: Panicking in an Acting Audition

Don't panic if one interview goes bad...and don't let one bad interview spoil the next one. You'll be meeting a lot of agents and casting directors throughout your acting career. Having one bad experience with an auditor does not mean that you'll always have a bad experience. remember that every experience makes you a stronger performer, a stronger artist. Take an objective look at what went wrong and make note of it in order to avoid making the same mistakes in the future. Above all, remember you're human! Kicking yourself too much is just as damaging to your art as being arrogant.

Tip: Professionalism in Amateur Auditions

Professionalism goes a long way in auditions. Not only does that mean dressing professionally, it mean acting professionally as well. You should be prompt and courteous during your auditions. If you receive a callback, be sure you are available for rehearsal and/or shooting dates. You don't want to waste the director's time by auditioning even though you already know you have conflicts.

Category: Acting Camps

Subcategory: Acting Camps

Tip: Why Attend Summer Acting Camp?

Along with getting a great and intensive period of time over the summer to study your acting (and all things theater), summer acting programs are a fantastic place to meet other actors and professional performers. You've probably heard that in the business of acting, it's all about "who you know." It may seem as though this phrase comes from actors who have schmoozed their way into a director's or agent's good graces, but that's rarely if ever the case. You get to know who you know often because you worked and/or studied with them in the past. One of the best ways to get to know others in the business -- or those who will be in it one day -- is to meet them through acting classes, workshops, seminars, and summer programs. So get out there and network!

Category: Acting Classes

Subcategory: Acting Class

Tip: Back to School

Acting classes are not only a great way to hone your craft in between jobs, but they are a great way to meet other actors and network with industry professionals. Besides the obvious benefits of learning techniques to improve your acting skills, attending regular acting classes can be like attending a support group. By interacting with others in your field, you can share experiences (both good and bad!), exchange contacts, share creative ideas and delve deeper into the ins and outs of a career in acting. As you grow and learn, you will become more confident, and who knows, you may surprise not only yourself, but everyone around you with your stellar abilities.

Category: Acting In Theater

Subcategory: Acting In Theater

Tip: Monologues for Your Acting College Audition

If you're planning to attend an acting college, you'll need to pull together a powerful audition to get accepted. Most acting colleges require that you prepare two monologues, one classical and one modern. Classical monologues are generally thought to be any theatrical piece written prior to the turn of the 20th century, although some colleges define it as later than that. Your best bet is to choose any of the Greek classics, Shakespeare, Moliere, Voltaire, etc. If you're stuck, go to a local bookstore and search for compilations of classic monologues. Modern monologues are more recently written, usually within the last 100 years. Try not to choose overdone monologues, as auditioners get bored hearing the same pieces over and over again. That won't work in your favor! Do your best to select a monologue that represents you well. Rehearse both monologues enough so that you will go into your audition fluidly and with confidence.

Subcategory: Drama School

Tip: The Perfect Monologue

You've been called to audition for a juicy part in a play. You really want to wow them at the audition with an amazing monologue, and you're frantically searching for the perfect choice. But hold on a minute. Teachers in drama schools care about great monologues. Casting directors don't. They care about what you can do. They're much more interested in seeing how you connect with a character in the moment than hearing Shakespeare. Why complicate your life by choosing a monologue you're not comfortable with? When picking a monologue, don't worry about impressing people with a masterpiece. Instead, keep it simple. Look for a monologue that you really connect with and that brings out the best of your abilities. Focus on wowing the director with the emotional truth of that character. Keep working on the classic monologues in your drama classes or on your own. The more you expand your repertoire, the better. But don't bring them into auditions until you've made them yours. Shakespeare won't land you the part if you stumble awkwardly on the words. But the ability to inhabit a character — no matter how simple the language — just might.

Category: Acting Jobs

Subcategory: Acting Job

Tip: Acting Jobs and Industry Connections

Keep in touch with the industry community. They will be your peers, your support group, and hopefully your connections to better acting gigs. Go to the plays of your friends and get to know the cast, crew, and any management. Watch new movies and television shows to see which way the industry is headed. If you like a show, find out who casts it. There are several seminars in larger cities you can attend and meet agents, casting directors and managers. Go to as many as you can to network and learn the names of important players in the film and/or theater community.

Category: Acting Resumes

Subcategory: Acting Resumes

Tip: What Makes a Good Resume?

Think of your acting resume as a calling card. You are presenting yourself to complete strangers who know nothing of your talents. With that in mind, be sure your resume is:

Neatly typed
No longer than one page
Edited and proofread
Updated on a regular basis
In correct format
In addition, you should be sure that your name and contact information are prominently displayed at the top of the page. This is so your resume can be found easily among others. When attaching your resume to the back of your headshot, be sure it adheres solidly. There should be no clips or opened staples to snag on other photos in the casting director's pile. Don't use clever fonts or colors on your resume. Keep the type simple, such as Tahoma, Courier, or Times New Roman. Always use black ink to print your resume, and be sure it doesn't smudge. A small effort on your acting resume will go a long way toward presenting yourself as a professional.

Tip: What to Include in Your Acting Resume

If you want to keep your acting resume clean and simple, follow these guidelines:

Opening: This should include your name, contact information (cell phone or service), height, weight, age range, eye and hair color.

Body: Any acting experience you have had belongs in this section. Use the sections Theater, Film, Television, and Commercials. If you have done voice-overs as well, you can include these here. List in columns the title of the piece, then your character's name, then the place where you performed. (i.e., Once Upon a Mattress; Winnifred; Bucks County Playhouse)

Education: List here any acting programs you have attended, as well as any schools you've gone to.

Special Skills: This is a list of skills you have that may be needed for certain roles. (i.e., Spanish speaker, horseback riding, fencing, dialects (list them), etc.)

Category: Acting Schools

Subcategory: Acting School

Tip: Say Good-Bye to Acting Classes

Experienced actors will tell you that the craft of acting demands life-long study. There's always more to learn and ways in which you can improve. So it's important to keep taking acting classes, right? Not necessarily. Attending an acting school is an essential step if you're just starting out or if you want to learn a new technique or skill. The best classes will challenge you and force you to grow. But if after years of working at your craft you're still taking classes in lieu of auditioning and landing jobs, you may be sticking a little too closely to your comfort zone. Ask yourself honestly if you're learning anything new. Perhaps your class was once great for you, but now it's time to move on. Remember, the point is to become a professional actor, not a professional acting student. Yes, you have to keep learning. But maybe your most important lessons are waiting for you on the set, not in the classroom! So spread your wings and leave the nest. Say good-bye to acting class and hello to your career.

Tip: Things to Watch Out For When Applying To Acting School

Beware of getting scammed when signing up for an acting school. No school that you apply to should ask for large payments upfront. A school with any kind of reputation will require you to audition for entrance rather than accepting you after just one interview. It is important to remember that a school should not ask you sign a binding contract with regards to your career before admission. Also, it's a good idea to check out school's backgrounds through friends and independent research.

Category: Acting Talent Agencies

Subcategory: Acting Agencies

Tip: Acting Agents and Your Career

An effective acting agent should have a clear idea of what roles you are looking for. In order to develop this rapport, you need to help him/her get a better understanding of who you are. Ask the agent how s/he sees your career right now and where it could head, realistically. Find out what the agent expects you to do. S/he usually won't have a pat answer, but this will help to start a conversation that will allow you to figure out the boundaries of your relationship.

Tip: Avoiding Phony Agents

With so many dreamy-eyed hopefuls trying to break into the acting business, scams abound. Swindlers seduce aspiring actors with promises of representation and stardom and wheedle fees out of them through flattery, intimidation, and phony job offers. Remember, an agent only takes his fee (about 10 percent) after he's procured work for you — never before. A legitimate agent will never ask you for an agency fee, a processing fee, a resume filing fee, or any other fee up front. It's perfectly acceptable for an acting agent to ask you to have new headshots made or suggest you take an acting class. It's even okay for him to recommend a handful of photographers and teachers. But if he tries to make you work with a particular photographer or acting teacher, it could be a rip-off. Walk away. Same thing goes if he promises you work and stardom or if he tells you he usually charges a fee, but he's making an exception in your case. Most importantly, if you show up for a photo shoot or audition and feel uncomfortable in any way, don't walk — run! Trust your instincts and get out of there. Your safety is more important than your career. If you've been scammed or abused by phony agents, contact your Attorney General's office or the Better Business Bureau. Then hit the online acting forums and warn your fellow actors! The only way to stop these criminals is by exposing them for what they are. For more information, check out the following link: <http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/conline/pubs/services/model.htm>

Tip: Avoiding Shady Agencies

When it comes to assessing agencies, it's wise to pay attention to your instincts. If you're unsure whether an agency is on the up-and-up, here is a general rule to follow: Agencies and management companies should never charge a fee to represent you. (That includes mailings!) Their job is to find you auditions and get paid in a percentage (generally 10%) from your earnings. Also beware of pressure to sign a contract right away. Don't be swayed by photos of celebrities on office walls; just because they are hanging there doesn't mean this agency represents them! Finally, search the Better Business Bureau (BBB) to see if the agency you are interested in signing with has any reports filed against it.

Tip: Gauging a Potential Acting Agent's Business

Ask your potential acting agent how many clients they submit each day or week. This answer isn't always accurate, but you'll get an idea of how hard the acting agency is working for its clients. Before selecting an acting agency, inquire about how many clients receive callbacks and bookings. This, compared with the first statistic, lets you know how successful the agent's lobbying is. It also gives you a rough idea of the skills of their client base.

Tip: Ross Reports and Acting Agencies

Rossreports.com is a great place to get starting looking for acting agencies. The website lists members of the industry by region, medium, and genre. You need a good idea of what your areas of interest are before you begin. Start with your region, and begin researching acting agencies that represent actors of your type. Make a list of possible candidates, and then get ready to do your research. Ask your contacts if anyone they know has worked with the agencies on your list. Nothing beats actually pounding the pavement and visiting each agency on your own.

Category: Acting Techniques

Subcategory: Acting Technique

Tip: Acting Techniques for Warming Up

A common warm-up acting exercise involves re-naming your surroundings. The point of the exercise is to break down external barriers in the hopes of challenging any inner barriers that you may have. Follow these instructions: Take a deep breath. Choose an object in the room, and rename it. It doesn't have to be a special name, just different. Move on to the next object, rename it, and repeat the new name of the first object. Repeat until you have renamed everything in the room.

Tip: Acting Techniques: Showing v. Telling

A critical acting tip is to remember that you are showing a story, not telling it. The advice may sound simple at first, but it's harder than you might think to engage your audience. Simply reciting your lines and obeying stage directions won't be enough. Acting involves the whole of your persona. Each movement, each breath, and each spoken line contribute to your performance. When you are on screen or on stage, know that your actions must be deliberate. Everything you do (your "stage business," in other words) must work to show the audience the story.

Tip: Acting Tips: Alexander Method

Alexander technique is another way of approaching acting. It involves a complete restructuring of the way your body responds to stimuli, re-realizing how your mind and body integrate through retaining breathing and movement. It was Alexander's belief that breathing and vocalization determine how the body functions as a whole. The technique allows actors to retrain any bad physical habits they may have developed and create more efficient ways of moving and breathing.

Tip: Acting Tips: Playing for Status

Status is a huge part of acting technique. Much of human interaction can be broken down into shifting issues of status. During the course of a normal conversation, a person's status may shift from high to low, and back again, depending on the topic of the conversation. In order to be an effective actor, these status changes must be replicated on screen or on stage. Be conscious of your body language. What kind of status is your body projecting? You should also take note of the timbre of your voice. Is it clear and confident or low and quavering? These factors help determine your status in a scene, and thereby establish your position and goals within it.

Tip: Acting Tips: Stanislavsky Method

The Stanislavsky method, or method acting, is one of the most common acting strategies. It involves studying and living as the character you are portraying. Essentially, with the Stanislavsky Method, you are working to find common emotional experiences with the character. Once those common emotions are identified, you draw on your own experiences of those emotions to fill out your character. In this way the emotions of your character become more genuine.

Tip: The Meisner Technique

Sanford Meisner (1905-1997), together with Stella Adler and Lee Strasberg, is generally regarded as one of America's most brilliant acting teachers. The Meisner Technique is one of the most popular acting techniques being taught and practiced today. Meisner

aimed to break an actor's dependence on easy tricks and to get him to respond truthfully to a given moment. He taught that a performer's attention should remain on his partner — on what the partner is saying and doing — and not on what he himself is preparing to say or do. The result: a far less self-conscious performance that resonates with authenticity. The Meisner Technique owes a debt to the great Russian acting teacher, Constantin Stanislavski, who steered his students away from the stiff and affected acting that was common in his day. The interdependent series of exercises developed by Meisner expand on Stanislavski's teachings. Each exercise builds on the earlier ones and increases in complexity. Improvisation, emotional truth, and an actor's personal response to the script are all important aspects of this approach.

Tip: Warm-up Your Face!

Like a professional athlete, actors need to get their bodies warmed up before performing on stage or in front of a camera. Yoga and other types of stretching exercises work quite well for full body toning. However, don't neglect the most important areas: your mouth and jaw! Lip, tongue, and jaw exercises are vital to an actor. Here's a quick combination exercise you can practice anytime: Clasp your hands in front of you at chest level as though you are about to arm wrestle yourself. Relax all the muscles in your face. Begin to shake your clasped hands rapidly toward and away from your body. Your lips and jaw should move easily, and your tongue should flop around in your mouth. Stop shaking your hands, and finish off by opening your mouth wide and relaxing it shut again to release any further tension in your jaw.

Category: Career In Acting

Subcategory: Acting Career

Tip: Networking Your Acting Career Online

There are two primary websites that handle networking online in New York City, a must for the acting careers of budding thespians: Actor's Access (www.actorsaccess.com) allows you to submit yourself for projects within the city as well as Canada and the West Coast. NY Castings (www.nycastings.com) allows you to submit headshots and resumes directly to casting agents and casting directors through their electronic database. Both websites allow actors to submit and host their own video portfolios. There are also plenty of online groups that allow you to network with other professionals. A quick search in any search engine will bring a number of results you can sort through to find the most appropriate community for you.

Tip: Promoting Your Acting Career

The Internet opens the door to many opportunities to network yourself without ever

making copies, postcards, or taking on many of the other costly endeavors that were the only choice for actors of the past. One of the best things to do to keep people informed about your career is to email periodic announcements of upcoming shows and appearances. You may also consider building a website that hosts your headshot(s), resume, and brief bio.

Tip: Your Acting Career: Daily Steps

Every actor wants to make it in the acting business, but ask what steps they plan to take toward achieving their objective, and they can't answer. Vague goals of the "I want to be a star" variety leave you feeling like there's so much to do, without giving the clarity you need to figure out the next steps. Setting concrete goals will keep you focused. Start by drawing up a one-year plan. What can you realistically achieve by this time next year? It's okay to be ambitious—within reason. Don't list "win an Oscar." Do list "go to three auditions." Be as specific as you can. If you want to get some more training, don't write, "apply to acting school." Write, "apply to NYU." Next, take each of those goals and break them down into concrete tasks with due-by dates. Then each day, do one of those tasks, such as picking up the application from NYU, checking casting websites, or redoing your resume. Have a few "whenever" tasks to do as well, such as learning a new monologue, studying a film on DVD, or attending a meetup gathering, so you'll never have an excuse for doing nothing. This may seem like a lot of work, but it's worth it. Remember, a daily task can be as simple as making a single phone call. Develop this habit, and by the end of the first year you will be 365 steps closer to a career!

Subcategory: Career In Acting

Tip: Acting is Work!

Congratulations. You've just graduated from acting school. Now what? Now you start your life as an actor. A daunting thing for a lot of our hopefuls, but not if you make a very important distinction right off the mark. Acting is a lifestyle, yes, but it is also a business. One of the many acting tips you will receive, but perhaps the most fundamental, is to not treat your acting life as an artistic indulgence. The same way bankers and lawyers and teachers go to work every day, so must you. Work for you may mean two hours of concentrated time fixing your resume. Work may be doing a mass mailing to agencies in your town. Work certainly means taking classes and auditioning. Get yourself into the habit of working every day -- whether it's learning a new monologue or scanning the trades for auditions. Acting is an art, but if you're going to make a career in acting, you'll have to start thinking of yourself as an entrepreneur.

Category: Casting Calls

Subcategory: Casting Directors

Tip: Attitudes for Casting Directors

Here's a key piece of advice: Don't be annoying, don't be needy, don't be whiny, and don't beg for a break. Nobody wants to hear it, and it's not anyone's job to help you. Be confident and respectful. Be yourself. You can always train more and improve, you can always give it another shot, but you can never again make a good first impression. Remember that you have a set amount of time with a casting director; they have to sit there all day and audition people. Be respectful of their time. It pays off!

Tip: Preparing For an Open Casting Call

How do you prepare for an open casting call? Make sure that you have an up-to-date headshot and resume package. Bring two copies. Make sure that your training is up to date. Gather information through any connections that you have made in the industry. Whenever possible, prepare by reading the script from which you will be performing. If this is not possible, get all the information about the key players: director, writer, producer, etc. The more you know, the more you will stand out.

Tip: Succeeding at a Casting Call

You're the only one who can make yourself look good in a casting call, so be proactive. Take note of the following advice: Show up on time. Be prepared for any readings that you have to do. Bring two copies of your resume/headshot package. Be very respectful to all of the people that you interact with, even other actors. Show that you can work professionally with the casting director and anyone else attached to the production. Follow up with a postcard or another small mailing the next day.

Category: Film Acting

Subcategory: Film Acting

Tip: Art Imitates Life

Want to keep your acting from getting stale? Make sure your life is interesting! Your most crucial dramatic lessons won't come from film acting class but from your own life. Sure, it's important to go to movies and plays, read scripts, and study the great directors. But if your only reference point is other movies, your performances will come across as flat and derivative. Snoresville. An actor has to continually fill his well of creativity to stay inspired. The broader your experiences and your studies, the more resources you'll have to draw from during a performance. Follow these tips to spice up your acting: Read. Learn all you can about art, music, science, psychology, history, and theology. Each field in its own way examines what it means to be human. Become a

first-class people-watcher. Keep a notebook with you and jot down dialogue, mannerisms, and interesting situations. Travel to experience other cultures. How do people greet each other in France? What does it feel like to ride a camel in the desert? Follow current events for insights into the best and worst of human theater. Seek novelty. Do something you've never done before, such as learn belly-dancing, repair a car's engine, or pet-sit a snake. Take risks. Bungee jump. Travel solo. Love and lose. Love and win. Live with your mind and senses fully engaged, and you'll perform the same way. Not to mention you'll have fantastic stories to tell your grandkids someday!

Category: Professional Acting Headshots

Subcategory: Professional Acting Headshots

Tip: Commercial and Theatrical Headshots

There are two basic types of headshots: commercial and theatrical. A commercial headshot should be attractive, warm, and open. A theatrical headshot, on the other hand, is more serious, and should try to represent your characteristics as a person. The format for headshots varies throughout the country –- from close-ups to 3/4 shots, from bordered to borderless. Make sure you use the preferred format for your area of application.

Tip: Dressing For a Headshot

When getting your headshots taken, keep your clothes simple, avoiding logos or loud colors and prints. Since the photo will be black and white, black and white clothing may appear too bold. Keep jewelry to a minimum, and makeup simple. Style your hair as you would normally. Avoid completely new ensembles or very trendy outfits as styles change. Wear something nice that you will appear comfortable in. Make sure that collars and necklines frame your face well.

Tip: Finding a Professional Headshot Photographer

When deciding who to audition, casting directors cull through hundreds of headshots. The best way to ensure your headshot makes a great first impression is to hire a professional headshot photographer. Finding a headshot photographer within your budget may seem difficult, but if you persevere, you'll find the person who's just right for you. Word-of-mouth is a great way of finding a photographer. If you see a headshot you like, take down the photographer's name and contact him. Here are a few things to keep in mind when shopping for a photographer: -Your budget. Headshot prices can range from \$100 to \$1,000 and up, depending on your location and the photographer's experience. Newer photographers building their portfolios will charge less, more established photographers will charge more. Price does not always determine quality,

however. A young talent may be just the photographer for you, so shop around until you find a someone within your budget. Don't make the mistake of choosing the cheap headshots if you're not thrilled by the photographer's work. A lousy headshot will close opportunities, lose you jobs, and cost you a fortune in the long run. -The package. How many shots will the photographer take? How many headshot prints are included in the price? Will he shoot in digital or on film? Black and white or color? Will you receive a contact sheet or the images on a CD? Will there be a hair and makeup person available to you, and is that included in the price? Will there be clothing changes, mood changes, and outdoor as well as indoor shots? What is the photographer's turn-around time? Will you need to sign a release form to duplicate the headshot? -The photographer's eye. Try to meet with the headshot photographer in person to discuss your headshots before hiring him. You want someone who is professional, confident, and knows what he's doing. His goal should be your goal: to get you work. During this initial meeting, the photographer should be trying to get a feel for your personality. Ask him how he plans to make you stand out from others in your age range and physical type. Look through his portfolio and point out what you like about certain shots and what you don't think would work for you. Do you like a certain composition? Are you not so crazy about a particular lighting effect? The best headshot photographers are skilled craftsmen with an artistic eye. Keep looking until you find a photographer who "gets" that special something about your personality and can capture it on film simply, naturally, and elegantly!

Tip: Mailing Your Headshot

Little things can make a big difference. Enclose your headshots in an envelope that is easy to open. That way, the casting director doesn't have to struggle with your materials. A simple clasp envelope sealed with a small piece of tape should do the trick. Attach a small note to your headshot. It will gain you a few extra moments of the casting director's time without being annoying. Your name should be printed on the front of your headshot and your resume should be on the back. If you have not printed it directly to the back of the headshot, staple your resume to the photo. Never use paper clips as they snag on other documents.

Tip: Preparing for a Headshot Session

Once you've booked your headshot session with a professional photographer, you may be wondering how to prepare for your session. Here are a few key pointers for how to get ready for your headshot session: Call to confirm your appointment 24 hours ahead of time. Don't drink alcohol the night before, which can make you puffy. Get a good amount of sleep the night before. Show up to the studio 15 minutes early. Never arrive late. Keep colors basic. Blue is best. Your headshots should be shot in black and white, so stay away from white colors, as they tend to wash you out. Bring at least three changes of clothing: casual, business, and business casual. If you wear any jewelry, keep it small and simple. Remove any facial piercings or be prepared to have them airbrushed out. Get a professional hair and makeup artist to do your hair and face. Yes,

men, too.

Category: Voice Acting

Subcategory: Voice Acting

Tip: Becoming a Voice-over Actor

Many actors at one point or another will have an opportunity to audition for voice-overs as well as theater, film, and/or television. There are some actors, however who go out of their way to narrow their career to doing only voice-overs. You may wonder, "How do I become an actor who does just voice-overs?" The answer is: With a lot of training and experience. Becoming a voice-over actor does require you to have a decent voice, but it's also great if you have a unique or quirky voice. Regardless of the type of voice you have, you will need training to help you learn to sell the product or entity for which the advertisement has been written. There are several classes available devoted to just the art of the voice-over. You can also find voice-over classes within most acting colleges' curricula. Once you have received training, you'll still need to practice almost on a daily basis. Daily practice can be accomplished at home (by just reading copy) or in a studio, if one is available to you. Get an agent who will submit you for voice-over auditions. Be sure to attend as many as you can, especially when you're first starting out.