

BE A GOOD FILM ACTOR:

GETTING TO THE SET

1. Know your lines cold and exactly as written. Guest stars, co-stars and day players will shoot their close-ups first to give series regulars time to learn their lines.
2. When you arrive on the set see if it is a one camera set up or three, so you know how to manage your choices.
3. Go to the monitor to find out what size the frame is before you shoot.

ON THE SET

1. Keep going until the director shouts "cut!" Then keep acting for a bit .
2. If you mess up a line, still keep going so it is the director who calls a halt to the proceedings, if he chooses to do so.
- 3 . Do not stop a take for ANY reason (except injury or death). If you flub a line, and the director doesn't call cut, simply go back one line and continue.
4. Never look directly into the LENS unless you are specifically asked to do so.
5. Ask the camera operator the size of a shot before asking the director .
6. Being in the right place is more important than saying the right line .
7. Keep your concentration and eye-lines all through the tedium of lineup and rehearsal. It helps your fellow actor and the crew.
8. An actor only has status between "action and "cut"- but the star has it all the time.
9. Never say "no"; say "maybe."

THE LENS

1. Let the lens be the magnet that draws your face toward wherever it is.
2. Don't just cheat an eye-line, MOTIVATE it.
3. If both your eyes cannot see the camera lens, your face will appear to be obscured.
4. Keep the camera on the imaginary "red carpet" that stretches from the front of the camera. Remember shots are composed in depth.
5. In a deep three shot, put the lens in the middle of the gap.
6. If you have trouble hitting a mark, line up two objects at

the final position you have to hit .

7. Shoulders angled toward a camera often look better than straight on ones.

C. THE FRAME

1. Cheat hands and business up into the "Hot" area.

2. The size of shot predicts the style of acting within the frame .

Long shot= "back of the balcony"-big gestures.

Medium shot= "intimate theatre"- theatrical truth & reality

Medium close-ups= "real reality"- the real thing.

Extreme close-up- Just think it.

3. Be prepared to stand embarrassingly close when acting and speaking with other characters .

4. There is no reality outside the frame; time and/or distance outside it may be expanded or contracted.

VOCAL

1. Only project as far as your microphone; check where it is before each take.

2. Intensity can be shown by increasing PACE, not volume.

3 . When the camera is moving with you, talk fast but move slowly.

4. If you are told to tone it down, try reducing only your volume but keeping the scale of your gestures.

5. When speaking at low levels, do not lose your sparky energy or adopt a very slow pace.

6. At low levels of speaking, all other sounds seem too loud, so be careful with all footsteps clattering cups, even breathing

7. Gently inquire if you are going to be in a contained two-shot, or if they are going to cross-cut with reverses, in which case be prepared to be asked NOT to overlap dialogue.

ACTING

1. The shots the director chooses are in themselves acting notes so obey their implicit instructions.

Long shot= let your BODY do the talking.

Reaction shot= DO A REACTION.

Two-shot= REACT as you listen to the other actor.

Close-up= put your thoughts on your FACE.

Close-up of your hand holding a prop= put your acting into that.

2. Do ALL your acting for an AUDIENCE OF ONE- the camera.
3. Create good acting reasons for all your pieces of business.
4. The lines should fit you like a glove. If they don't, and you don't have the rehearsal time to create the character who would say those lines, then ask to change the dialogue.
5. Find positive ways to communicate negative thoughts.
6. Give yourself something to do AFTER the shot ends. That will keep your face alive right to the end of the take.
7. Let your inner voice give you those continuous instructions that silent movie actors got from their director's megaphones.
6. Let an acting impulse that would lead to a move onstage lead to a gesture or a look on the screen.

REACTIONS AND BUSINESS

1. React before you speak, and react to the upcoming thought.
2. React while others are speaking.
3. The best moments are nonverbal ones- give yourself TIME.
4. Be flexible in a cooperative way. You may be asked to change lines and business at the very last moment.
5. Know your lines very, very well.
6. Pace is continuous events not continuous speaking.
7. Fully motivate any large reactions. Don't reduce your size, increase your believability
8. Remember the camera cannot follow fast movements, so lift that cup slowly, rise out of the chair gently.
9. Eyes can be very effective. Try looking up as well as down when listening to another actor.
10. In a close-up never look from one eye to the other.

THE EDITOR

1. The better your continuity, the easier it is for the editor to cut to you for your best moments.
2. Editors like to cut on movements, so put some in before important bits of acting- and after.
3. Mark changes of thought with such pieces of business.
4. During a speech, look at the other actors. The editor needs your "eyeflashes" to motivate cuts.
5. Reactions don't have to be logical or consistent. The editor is only looking for a slice of a good reaction, and several different ones give him a better choice for cutting .

FINAL THOUGHTS

1. To come across as truthful and believable needs both talent AND technique.
- 2, Don't panic over any problem.
3. All rules are made to be broken- so know the rules you are breaking and have a very good reason for doing so.
4. Screen acting is going to be a very important part of your career, so find out how to ENJOY and relish it all. It should be FUN.