

Chapter 16 - Working with Actors - QuizPrint

1. What should be your process to find the strongest actors for your project?

The First step to find the best/strongest actors for my project is the casting process, I will have to hire a Casting Director who will go through hundreds of actors and has copies of their headshots, next the casting director should call back the best 10 or something and invite me (the director) to cast them and make the final selection/decision.

As a director, I should be monitoring my actors closely, make sure that they follow instructions and will not give me or the production a hard time when we start production.

2. What is the job of the casting director?

As mentioned in the answer above the Casting Director is responsible for going through and casting potential actors for a production, by going through hundreds of actors and their headshots, then the casting director should call back the best 10 or something then invite the director to cast the final potential actors to make the final selection/ decision.

3. What is the best way to handle the audition process?

Actors can be difficult people to work with, they are creative and sensitive, a good director should realize and respect that so in auditions I (the director) will be positive with my actors giving them SOME room for their talent (at least for their first try),

Example: if I am audition an actor and he is trying to do things his way (which is far away from required, I will let him finish tell him that was a good job, can you try this way, Please? I don't want to get my actors angry or distracted.

4. What is the purpose of a table read?

A table read is an opportunity for the whole cast and the director of a project to sit all together, first to meet which is a very good opportunity for all of the previous mentioned crew to meet in person and get acquainted,

It is also a good opportunity to get familiar with the project's script as in the table reading all actors and the director are required to sit together and read the script together for few times,

Last but not least it gives a good opportunity for the actors to get into their characters,

In my own point of view a table read is very crucial as it is an opportunity to avoid a lot of problems in production and makes the actors understand the story more.

5. What type of language is most useful when directing actors on-set, and why?

The best language to use with actors is "action verbs" rather than adjectives, When I use action verbs with actors (onset) they will be less distracted and more focused on their character, emotions and the story,

But if I use adjectives ("be more happy" or "be more angry") first of all you will make the actor doubt him/herself start to get distracted, in addition to they usually make faces which will make the actors demonstrate rather than experiencing which lacks emotions (and audience can see/feel that)

I will talk about the process more than talking about the results (I will review the results with myself later on but I will not include the actors on the results so I don't distract them).

6. Why is it important to understand the purpose of a scene BEFORE discussing it with your actors?

As a director, it is very important to understand the scene before discussing it with

anyone (not only the actors.),

First of all it falls under preparation which is very crucial trait to any successful director, secondly the director must know the essential moment in the scene, must know the characters and their needs and wants,

Bottom line a good director should know every single detail about each and every scene, the theme, the tone, the character's emotions, need and wants and even bear in mind the grand statement of the movie,

All of the above will make it easier for the Director to communicate not only to the actors but to any member of his crew (as the director has a deep awareness and knowledge about his scenes and the whole story) which comes from preparation.

7. What is the purpose of Uta Hagen's "six questions a director must be able to answer"?

If I (the director) can give my actors the answers to the below four questions then I have provided my actors with the necessary background to the scene (which is very important), the four questions are:

- Who am I?
- Where am I coming from?
- Where am I?
- Who am I with? And do I feel about it/him or her?

Next If I answer the following two questions I will find the point of the scene and the key action verbs that I should use with my actors, the two questions are:

- What do I want from this person?
- What am I doing to get what I want?

8. Why is it important that you as the director, as well as the actor, understand a character's background when playing a scene, even if that background is not

explicitly stated in the script?

It is very important for both the director as well as the actor to understand the “character’s background” when playing a scene,

For actors it is more crucial as it will effect their level in getting into the character and the story, the more they know the better they will understand then they will perform at their best (because they do know the character’s background and understand the why they act and feel which will help significantly in their performance).

9. How do you keep actors from getting bored of doing the same thing over and over again?

We have to understand that actors get bored quickly, they might take a scene or even a single take more than 20 times, and it is my responsibility to keep them happy (as a director) so I will give them more breaks, make sure they feel refreshed, I will make sure to provide good catering service with different refreshments varieties (drinks “coffee and tea”, food and even deserts).

I will also make sure to keep stand-ins in hand, (which are used to block a lighting from a scene, so that the actor doesn’t have to stand uncomfortably during the scene takes).

10. Write 500 words on your own philosophy of working with actors. How do you plan to handle them? What will be your process?

Actors are very difficult people to work with, they are creative, sensitive and talented, you want to make sure (as a director) to use all your actor’s trait and advantages into the advantage of your project and or production.

I will start the process by the regular first step to find the best/strongest actors for my project which is the casting process,

I will hire a Casting Director who will go through hundreds of actors and has copies of their headshots, next the casting director should call back the best 10 or

something and invite me (the director) to cast them and make the final selection/decision.

As a director, I should be monitoring my actors closely, make sure that they follow instructions and will not give me or the production a hard time when we start production.

I will deal with actors professionally but with extra care, I will let the actors (as long as other crew members) that I am the boss and have a firm grip over the project but at the same time I will be nice and understanding,

When dealing with actors, I want them to feel comfortable and appreciated so that they can give me their best performance,
I will want to give my actors every single information needed on their characters and their character's backgrounds so that they have a better and deeper understanding of the characters and the story,

I will make sure that I share my vision (with actors and crew) so they can see my view and what we are trying to accomplish,

I will give actor their creative space (at least on the first shoot) after they get it all out and try it their way, I will come in and say "that was great, can we try it my way this time, please", I want to make sure that my actors are not distracted or paranoid with my comments that's why I will use action verbs instead of adjectives,

When I use action verbs with actors (onset) they will be less distracted and more focused on their character, emotions and the story,
But if I use adjectives ("be more happy" or "be more angry") first of all you will make the actor doubt him/her self start to get distracted, in addition to they usually make faces which will make the actors demonstrate rather than experiencing which lacks emotions (and audience can see/feel that)
I will talk about the process more than talking about the results (I will review the results with myself later on but I will not include the actors on the results so I don't distract them).

I will also note that actors get bored quickly, it is my responsibility to keep them happy and not bored (as they will be taking different takes and scenes several times) so I will give them more breaks, make sure they feel refreshed, I will make sure to provide good catering service with different refreshments varieties (drinks “coffee and tea”, food and even deserts).

I will also make sure to keep stand-ins in hand, (which are used to block a lighting from a scene, so that the actor doesn't have to stand uncomfortably during the scene takes).

I will also make sure to do a table read for three times not only one or two, A table read is an opportunity for the whole cast and the director of a project to sit all together, first to meet which is a very good opportunity for all of the previous mentioned crew to meet in person and get acquainted,

It is also a good opportunity to get familiar with the project's script as in the table reading all actors and the director are required to sit together and read the script together for few times,

Last but not least it gives a good opportunity for the actors to get into their characters,

In my own point of view a table read is very crucial as it is an opportunity to avoid a lot of problems in production and makes the actors understand the story more.

At the end I want to be nice and positive to my actors (and crew) who will be working so hard to implement my vision so that the project/movie succeed, which should be a win-win situation for all,