

“The Actor/Agent Relationship”

Every actor strives to have a great relationship with their agent and vice-versa. You often hear actors praising their agents while other actors are complaining about theirs. The actor/agent relationship is a mutual partnership. Agents arrange interviews and auditions, negotiate salary and billing, believe in you when you are down and celebrate your success. Your agent can not put all the energy in the relationship. Nor can you expect them to do the majority of the work. Developing a long term relationship takes time. Patience, loyalty to your agent and believing in yourself will go a long way toward a successful career. Remember this is a business, not a hobby.

Below are Do's and Don'ts to help achieve your goals for a successful career in show business.

DO have a great headshot that looks like you. You can be the most talented actor in the world, but it will not do you any good unless you have a great headshot to get your foot in the door. The headshot is the first step in the casting process. It should be done by a professional headshot photographer and must currently look like you.

DO return calls promptly and check your e-mail daily. You must be accessible at all times. It is good idea for you to have a cell phone that you can check emails on.

DO buy your domain name. Go to godaddy.com. It is an inexpensive way to market yourself. You might not plan on using it now, but it is a good business decision to secure it just in case you need it in future.

DO be on time for all auditions and callbacks. Give yourself plenty of time to get to the casting location. There is no excuse for being late. Plan ahead for possible traffic and weather delays.

DO be prepared for auditions. Bring extra headshots and resumes. Have extra wardrobe in your car. Go over the storyboard and know your script before you go to the audition. Do your homework! One of casting directors biggest complaints are actors who come to castings unprepared. If you can not put in 100 percent don't go! You must be off book for every audition. Memorize lines and know the character. The audition room is not for socializing. The more prepared you are the better chance you have to book the job.

DO investigate good acting classes. Audit a few classes to see which one is right for you. Going to an acting class is the equivalent to going to the gym to work out. Acting is an aquired skill. The more you do the better you get.

DO provide your agent with current headshots and updated resumes without being reminded. It is your job to keep your resume updated and the hands of your agent. E-mail your new resume and don't forget to mail 10 hard copies of your headshot and resume each time it is updated. Depending on the project submissions are done either electronically or hard copy.

DO be realistic to what roles you are right for, either physically or skill level. Trust your agent to send you out when you are right for the role. It is not the quantity of auditions your agent sends you on, but the quality of auditions you are "right" for.

DO network. Sometimes the most talented actor doesn't land the part, but actor who knows how to "get the job".

DO have a current passport. You never know when you will have the opportunity to film out of the country.

DO pay your agent commission promptly. Contracts must be sent to the agency. If a mistake is made and the check is sent directly to you call the paymaster to have it changed to be sent to your agent. If you do not trust your agent to receive your check then you should not be represented by them.

DO keep your agent posted on any commercial conflicts you have. And, don't forget to let them know when you are released from the conflict.

DO book yourself out if you are not available for auditions. If you are not booked out then your agent will consider you available 24/7.

DO ask for your agent's advice on choosing new headshots. Please send a self addressed stamped envelope to return the contact sheets or disc to you. Discuss wardrobe and get your agents opinion on looks before you shoot.

DO bring your I-9 information when you work. A copy of your passport **or** driver license **and** birth certificate for adults and a passport **or** school report card **and** social security card for minors. This is a requirement from the federal government to prove that you are a U.S. citizen and eligible for employment.

DO get a copy of the call sheet when you work and send a copy to your agent. This will give you all the information on who to thank and who to contact for a copy of the job. It is your responsibility to find out how to get a copy of your work.

DO keep your agent updated with sizes and phone numbers. Let them know about any changes you have with your hair style, braces on or off, loose or gain weight...anything that changes your look.

DO carefully read the release before you sign it. **IF** in doubt call your agent. Once the release is signed it is a legal agreement between you and the production company and/or ad agency. Changes can not be made after you sign the contract. You must get a copy of the release/contract before you leave the set and send a copy to your agent.

DO call your agent and express any concerns you have.

DO keep a positive mental outlook at all times.

DO remember it's your career. It is your responsibility to stay on top of the business you are the only one who can control your own destiny.

DO have a great attitude at all times. How you look, act and conduct yourself at auditions and on the job will determine future bookings. Be professional, patient and listen to directions given to you by the director and the crew. There are a lot of little details involved in filming. It is a long and tedious process of getting everything perfect. Be cooperative, no moaning and complaining.

DON'T expect to book every audition you go out on. The best advice is to do the best you can at the audition and when you leave forget about it. It is a numbers game. Auditions are job interviews. The more you go on the better chance you have of booking the job.

DON'T confirm an audition unless you are positive you can be there. Make sure you check your schedule before you confirm. Canceling an audition is unacceptable unless you are sick or have an emergency.

DON'T go to an audition unless you are available for callbacks and the entire shoot. Seldom will production work around your schedule and they can not guarantee you will be released for a curtain call or other obligations.

DON'T go to auditions if you are not feeling well. Try to reschedule the audition or cancel it. Your work is not going to be the best and it is not fair to put other actors and casting directors at risk to get sick.

DON'T call your actor friends to see if they are going on the same audition. This has a way of causing hard feelings for everyone. Although you may go on some of the same castings please don't compare yourself to anyone. Every actor an agent represents is unique to themselves.

DON'T call your agent at home or on the cell phone unless it is an emergency.

DON'T bring family and friends to auditions or bookings. Exception is one adult per minor child.

DON'T put an unemployment claim against your agent. We are not your employer. If you are on unemployment get the information from a PA on the set on who the right company is to file a claim on.

DON'T go behind your agents back and call the casting director about a business matter unless you have discussed it with your agent first.

DON'T call your agent and say "what's happening?" Have a reason to call them or use e-mail for all non-emergency correspondence.

DON'T take it for granted that you can drop by your agents office anytime and expect them to drop what they are doing to talk to you. Be courteous and set up an appointment.

DON'T expect your agent to get you the job. Your agent provides the opportunity and the actor gets the work and by being the most professional and talented actor for the job.