

Actor's Etiquette 102

Dos and Don'ts In the Audition Room

[Jul 17, 2009 Sean Pratt](#)

Whether you're walking onto the stage or into someone's office, your behavior while auditioning will have a definite impact on your chances for success.

It continues to astound directors, agents and casting directors how actors behave, or rather misbehave, during the audition or interview. Some of the actor's mistakes can be chalked up to naiveté or nervousness, but others can only be the result of carelessness, a bad attitude or worse, a hidden desire to take out their frustrations on the "powers that be." Take a moment to look over these tips on the dos and don'ts of audition etiquette.

The Moment Before

Prior to walking into the room, you should have taken care of these things:

- Hopefully, the monitor has told you, "You're up next," so get your game-face on and you won't be surprised when you're called to go in.
- If the monitor doesn't have it, then have your picture/resume ready, along with your sides if you're reading from a scene. In fact, have an extra copy of your P/R with you just in case.
- Please make sure your cell phone is off!
- Leave your satchel, briefcase, etc., with the monitor. You don't want to be dragging this stuff around or accidentally leaving it in the room.

Hello, My Name is

Normally, you'll be introduced to the director or whoever is running the audition. Take a moment to acknowledge them by saying their names back to them... "Hello, Cheryl." Your ability to be genuine and appealing is never as important as it is right now, so turn up the "Charm-o-meter" to ten!

As a general rule, don't shake anyone's hand unless they offer it first. Remember, they're going to see a passel of actors and if they shook hands with all of them they'd have a dislocated shoulder by the end of the day. Keep your conversation up-tempo and brief, letting them drive the conversation. One more thing, if they want to know what you've been up to lately, this is a great opportunity to *not* talk about the Biz. Having a short and humorous anecdote handy is worth its weight in gold, at this moment. Remember, they want to see as much of the "real you" as possible in these few minutes.

The Performance

After the introductions are over you should smoothly transition into performing your monologue or scene. Here are some *faux pas* to avoid:

- Don't use any props in your scene unless otherwise told to do so. If it's specified in the text, you can mime it.
- If there is a reader provided to be your scene partner, do not hit, kiss, slap or in any way touch them or, for that matter, expect them to touch you.
- If there is a set in the space where you're auditioning, for God's sake don't touch it or use the props or furniture! The stage manager will tear you limb from limb and no jury in the world would convict her. Only use the chair provided for your audition.
- If you're using the chair, do not throw it! It isn't dramatic, it's stupid and someone could get hurt.

Take a Bow

After you've done your scene or monologue, remember that the audition is not over yet. You can still mess up your chances of success by doing any of the following:

- Don't apologize for your audition in the hopes of getting praise from the director. They are not your mother.
- Don't balk at any direction that they may give you, even if you think it's totally wrong. They want to see how easily you can make an acting adjustment... that's why they're called the director!
- If they strike up a conversation with you, never, never, never, badmouth anyone in the Biz. They might be best friends with that person or have worked with that theatre.
- Don't overstay your welcome. Be aware when it's time to say, "Thank you for your time and have a great day."

Break a Leg!