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How to Make Casting Director Workshops Work for You

by Dallas Travers, CEC

How familiar does this scenario sound to you? You decide that it's time to cultivate solid relationships with television casting directors, so you sign up for a workshop service in order to meet these people face to face. Over the course of the next year, you meet two different casting directors each month totaling twenty-four first meetings yet no one really knows you. I meet tons of actors every month who believe strongly that CD workshops don't work. Well, of course they don't when you never really develop a relationship with the casting directors you meet.

A lot of actors make this mistake and I understand why. It's easy to fall into the trap that the more people you meet, the more opportunities you'll have. But that's just not true. It's not about who you know in this town. It's actually about who knows you and you cannot become known after just one meeting.

So here's how you can use The Rule of Seven to make CD workshops work for you.

Step One: Create your target list. There are literally hundreds of casting directors in Hollywood, so it's pretty impossible to effectively apply the Rule of Seven to all of them. Not to worry - you don't have to. Just select a small (less than 12) list of casting directors and target them specifically and consistently.

Visit www.castingabout.com or imdbpro.com and research those television shows where the most opportunity for co-stars and guest-stars exists. Please note that I did not just tell you to make a list of your favorite shows! I know, everybody loves *The Office*. But part of what makes that show so great is the fact that the cast is stuck together day in and day out working in an office, so new characters are rarely introduced. Instead, make a list of those shows that feature new characters on a consistent basis such as *Cold Case*, *CSI*, or any of the other countless procedural episodics. Don't forget about comedies such as *Chuck*, *My Name is Earl*, and *Monk* as well.

Step Two: Get some face time. Register for two different CD workshop services if you can. Now, remember not all services are created equal. I recommend that

you join a service that truly auditions their talent before accepting an actor. This insures that the caliber of talent is consistent and sets you up to really shine.

Step Three: Only workshop with those CD offices on your target list. This will allow you to maintain your sanity and your budget by attending a limited number of workshops with a purpose rather than taking a shot in the dark and workshopping with various CDs through a process of random selection.

Step Four: Do your best to attend every workshop you can with members of your target list. Remember, it's the Rule of Seven so aim to workshop with the same people multiple times over the course of a year. That's how you become remembered. That's how you'll build trust. And that's how you'll eventually snag auditions.

Step Five: Follow up. Send a thank you card after each workshop specifically speaking to one thing you appreciated or learned in the class. Be real. Be authentic. Avoid the obligatory "hey thanks... hope you call me in soon." And instead specifically identify one part of the workshop experience that you appreciated most. This shows that you actually paid attention.

Step Six: Stay in the loop. Send a postcard update to your target list at least every other month. Remember Bed Bath and Beyond. You must remind them how they know you and keep your name in the forefront of their minds.

You can easily apply the Rule of Seven to every area of your career. The best part about the Rule of Seven is that it allows you to become more consistent and persistent in your marketing efforts, which naturally leads to exciting results. Just remember that what you do is less important than how often you do it and how happy you are during the process. So go out there, do less stuff more often, and have a blast. It's your career, so enjoy it!

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