

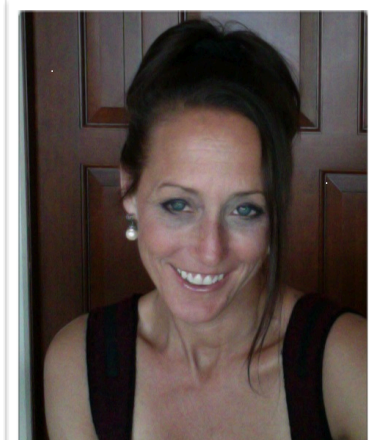
The Screen Actor's Check List



by **Beth Rosen**

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Beth Rosen is a #1 best selling author, film producer, screenwriter, comedy writer, actress, film editor, songwriter, illustrator, graphic designer, radio personality, international corporate insolvency attorney, healer and professor of yoga. She owns her own production company, Signature Beth Productions LLC, which is dedicated to bringing quality film to the big screen and television.

Beth has written, produced, acted in and edited her own short film, *Photo Finish*, with Mort Scharfman, an Emmy award winning writer. The film was an official selection at several film festivals, including the Sunscreen Film Festival, Big Apple Film Festival, Garden State Film Festival and Hoboken Film Festival. She currently has several television pilots and screenplays in circulation for consideration by production companies.

She recently co-authored a #1 best selling book *Living Proof: Celebrating the Gifts That Came Wrapped in Sandpaper* with Lisa Nichols (co-author of *Chicken Soup for the African American Soul*). Beth has also written and illustrated several children's books and books of wisdom. She has her own inspirational radio show *Spotlight on Rhino On Air Radio*, by the arts for the arts, which airs Mondays at 10:00 a.m. EST.

Beth also teaches an online movie-making course called *The Back Door to Hollywood* which teaches how to launch your movie career, how to build star recognition and how to write and produce your own independent film.

She graduated from Columbia Law School and the Wharton School of Business and worked as an international corporate insolvency and bank financing attorney at top New York City law firms, including Weil, Gotshal & Manges LLC, Shearman & Sterling, LLP and Cadwalader, Wickersham & Taft, LLP.

Beth has studied with world-renowned masters from all walks of life in numerous areas of expertise, including spiritual enlightenment, healing, yoga, business, law, comedy writing and martial arts. Her diverse background, training and life experiences give her a unique ability to get to the heart of the matter and touch the soul in profound ways. She is a master with words and like all masters, she draws you in to draw you out.

Her passion is helping others accelerate their path to success, peace and happiness with enlightenment so they can be free to live the life they always dreamed of with effortless intention. To that end, she offers various free resources, products, courses, services and coaching.

For more information, please visit bethrosen.com



THE SCREEN ACTOR'S CHECK LIST

If you want to act in film, television or video, here are some priceless tips to keep in mind while on the set.

The Goal is to Make You Look Fabulous on Film

Everyone is on your side in film. The goal is to get the perfect shot and you can do a number of retakes and reshoots if you “mess up.” Remember the director of photography, director, producer, make-up artists, lighting crew, props person, line producer, continuity person, personal assistants, etc. - are all on your side. You have a team of support to help you get the best performance.

Know Where the Camera is at All Times and Know When to Play to It

Be aware of the camera but don't look directly into it unless directed. A good director of photography and the director will know how to get the required shot.

If your facial reactions are key to conveying an emotion or a critical element of the scene, make sure your face is toward the camera. You don't want the audience to miss your Oscar performance by inadvertently turning away from the camera, especially if you are told in advance they are doing close-ups or extreme close-ups.

Emotions and reactions are critical in the cutting room so even if you are not speaking but the camera is on you, you need to react to the other person. Don't be afraid to try out a few different facial reactions when you do retakes. continue acting and reacting so long as the camera is on you. Those close-up facial and body reactions can ultimately save a scene in a film and bring it to the next level.

The Camera Sees All

Don't be afraid to play things subtly, especially if the director is getting close-ups or extreme close-ups. The camera sees everything, even the most subtle of movements. You can study the subtle movements of film and television actors to get a sense of what works and what doesn't work. Remember if you are a theater actor, not to exaggerate your actions in film. Many times the camera will be positioned and zoom in close to you to get subtle movements.

Always Hit Your Mark

Remember where your mark is - where you should be standing or sitting on set so that you are within the camera's frame. Always hit your mark. Don't go beyond the camera's frame or you will not be in the shot.



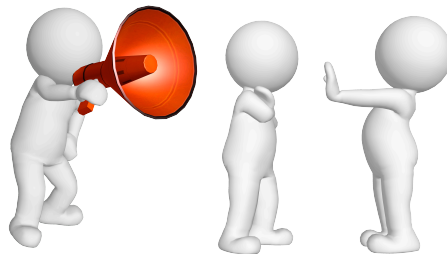
Be Aware of Others on Set

Expand your awareness of others on set so that you do not unnecessarily block their actions that are meant to be captured on film. Stick to your casted role and play that to perfection.

Be Aware of Props and Their Relation to the Camera and Actors

Be aware of where the props are, especially in relation to the camera and other actors. Make sure they are not blocking you or a fellow actor unless the scene calls for that. Be consistent and contiguous in re-takes and follow-up shots with your actions so that the editor can get a smooth seamless sequence of events.

Although there should be a continuity person on set, it's important for you to remember what you were doing from shot to shot. For example, remembering if your drinking glass was full at the end of the last shot and now it is half full so it must be refilled again for continuity purposes is a huge help on set and can go a long way in facilitating the editing process. Don't leave stray soda cans or snacks on set because they will destroy the continuity of the set.



Once the Camera is Rolling Don't Stop

Once the director says "Action!" do not stop acting for any reason until the director shouts "Cut!" even if you mess up a line. It is ultimately the director's decision and he knows whether

the scene worked and also the kind of magic he can work in the editing room with what you believe is a “bloop” or a mistake. Continue to act and react even if you are going beyond the scripted dialog and action because chances are, the director is getting necessary footage. That is why you don’t stop no matter what until you hear “Cut!” It shows that you are a professional actor and you understand movie making.

Remember the Editing Room is Where Magic Happens

Don’t worry if you think you “blew” your scene. Editors can work magic in the editing room. Stay positive, stay in the flow and follow direction on set. Let the director get his shots and reverse shots, even if you “mess up” your lines. They can always cut to the other actor reacting to you in your “bloop” moments and use a voice over dub or hear you speaking the parts while off camera to the actor on film. So don’t beat yourself up for so-called mistakes.

Sensitive Microphones and Your Voice

Unlike the theater where an actor has to project their voice and exaggerate their actions, in film and television, there will be audio recording devices such as booms and lav mics designed to pick up very subtle noises. That means means your normal voice, the same kind of voice you would use in real life, even a whisper when you are acting, will be clear as day.

Wardrobe Issues

Do not wear clothing that is noisy when you move because it will cause loud interference with the mics. Be aware of clothing that goes “swoosh” when you move and avoid that on set.

If you know you will be under hot lights for extended periods of time and you tend to sweat, bring a second change of the same clothes. An example would be two white button down shirts or two white t-shirts. The last thing you want is to be cut from a scene because your clothing is drenched from sweat.



The Best Acting is Interacting

Sometimes it’s best to forget about the camera other than knowing where your mark is and just interact with the other characters on set. Then the acting becomes natural and flows effortlessly. If you are the only one in the scene, then use your imagination and immerse yourself in the role as if it were a real life scenario so you act natural.



Take Direction Well

Take direction well. Remember that no matter what the director says to you, he is on your side. If you make a mistake, let it go. Learn to take constructive criticism and bounce back quickly. A good director is trying to get the best performance as possible from you. If he wants you to redo it, that means he sees even more potential in you to nail the scene - he sees an Oscar winning performance - your true potential. Sometimes you may not agree with what they have to say but remember they see things from a much wider vantage point than you do while on set and within the camera's frame. So be deferential to their advice. They have the big picture in mind as well as each of the minute details for the scene.

Bring a Shooting Script Along

It's always wise to have a copy of the script with you so you can go over your lines, especially if you forget them. You can also make notations if the director decides to change anything while on set, which is very common.

Don't Drink the Night Before

Drinking dulls your senses and you will not be "on" the day of your filming, which will adversely impact your own acting career and taint your image to the professional cast and crew. You will also slow down the filming process and interfere with the performances of others if you are not as sharp as they are.

Bring Snacks and a Change of Comfortable Clothes

You are ultimately responsible for yourself so bring what you need to the set to feel good and charged with energy in between shoots. Although food is normally provided, if you have specific eating habits or needs, make sure you bring what you can eat so that you don't get hungry. It is very common to be waiting on set for long hours, even into the wee hours of the morning during filming shoots. You may not be able to come and go from the location because the sound may interfere with filming so have crunchy munchies on hand for emergency hunger pangs.

If you are going to be outside for any length of time and it is cold, bring sweaters, jackets and a cozy blanket to keep warm.

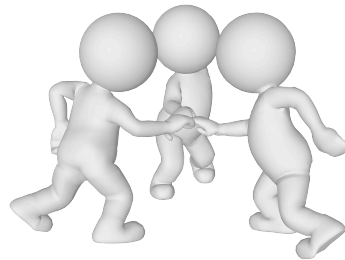
Reshoots Are Not Necessarily Bad

When you act in film and television, you will often be doing re-takes of the same scene over and over again, regardless of whether you nailed it the first time. The director will want to get

different camera angles (long shots, close-ups, medium shots, two shots, over the shoulder shots, obtuse angles, etc.) to use to splice together the film and keep the audience's attention. So don't take it personally. It's part of the job. Just be aware of your expressions, movements and props so that you maintain continuity in the different camera angles. Remember if your glasses were on or off in the last shot. Were you using your right hand to reach for the bread basket on the dinner table or your left hand. The little details can prove to be big editing issues in the cutting room and the better your continuity, the easier it will be for the editor to create a seamless sequence of events that use your best acting.

Remember Movies Move and So Should You

Movies move and so should you, even if the movements are subtle. Don't be a sitting duck on camera unless you are playing that role. Do what comes naturally, as if the camera wasn't even there and your movements will flow effortlessly.



Be a Team Player: Be Courteous and Go Out of Your Way

Producers, writers and directors like to work with amenable actors who go out of their way, clean up after themselves, are easy to direct and help out on set. Remember these people are investing a fortune to make you look good on film so don't rub them the wrong way. They may ultimately be your ticket to another film or television role. If you notice directors often work with the same stars over and over again because they have good chemistry with them and it makes the filmmaking process enjoyable.

If you go out of your way and are courteous to the cast and crew, they can only say nice things about you (assuming you remember your lines and nail your acting role). So be a team player.

Opportunity to Learn From Others

Expand your awareness while on the set. Learn from the other actors, the director, the producer and the other crew members. When you set the intention to learn and grow, you are likely to pick up priceless tricks of the trade and skills that could only be learned and integrated by watching how the masters do it on a movie set.



Maintain an Attitude of Gratitude

The opportunity to be on a movie-set and part of a film or television series is an extraordinary opportunity and gift of a lifetime. Your talents are being recognized and you are being given the opportunity to share your gifts with the world and work with other creative geniuses like yourself. Maintaining a positive state of mind and an attitude of gratitude will go a long way in helping you make the next quantum leap in your career.

Congratulate yourself and celebrate each success, no matter how big or small, in your journey. And that goes for others as well. Enjoy the ride!