

AVOC Auditioning Workshop

BREAKIN' IT DOWN

FIRST - READ IT. ALL OF IT.

Read any instructions, specs, notes. Read the title of the spot if it's there, read EVERYTHING. Read your role, read the other roles – the whole enchilada. Everything in there is a piece of information that can inform your performance. Know what is happening and how you fit in. How long is it supposed to be? Everything there is a clue for you to know what to do. Is it funny? Is it serious? Is it both? What is the intent and tone of the spot. What is the intent and tone of your role? What is the intent and tone of the other roles. If you are the announcer, what kind of announcer are you? Big and broad? Serious? Conversational? Somewhere in between? Voice of reason? Voice of God? Paying off a joke? If you are a character, look for any clues for tone and intent. Knowing the answer to these questions is key. Even if you're initially wrong about your role you will have an idea to start, and things will begin to crystalize as you continue.

(Side Note: I start reading *out loud* from the get go – just to start hearing it. It sounds different than reading in your head)

RESEARCH: The script isn't your only source of information. Look into the work these folks have been doing. Are there examples of spots or work from the same people? What commercials are running for the same company right now? What is the tone of what you can find? If you're reading for an animated show, look at other episodes, characters you may be interacting with, how broad is it & who's it geared to? Is it geared toward kids? Adults? Both? All of this information is important to form your performance. If it's a new show - get your info from the sides.

WHO ARE YOU?

Figure out who you are and who you are talking to. If you're in a dialogue, who is the other person? Who are you to them? How would you react to them? Knowing your audience is doubly important when you're flying solo. Remember, commercials speak to just one person at a time. Knowing these things will give you confidence – something every casting person and producer wants to see/hear.

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WHAT IS THE STORY?

Maybe the most important piece of the puzzle! What is the story and how do you fit in? AND THEN.... How do you serve that story? This is all of it right here. Serve the story, serve the spot, serve your scene partner, serve the scene, and you will have served the client and director. The story doesn't have to be some complex riddle that you have to solve. It can be as simple as "these people are buying a car and can't agree on the color."

NOW ACTUALLY BREAK IT DOWN

Now that you know everything you can possibly know about your role and the piece, read your role and figure out where to breathe, what you want to emphasize, where to pause etc. If you need to, mark up your script with your own notes. If your role is a monologue, where is the beginning, middle and end? What is the arc, what is the story? Structure your beats around what you've found. READ ALOUD! I don't care how many times you read it to yourself in your head, it does not compare to hearing yourself read the thing out loud. I can almost guarantee you will discover something about your performance that you hadn't noticed when reading it in your head.

KNOW WHAT A CASTING SESSION IS

Amazing as it may sound the casting session is not just about you. The casting director is on a deadline. He or she may have 5 or 6 other roles to audition that day. At best you are one of about 80 to 100 people reading for the role. More commonly these days – 100s. They want to be able to recommend just a few from that. A casting director wants you to succeed- it makes them look good, and eases their work load. You need to stand out with confidence, connection, and presence.

Ok, feel free to ask questions, that's why I'm here! KEEP PRACTICING!!

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