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Advice

The Atlanta Actor's 3-Step Guide to Workshops

By [John Stoneburner](#) | Posted Feb. 4, 2016, 2 p.m.

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The **Atlanta entertainment market** is booming (still!!) and as that continues there will be more and more workshops being offered to the actor starting and building a career. The choices can become overwhelming and the fear of not taking the "right" workshop can bankrupt an actor—quickly.

Workshops led by agents and casting directors will always be around and they will always be useful to your career, especially when used in conjunction with an ongoing training program. You can get the most out of them, and for your money, if you use the following general guide to help make your choices. Georgia-based performers should think of this as a roadmap: know that you can veer off at

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any time, experience something new, and then hop back on again.

When you don't yet have an agent:

Assuming you're in or have consistently been in quality acting classes, industry workshops with local agents should be the first target in your quest for professional jobs. **Joy Pervis**, talent agent and head of **J Pervis Talent** in Atlanta, tells Backstage, "New actors with limited credits can utilize agent or casting director workshops to their advantage to showcase their talent level in front of industry reps that may normally not give them a second look on a mail-in submission. I personally have signed and developed actors from these type of workshops."

After you get an agent:

Once you're an actor with an agent in your corner, seek out the workshops that feature **local casting directors**. Their feedback will give you a chance to truly assess your skill set and your possibility of booking work.

The second reason actors in the Southeast should focus on local casting directors—as opposed to CDs from larger markets who come here to do workshops—is that this stage in an acting career ought to be about looking for work nearby. You need to know the local CDs and they need to know you. Once your submissions start crossing their desks it will be more beneficial if they have an idea of the work you can produce. Spaces such as Get Scene Studios in Atlanta feature these types of workshops on a regular basis.

Once you're booking regular work:

You have representation, you've been auditioning often and landing gigs in your region. Now you should definitely be looking to do the workshops that feature a larger market agent or CD. Know that travel might be a factor should they see you, like you, and want to help further your career. So be honest with yourself about your cross-country, drop-of-a-hat, travel limitations prior to signing onto the workshop.

If you know you're only working in Atlanta and the Southeast, you may want to do these types of workshops anyway, if only as a way to see how you compare in a larger market. Knowing that you could compete on a bigger scale can give you an extreme boost in confidence—and confidence always works!

*Talent agent Joy Pervis of J Pervis Talent has an upcoming workshop Feb. 20 at **Get Scene Studios**.*

*John Stoneburner is co-owner of **The Company Acting Studio** in Atlanta and currently teaches group and private sessions with a focus on the on-camera audition for film and TV. His students have booked roles in feature films, network TV, and both national and regional commercials.*

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film

CMT's, 'Million Dollar Quartet'

Casting Elvis, Johnny Cash, Ike Turner & other roles for the upcoming TV movie produced by ThinkFactory Media ("Hatfields & McCoy's")

reality

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Seeking climbers to potentially climb Mount Kilimanjaro for a new reality show in development

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