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Designing a Rehearsal Process for Any Medium

By **Lisina Stoneburner** | Posted Dec. 3, 2015, 10 a.m.

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Actors need and want a rehearsal process that is successful across all mediums. One that simply requires alterations, tweaks and manipulations based on the material and the job. At the core of every good process though...are a few key components.

Consider these three words when designing your process: explore, discover, and drill—in that order.

An effective rehearsal process takes time to allow moments to occur to you—for your body, heart, and mind to have an experience. The process should be explorative to allow discovery, which can lead eventually to drilling. It's important not to do these in reverse.

Three helpful ideas to remember when working are as follows.

1. It should be physical. The actor's body is a big recording device. What you do to it, it will remember. It is receptive to stimuli and it yearns to be stimulated into feeling and reacting. Provide something for your senses to react and respond to. Physicalizing the material will help you discover rhythms, character traits, body language, voice, and levels. Engaging your body in rehearsal through walking, activity, and explorative movement will allow the emotions to organically connect with your physical behavior. Physical behavior stimulates emotion and opens your valves to receive feelings that might otherwise remain stagnant by inactivity.

2. The words should become comfortable in your mouth. Spend time on the text. It's not an afterthought. Articulate. Over-articulate in rehearsal to the point where the words are now yours and can be manipulated however necessary. Once it is second nature, you can forget about them, you will stop thinking about them, and your body, mind, and heart will have recorded them so now they can be used as part of your exploration and discovery.

3. Leave room for something new to happen. You are not the director and should not wear that hat while rehearsing. Your job is to create a prepared and available canvas, prepared with research, script comprehension, character work, physical, vocal, and emotional preparation. However, prepare yourself to be open to suggestion. Give yourself room to hear something new, respond to a new idea, thought, or memory. Leave space to have a brand new moment. Do not direct yourself. Prepare yourself.

Strong actors are trained in relaxation, vocal and physical warmup, speech work, script comprehension, character development, and emotional discovery. It is your job to know what tools you need for what job and apply them with efficiency. When you prepare properly, you are available for the experience of acting.

Remember, exploration is not performance. Much is allowed in rehearsal that eventually creates the very distinct and unique performance. Do not judge what occurs in rehearsal. It is not the finished product. It may take many forms—too big, too small, not camera-friendly, too subtle—but this is simply you discovering what works and what makes the moments happen. Record what happens to you when exploring, look back on what worked, debrief with your fellow actors about what they experienced. All experiences in rehearsal are valid. Then you must use those experiences to create the proper performance for each medium.

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Lisina Stoneburner is an Atlanta-based acting coach, founder of the [Company Acting Studio](#), and [Backstage Expert](#). For more information, check out Stoneburner's [full bio!](#)

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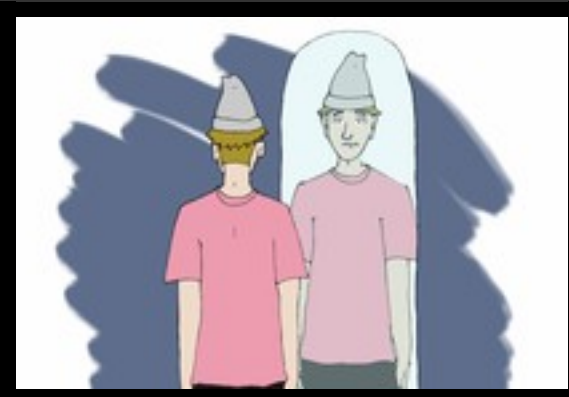
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