



DIRECTOR-ACTORS ROUNDTABLE (DART) - SUMMARY OF POINTS

Casting

	Casting Calls	Casting Process	Preparing for Auditions	Video Auditions	Budgets
Actors	Clarify all information regarding the project such as shoot rates, overtime rates (if any), shoot dates, payment terms, loading period, usages and territories.	Be flexible in accommodating to new directions given during the audition. Directors look for actors that fit the emotional range and energy level of their characters, as well as the actors' sincerity in getting the role. They are also looking for your ability to emote and respond to different directions on-the-spot.	To be better prepared, ask questions about the film or the character to gain a better idea of what you are auditioning for - understand the character's motivations and avoid overly dramatic performances. Consider auditioning for characters that you can relate to.	Dress presentably with neutral colors and no loud prints. Audition videos should be shot against a clean white background with clear audio.	While remuneration is often offered, bear in mind that you may also need to cover your own expenses such as training and transportation. Remember that the culture in Singapore is different from that of other countries.

<p>Actors</p>	<p>Have proper contract /written agreement before agreeing /starting on the job. No verbal agreements via phone.</p>	<p>When you don't get feedback during auditions, it may not necessarily be a bad thing. Don't take it personally.</p> <p>However, if you do receive feedback and adjustments, that is often a sign that the casting director likes you or sees potential in you.</p>	<p>Directors want actors to have done prior homework on the characters.</p>	<p>For physical auditions, actors should come dressed as close to the character that they're auditioning for.</p> <p>Take note that directors generally prefer live auditions as it allows them to interact with you, gauge your attitude, personality, energy level and build rapport with you.</p>	<p>If the role involves a good script and story, and the character you are given is good, consider acting for free and use the reel as compensation - good exposure and experience is key.</p>
		<p>It is good to have a standardised format for resumés and headshots. Having an array of photos from full body shots to pictures in other costumes is helpful for a director to envision how the actor can fit as the character.</p> <p>An actor who has a showreel and/or website is an advantage in the casting process.</p>			<p>Student films in Singapore are generally of good quality. Remember that film schools worldwide don't have big budgets in general, and not everyone is a rich student - try to manage your expectations.</p>

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Directors	<p>Casting calls that are publicized should only contain necessary information & not be overtaken by graphic design. Keep the design simple and readable.</p> <p>Be transparent on info such as location, dates and rates. If it's low-paid or unpaid, specify it.</p> <p>If there are intimate/nude scenes, specify it. Transparency is a sign of professionalism.</p>	<p>Directors should be respectful and mindful towards actors during auditions. Consider casting actors for their attitude, not just their talent.</p> <p>Chat with the actors to gauge whether they are easy to work with on-set. Bad auditions result in bad chemistry with a bad end-product.</p>	<p>If your script is unfinished, it is recommended to send actors a short sample or key scenes in the script for actors to prepare.</p>	<p>Most actors are generally willing to travel for auditions but having the option of self-tape video casting is also recommended.</p>	<p>For student films, the typical pay is between \$100 to \$200.</p> <p>It is good practice to specify whether the project is low-paid or unpaid in your casting call.</p> <p>For non-paid shoots, you can cover expenses such as food, transportation as well as providing allowance per diem for the actor.</p>
	<p>Cast more based on acting ability, rather than looks alone.</p> <p>The casting & audition process is generally a colour-blind one. Unless race is a requirement, see the actors for their talent and what they bring to the audition instead of their race.</p> <p>Consider being specific in what kind of actors you want answering to your casting call. Actors may respond to a casting call only to find out that you're</p>	<p>Talk to the actors to make them feel more relaxed during the auditions and help ease their nervousness.</p> <p>Get the actors to do a brief introduction to get to know them better and what they think about the character as well as how differently they can portray the character.</p>	<p>Actors prioritize a good story, good attitude from director/producer and overall professionalism from communication and casting calls.</p>	<p>Video casting allows you to cast a wider group of people without needing a space for hours to audition.</p> <p>Video casting may not be useful if you wish to view actors outside of their comfort zone.</p>	<p>For paid shoots, let actors know the loading platforms of the project (social media, TV, print) and rates provided.</p> <p>For student films, negotiate with your teachers to get more time to cast for greater quality in the end-product.</p> <p>Be as transparent with all the business aspects related to the project as possible.</p>

	<p>looking for another kind of actor.</p> <p>For example, using the term 'Caucasian' to mean 'White' in a casting call, and then rejecting someone who is Caucasian because they look 'Middle Eastern, may not be considered fair for the actor.</p>	<p>It is best not to make assumptions about the actors, but rather to try and listen or bounce off ideas with each other.</p>		<p>Be specific on the type of shots required from the actor (eg: close-up, medium close-up, etc).</p>	<p>Transparency is a sign of professionalism.</p>
<p>Directors</p>	<p>Be transparent with all aspects related to the project. Let actors know the loading period, usage platforms of the project (e.g. social media, TV, print) shoot rates, shoot dates and payment terms.</p>	<p>As a director, it is good for you to make strong, consistent, justified choices and ensure your actors do the same. Provide focused, detailed instructions over empty ones (eg. "more sad, more energy, more colours, etc.")</p> <p>Try giving the actors more backstory to work with.</p> <p>Be open to suggestions and ideas from the actors instead of imposing only your way. It might bring something more exciting and interesting to the production.</p>			<p>Be realistic; ensure things are within your budget and skill level to maintain quality produced work.</p> <p>Remuneration for actors can be added into the acting package cost. Transport and lunch should be provided if no pay is available.</p> <p>If actors provide props and costumes, the production is advised to cover the laundry cost and the collection of laundry. Be specific if these items are needed. Provide them with money to buy clothes for the production wherever possible.</p>

		Actors can be given scenarios and / or motivations to work with instead of only being given directions and adjectives. You can also create and provide problems for the actors to solve. To test actors' improvisational skills, consider asking actors to come up with different lines that still suit the scene.			
Directors	As a generic guide, most actors look for quality, time and money as a measure for considering a role (minimum of 2 out of the 3 are required for consideration).	<p>If you receive e-mails from actors requesting for a follow-up, it is nice if you could respond "thank you for applying, we regret to inform you that you are not shortlisted"</p> <p>Actors will appreciate a response so that they can free their schedule if they are not selected for the project.</p> <p>However, in reality, most directors don't have the luxury of replying every e-mail request and actors often rarely get replied to.</p>			<p>Remember that movies you make in film school are not life changing</p> <p>- Do it more for passion than the money.</p> <p>If there are financial burdens affecting your production, you can consider asking your friends or schoolmates to help you. However, this runs the risk of getting people who may not be trained actors.</p>

Rehearsals are useful for both the cast and crew and is a great time to get to know each other's roles better.

It creates opportunities for both actors and directors to experiment and try new things with the script - it gives directors more time to share about the script and possible references and styles that actors can become familiar with.

Rehearsal

	Preparation for Scenes	Communication	Shoot Schedule	Should rehearsals be paid?
Directors	<p>Table reads are very beneficial to the quality of the production. It gives the actors opportunities to understand the story as a whole, decide on choices for their character & suggest new ideas with the director.</p> <p>It also gets the cast all on the same page when starting on the production.</p>	<p>Communicate the vision and style of film with the actor before production begins. Let them prepare for the style of acting (e.g. dramatic, subdued) in the rehearsal process.</p> <p>Communicate the vision and style of film with the crew before production begins. Discuss the aesthetics & cinematography with the director of photography.</p> <p>This is so everyone begins production on the same page and that all scenes remain consistent.</p>	<p>For short films, 2-3 rehearsals are generally sufficient. If there are sensitive scenes, rehearsals are a good time for the cast and crew to become comfortable with each other.</p> <p>Rehearsal timings are recommended to be listed in casting calls. For an ensemble cast, schedule rehearsals to ensure that actors will not be waiting their turn.</p>	<p>A fair compensation would be to cover at least transport.</p> <p>If you have the budget, it should preferably be paid.</p>
	<p>Give the actors time to connect with each other, especially if there is a need for chemistry between them.</p>	<p>Be transparent with what is expected from the actor. Let them know early on if there are intimate scenes/fight scenes etc. to ensure that they are on board and comfortable.</p>	<p>In film, try to have more scene rehearsals with the actors so that filming on set will be a better prepared & smoother process.</p>	

	Preparation for Scenes	Communication	Shoot Schedule	Should rehearsals be paid?
Directors	Rehearse the blocking and camera shots intended with the actor for the scene beforehand.	Directors should be sensitive with the actors. Be aware if the actors are tired or uncomfortable. Give them breaks.	It is good to rehearse scenes, especially complicated ones (e.g. fight scenes, choreographed scenes) a few days before the actual filming. This gives time to experiment, practice & ensure a smooth filming day.	
	You may challenge actors by giving them scenarios/problems to improvise with. They might spark ideas never thought out before by the director.		Shooting schedule should be fixed & determined before filming begins so that the actors can reserve their time.	
			Come up with a pre-production timetable to plan for rehearsals. Once the cast is confirmed, you can easily ask if they are available for those dates. Communication: explain why you require actors to come earlier (e.g. to familiarise with the set) to foster greater commitment to rehearsals.	

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Actors	Rehearsals as well as acting and technical notes are helpful in your preparation for the shoot. No matter how prepared you think you are, it is good to rehearse scenes beforehand to reduce mistakes and create a better performance.	Communicate the boundaries and comfort levels early on in the process with the director. This also prevents/minimises any misunderstanding during the production.	Commit to rehearsal schedules. If you make a scheduling error, offer to find another actor who can replace you	A fair compensation would be to cover at least transport. If you have the budget, it should preferably be paid.
	Don't let your ego get in the way of taking direction from your director. Rehearsals and feedback are there to give the best performances possible for a production. Always be professional even if it's your personal friends who are acting with you. Treat rehearsals seriously; avoid fooling around just because you've landed the role.			

	Preparation for Scenes	Communication	Shoot Schedule	Should rehearsals be paid?
Actors	<p>If given the script beforehand, map out a character arc and make decisions and notes to share with the director during the table read.</p> <p>Commit to the choices you've made for the characters; maintain them during the actual shoot.</p> <p>Be quick & receptive to the director's notes to achieve the director's vision for a smoother filming process.</p>			
	<p>How soon can actors get the script?</p> <p>TV: Normally 1 week/2 weeks before. Censorship approval has to be cleared before the shoot. Changes in script is expected on the day itself.</p>			

Production

	Before Filming	On Set	On Set Continued	After Filming	Low Budget Productions
Directors	<p>Accommodate actors who have a different look from the majority (e.g. curly hair, darker skin). Put in the effort to make these actors look as good as their respective counterparts on screen.</p> <p>E.g. Communicate with your actors and understand the style that compliments them best.</p>	<p>Give actors a private or quiet space where they can focus on preparing for their scenes.</p> <p>Breaks are necessary for actors to rest/prepare.</p>	<p>Inform the actors early (e.g. at least 2 days before) on call times.</p> <p>Consider asking for longer shooting times than you need in case of unforeseeable blunders on the day. If you end early, you'll also boost morale.</p> <p>Consider providing transport for the actors, especially if you overrun. (Margin of error: 45 minutes past stated end time.)</p>	<p>If an actor requests to look at the shot or scene filmed, tell the actor to watch the 'dailys' at the end of the day.</p> <p>Most, if not all actors would not stay on set till the end of the day.</p>	<p>If actors have to bring in their own clothes, ask them nicely.</p> <p>Provide them with money to buy clothes for the production.</p> <p>The laundry of the actor's personal clothes used for production should be paid for.</p>
		<p>Craft services should always be provided for actors (e.g. snacks, fruits, water). The actor's time should be prioritised on scene preparations.</p> <p>Ensure that the set is safe for the actors and crew. Mark out dangerous areas and communicate with the actors and crew directly.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider creating Best Practices for your cast (e.g. after AV shouts, "Action!", wait for around 2 seconds before acting.) • Have a first aid kit in case of emergencies (e.g accident, diarrhoea) • Obtain emergency contact information of your cast. • Have back-up plans in the event of equipment failure or bad weather. 	<p>Are playbacks for acting adjustments taboo?</p> <p>Instead of just showing the playback, directors can give instructions on how to improve on the next take.</p> <p>After playback, actors might pick up on things that directors may not have noticed.</p>	

	Before Filming	On Set	On Set Continued	After Filming	Low Budget Productions
		When filming intimate scenes, only allow necessary people in the room. Ensure that the actors are comfortable in such situations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform actors on what to prepare for the shoot, especially if it's outdoors (e.g. at the beach: bring sunblock) 	They will be more aware on areas that seem unnatural and improve on the next take.	
		Always let the actor know whether they are needed on set & how much time it will take in between shots & scenes. If not, actors will be left feeling lost and waste energy reserves which can otherwise be channelled into a scene.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure the actors are well rested and sufficiently hydrated. • Validate and acknowledge actors for their performance. 		
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When there's nudity involved, directors should prepare a closed set to respect the actor's vulnerability. • Directors and actors should be transparent about sensitive scenes (e.g nudity). • Directors should express intentions without motives and actors should be upfront about the things they can and cannot do. 		

	Before Filming	On Set	On Set Continued	After Filming	Low Budget Productions
Actors	<p>Advisable to bring along your own set of beauty products (e.g. hair spray or other cosmetic necessities especially when working on a low budget production.</p> <p>Production may not always have the tools you need to look good on camera.</p>	<p>Always ask the director what the shot size or framing is so that the acting can be adjusted to the shot (e.g. smaller shot sizes mean that the acting has to be more subdued).</p>	<p>Actors should listen at all times even if it might not be immediately relevant. An actor that maintains awareness means that they are always ready for sudden changes. It also reflects professionalism.</p>	<p>Actors should be able to look at playbacks objectively.</p> <p>Actors might pick up on things that directors may not have noticed and be more aware on areas that seem unnatural and improve on the next take.</p>	
		<p>If certain issues arise when filming a scene, voice out these issues as early as possible so that the production team can find a solution.</p>	<p>Directors have different approaches to their work. The actor must adapt to the director. e.g. Follow instructions. Know when and how to keep your ego in check.</p>		
		<p>If unprepared for a scene or shot, let the director know that you need a moment to prepare.</p>	<p>Directors and actors should be transparent about sensitive scenes (e.g. nudity).</p> <p>Directors should express intentions without motives and actors should be upfront about the things they can and cannot do.</p>		