

## **What If You Were Ruining Your Chances Of Working As An Actor and Didn't Even Know It?**

Having marketed thousands of actors over the years, I have found that there are at least Ten Things that actors commonly do that mess up their careers or auditions or opportunities, and they don't even realize it. I LOVE working with actors because they have the courage to Dream the Big Dream, but on the other side of the big dream oftentimes, they feel nearly powerless to help their own careers along.

To achieve success in ANYTHING, the first half of the battle is getting the stuff out of the way that is stopping you from achieving it. Most of the times, it's simply changing your mindset. Think of it as getting to Ground Zero.

For example, when you complain about how hard it all is and how much you would just love to act if only someone would give you a chance -- that is putting negative energy out to the Universe about your career. Stop that. Give yourself power in your career! Quit playing the victim and putting yourself at the mercy of everyone else to hire you. It's a mental position! Okay, so that's a start.

Here are ten more things that you can change immediately and easily and get a few more things out of the way of your Success!

### **Here Are Ten Things That Ruin Your Chances**

**1. You stop doing things on your own once you get an agent.**

Even once you get an agent, you must continue to promote yourself. At best, your agent will get you a few auditions and then you'll be cast in some very small percentage of them. If you are waiting for your agent to make your career happen, you're in for a long wait. You should have a plan to pursue your career well beyond the activities of your agent.

**2. You say you want nothing more than to work but you're not really driven about the acting itself or getting work.**

You need to have some alchemical combination of wanting to act, wanting people to see your work, wanting to get paid for your work, and even wanting to be famous for your work. A pro-athlete knows that practice is as important as The Game itself. But most actors have a disconnect between knowing that the stuff they do for their career is as important as the

acting itself. You must get to where you FEEL the connection between your actions for your career and what you want in terms of results.

**3. You “feel” like you’re doing everything you can to get work, so you stop there even though you aren’t getting the results.**

Best case for most actors is that they consistently do the marketing activities they know they should do, like mailings, online submissions, and casting workshops, but they stop there. If you’re not getting the results you want, you’ve got to KEEP TAKING ACTIONS! Make them up if you can’t think of anything else. You need to get yourself to be business-minded by authentically generating a deep desire to work – not from your head but deep inside. When you do that, what starts to show up is the next action you need to take.

**4. You feel like there is nothing unique about you and just hope you get lucky enough that someday you’ll be cast in something.**

Every actor, including you, has aspects of themselves that are the same as everyone else and other aspects of that are unique and distinct. Julia Roberts is a star because everyone can relate to her – yet there’s only one Julia Roberts. It is the same with you—part of you is just like everyone else and yet you are unique in your particular combination of qualities. Your marketing task is to identify, develop, and brand those qualities to be fully expressed.

**5. You either lack confidence or you “act” arrogant.**

How “good” you are is a big hot button for most actors. A pro-athlete is measured by her statistics, but for an actor, it’s subjective. Even winning an Oscar is a collective opinion. Since being “good” is subjective for actors, many of them miss the boat. They either have no confidence or they put on an air of arrogance. **But confidence must come from within.** When it genuinely comes from within, it is a solid, peaceful place of being. It’s not a “belief,” because there is nothing to believe. You’re not telling yourself to be confident, you’re just being who you are. You are at peace with yourself. The issue of lacking confidence / acting arrogant disappears. People are drawn to you and you come across as confident.

**6. You get comfortable taking classes and don’t pursue actual work.**

You must have training. Classes are important. It’s even fine to *always* be in a class. But classes are not where you get work. Actors often talk about the great scenes they did in class. That’s great. But the real question is, “Can you deliver when the stakes are high?” Meaning, on the job. That part you can only find out by going out and doing it. Getting comfortable just taking classes and not pursuing work is a trap that will keep you from working.

**7. You do not fully prepare for your auditions.**

Not preparing fully is simply self-sabotage. You finally get the great audition that you

wanted, but then you get there late because of “traffic.” Now you’re flustered and you go in and blow it. Or on the other hand, you audition so rarely that you put tremendous pressure on yourself to do well, and then your nerves take over and you’re suppressed when you go in. Then you spend days being down about it, putting even more pressure on you for the next time. Bottom-line: Prepare your scene if you have it in advance, but just as importantly, prepare yourself psychologically so you can deliver when the stakes are high. The degree to which you are not prepared psychologically will be the degree to which you will ruin your chances of working. Said another way, you can only work up to the level to which you are psychologically ready.

**8. You send out headshots that don’t give a vibe about your casting.**

Your two-dimensional headshot must capture you three-dimensionally. It should tell much more about you than just your coloring, ethnicity, and hairstyle – that’s a mug shot. It should reveal something deeper about who you are as an interesting human being that people will want to watch.

**9. You downplay your accomplishments.**

Many actors downplay their accomplishments no matter what they’ve done. Some actors get so excited about a scene they did in class that they downplay their credits. Or they have been taught to be humble and not to brag, so they dismiss everything they’ve done as being “just a little thing.” Don’t do that!

Make sure you acknowledge what you truly have accomplished. Just acknowledge it for what it is. You may not have gotten an Oscar for it, but you played a nice dramatic Lead Role in a film that won at a few festivals. Great. That’s more than a lot of actors. Some credits are an accomplishment simply because you GOT the work, even if you don’t get a chance to demonstrate how incredibly talented you are. Most roles will not require tremendous talent because they are smaller roles with a scene or two – but it is still an accomplishment for many other reasons. A lack of confidence presented as modesty is not appealing! You’ve got to learn to sell yourself.

**10. You get distracted by other things and go for periods of time doing very little to move your career forward.**

Pursuing an acting career can be very discouraging. But since it is the career you’ve chosen, you’ve got to come to terms with the things that make you feel like crap. You can’t afford to be inactive on your career for days, weeks, months, or years at a time! You take no action – nothing happens. You keep taking directed, intentional action, things will start to happen!

So that’s it. Ten ways to get out of your own way!



15030 Ventura Blvd. #914  
Sherman Oaks CA 91403  
Ph: 818/907-6511 • Fx: 818/990-5293  
[www.SmartGirlsProductions.com](http://www.SmartGirlsProductions.com)  
SmartGirls@SmartGirlsProductions.com

---

In case you are wondering what the second half of the battle is for your acting career since I mentioned “the first half” at the beginning of this article (getting the stuff out of the way that is stopping you), the second half of the battle is to take the actions to move you forward. So first get the barriers out of the way, then take actions to move forward toward success!

If you would like coaching on getting past some of your blocks or want help marketing yourself, visit us at [www.SmartG.com](http://www.SmartG.com) or call 818/907-6511 for a FREE 15-minute career consultation on the phone.

---

*By Melody Jackson, Ph.D., of Smart Girls Productions, a marketing firm for actors and screenwriters. She has led motivational seminars and has helped thousands of actors and screenwriters to move forward in their careers. To subscribe to the FREE monthly E-zine Plugged In Hollywood: Marketing Tips You Need to Know, go to [www.SmartG.com](http://www.SmartG.com) and register yourself.*

---

**Get It Done. Now. Super Easy.**