

CHAPTER THREE

THE PLAN

Do you understand all an acting career entails: the time, money, training, dedication, energy, lifestyle adjustments, personal and business challenges? It is vital to know as much as possible before embarking on this journey. Too many people approach an acting career with no strategy or idea of what is necessary. Most try to get acting work way before they are ready, jump from teacher to teacher, make bad business decisions and/or are financially unprepared. Don't be one of them. This is a business. When preparing to be a doctor, dentist, lawyer, accountant, contractor, teacher or most any type of professional, there is a strategy: schools to attend, financing, entry-level work, business plans, etc. Professions have established paths to be traveled and one can usually determine what is required – the costs and courses of action. Yet most people approach becoming an actor as if it were an improvisation. From my years of being an actress, teacher, casting director, director and producer, I have seen thousands of actors come and then go because they didn't have a plan. I strongly believe that having a well-thought-out plan that actors commit to is crucial for a successful career.

Amen. I tell actors this all the time. **HUGH LEON, Commercial Agent @ Coast to Coast Agency**

The plan that I am about to outline is what I propose to new actors as well as those who were actors ten years ago (or more) and folks who have had bad training or have done the kinds of acting work that has created habits that are not conducive to film and TV work or professional theatre productions. This plan should help you avoid many pitfalls of the first few years. It is based on my career, the experience of thousands of actors I know or have trained and successful actors whom I have researched. It is not the only strategy, but it is the one I strongly believe makes the most sense and have seen work for the great majority of those who have followed it.

This PLAN suggests an often-followed routine in which to proceed when making long-term acting goals for one's self or when stuck at a career roadblock. I cannot begin to count the number of working actors I have met who lament about how much easier their careers would have started had there been a plan given to them to follow.

BERNARD TELSEY, New York Theatre and Film Casting Director

TO START:

If you do not live in New York, Los Angeles or Chicago, seriously think about moving to one of these cities. These are the major entertainment markets in the United States. Many consider San Francisco, Seattle, Detroit, Dallas/Houston, Miami/Orlando and Las Vegas strong secondary entertainment markets. In Canada, the major markets would be Toronto, Vancouver and Montreal. These entertainment centers offer the best overall training and the most career opportunities and work. Bottom line: If you want to be a professional working actor in film and TV and/or high-end theatre productions, you will need to move to a major or secondary market area either at the beginning or no later than by the end of the first year of this three-year plan.

THE FIRST SIX MONTHS

- **Take acting and improvisation classes**
- **Audit classes and read as much as possible**
- **Rehearse a lot**
- **Develop skills and sports abilities**
- **Make as much money as possible**