

CHEAT SHEET

How to deal with bad actors

By Sareesh Sudhakaran | wolfcrow.com

Here are some tips from my personal experience on how to deal with “bad” actors. Remember, there is no such thing as a “bad” actor.

#1 Empower yourself

Take ownership of the situation and empower yourself. Tell yourself you can solve the situation by being patient and understanding. The first step in this process is to not lose your cool.

#2 Listen to them

The time-tested technique to listening to any problem is to *listen*. Don't interrupt, show empathy, show that you can see they are upset. Acknowledge their needs and let them vent their anger or frustration or whatever.

Most actors with a bad attitude are just looking for attention. Or maybe they genuinely need your help.

You won't know unless you've listened entirely to what they have to say.

#3 Actors who can't act

Once you have an actor on set there's nothing you can do to *teach* them, but you can control the process by asking them to do only one thing at a time.

Most actors need to:

- Remember their lines
- Hit their marks
- Give the right "look", called the eye line
- Emote
- Control their body language
- Be aware of the other actor, camera, etc.
- Sometimes, be aware of the lighting

If they can't emote, then it's pointless to ask them to master the rest first. Focus on the emotion and see what you can do or say to get that out. You might have to rethink your shooting strategy to showcase their strengths and hide their weaknesses.

#4 The Stare

Time-tested technique. If an actor has a stone-face, ask them to stare at the other actor or wall or whatever. This will bring out some kind of emotion. May not be the one you want, but it will be better than the dead stare they had going on before.

#5 The hands

Get them to use their hands and keep them busy with some simple action so they feel they are part of the process. A portion of their brain will be dedicated to getting the action right, so they won't be so nervous.

That's it! I hope you enjoyed this document. Save it on your phone or print it to use during your shoots to remember how to deal with actors.