

Lauren Goodman

Independent Study & Mentorship

Mr. Speice 4A

10 September 2016

**Research Assessment #2**

**Date:** Sept., 10, 2016

**Subject:** Helpful Skills To Be Successful in Film Production

**MLA Citations:**

Bell, Christian. "6 Ways Film Directors Screw Editors." *Raindance*. 03 May 2016. Web. 11 Sept. 2016.

Kane, Brad. "Filmmaking Visionaries: The Top Ten Writer-Directors." *Torcom Filmmaking Visionaries The Top Ten Writer-Directors Comments*. 14 Dec. 2014. Web. 10 Sept. 2016.

Kroll, Noam. "Why All Film Directors Need To Know How To Act." *Noam Kroll*. 13 Dec. 2013. Web. 10 Sept. 2016.

**Assessment:**

One thing that every filmmaker needs nowadays is an edge. The industry is so competitive and hard to become a part of, every filmmaker needs something to help distinguish themselves from the rest of the wannabe filmmakers. And the real truth is that filmmakers should not be just focusing on filming and shooting, they should be able to have other skills to make them more well-rounded. Some successful directors have had crazy background stories, but they were able to utilize this to their advantage, which made them so unique from other cookie-cutter directors. If a filmmaker cannot understand other jobs in the industry, how are

they suppose to lead them and tell a story. As a budding filmmaker, I need to use what skills I already know to help me in the future. By figuring out what will give me an edge over the competition, I can make sure these skills are noted on my resume so I will be distinguished from my adversaries.

I thought the first article, "Why All Film Directors Need To Know How To Act" was extremely helpful and interesting to me because it pertains directly to me and my personal experience of being an actor. The job of directing has changed so much over the years from just directing actors to having a heavy influence over all aspects of production both technically and artistically. However, the experience of being an actor before becoming a director is invaluable because an actor gets a feeling of how to set works, how to work with a team, and is able to understand the dynamic of actors and directors. Actors also know how to handle rejection, something filmmakers face all the time. Directors and producers make mistakes more often than not in the beginning, yet a lot of these mistakes have to do with directing the talent. Having previous experience allows filmmakers to pick out which actors have the most experience and fulfill their vision. Also, by knowing what it is like to direct and act, a director does not have to micromanage their actors because they know that the actors know their responsibilities and are experts in their craft. I think that was the reason why my first film was not that hard to make. I have been an actor so I was able to better communicate with my actors what I want from them. Ultimately it worked because they fulfill my vision.

The second article was, "Filmmaking Visionaries: The Top Ten Writer-Directors". To me, I love that a person does not have to be either a writer or director, they can be both. Being a filmmaker, it is hard to let someone else try to put your vision and story into words because it may not come out the way you envisioned it. Not only that, but writers may not interpret the artistry the same way a filmmaker does. Although it takes a ton more of time and hard work,

the writer-directors are so successful was because what they showed in their movie was exactly their vision. It was not altered and or changed in any way by someone else. The article states that if you just consider the numbers, “The seven highest-grossing films of all time were writer-director films: *Avatar*, *Titanic*, *The Avengers*, *The Dark Knight*, *Star Wars I*, *Star Wars IV*, and *The Dark Knight Rises*. If you look at the Best Picture Oscar nominees for 2011 and 2012, a full half of them were written and directed by one person”. For example, Alfonso Cuarón is now considered a visionary in Hollywood for his amazing work in movies like *Gravity*. He not only made an awe-inspiring film with only a few actors, but in his writing he was able implement a unique visual with long takes and creative shots. That film is an example of movies evolving. The movie catapulted the audience into the twenty-first century with stunning cinematography, innovative special effects, and good writing. It set the stage for amazing films to come.

Finally, the last article I read was, “6 Ways Film Directors Screw Editors”, an article which I thought was hilariously true and applies to my frustration of editing. Being a director but having no experience editing is extremely frustrating for an editor because they have to work ten times harder to fix a directors mistakes. One example is poor choice in coverage. It may seem like a good idea to film scenes handheld rather than on a tripod, but this could be an editor's worst nightmare. The footage may seem somewhat stable on the camera's viewer, yet it can turn out to be very shaky once it is on the big screen. Editors then have to find a way to either stabilize the footage or by some miracle make it work. It shows me how editors often do not get the credit they deserve. Directors are the ones who get all the applause and attention for the story, but their story would not be a story without the editor's help. As a direct quote from the article, “[Editors] are surgeons as much as storytellers... But [they] should not have to save your film”. Directors need to realize and appreciate the importance of what an editor does. Also, they need to be able to picture how their shots will be edited on the cutting room floor so the editor's job will be easier. Now, just because one is a director does not mean they should be editing their own films. Every director needs a new

pair of fresh eyes to give another perspective. Editors are experts at their craft. If you give them good and usable footage to work with, they can make a film even more spectacular.

These three skills of acting, screenwriting, and editing all better a director. They are better able to realize how to interact and lead their team and they have a more creative say-so without overstepping. I have had personal experience in all of these areas and I believe that I am a much better filmmaker because of it. My work is creative, original, and well put-together because of my previous knowledge. I know now that by putting these skills on my resume and illustrating them in my portfolio, I will be different than other filmmakers because I am more versatile and balanced. The most important lesson I realized is that a filmmaker should not micromanage. One may have tons of experience in every aspect, but they should still allow others to do their job. In film production, it is okay if there are a ton of cooks in the kitchen because they are still able to follow a leader while inputting their own creative viewpoint. Like it or not, film and video production is all about teamwork. And if someone does not like working with others, I suggest that they should not be in this profession.

## Articles:

1. **Bell, Christian. "6 Ways Film Directors Screw Editors." *Raindance*. 03 May 2016. Web. 11 Sept. 2016.**

# 6 WAYS FILM DIRECTORS SCREW EDITORS

POSTED ON NOVEMBER 27, 2012 MAY 3, 2016 BY CHRISTIAN BELL

Being an editor is tough. We have to work with what we're given and as such the results we can yield are subject to countless limitations. We are surgeons as much as storytellers, hacking out what we can whilst trying to keep our patient from bleeding to death. But we shouldn't have to save your film. The ideal for an editor is to approach the film as more of a cosmetic surgeon, where our role is to enhance, improve and tighten. But we don't often have that luxury.

Here are 6 ways in which directors have screwed me.

## 1. Poor choice of coverage

Something I've noticed with new directors is an excessive amount of establishing / wide shots, when the fact of the matter is, I'm only going to use tiny fragments of any of them. The same filmmakers tend to film the whole scene through on the wide shot and then begin their close-ups part way through the scene, thinking "I'm only going to need the close up for this bit."

Only direct for the edit if you know you can pull it off (and if you know you can, you're most likely wrong.). If you only shoot what you think you'll need you'll be severely limiting yourself (and me) in the cutting room.

## 2. Continuity

It's the little things that will kill you in continuity. Now, I'm actually fairly lax about what I consider a continuity issue. A lot can be overlooked so long as your audience is engaged with the scene. But there are certain actions and scenes that cause trouble time and time again.

Lauren Goodman 12/16/2016 1:00 PM

**Comment [1]:** Editors are in charge of making films look good. An editor should also show a director's vision and artistry through cuts and angles. However, they shouldn't have to save a film.

Say you have a character taking occasional sips from a drink in a scene. Say you have a wide shot, a close up and can still make out that the character is drinking in a reverse shot of the other actor. Let's also say you've done multiple takes of each set up. You didn't choreograph any specific points for the actor to drink. All of a sudden the cutting points are decided by the moments at which the action matches up. Eating and smoking have this same problem. It's essential to block your scenes out. Often it is possible to cut around these issues but only by cutting at very specific points dictated by the continuity. Is that how you want to decide the pacing of your film?

### **3. Cutting too quick / starting too late**

This is the digital age. Letting the camera roll for a second or two longer will do no harm to your budget and those extra seconds at the beginning and end of a shot are like gold dust to editors. Sometimes the actor waiting for the scene to start provides a better reaction than they do within the scene. Sometimes those extra seconds provide an essential cutaway moment. Sometimes it gives a useful handle to give the scene a little breathing time. If those cameras aren't rolling then you're missing out on a whole heap of potential goodness.

### **4. Not getting matching shots**

Not one of the big rules like crossing the line but this certainly still looks odd and is something that new filmmakers do very often. If you are shooting two people talking, doing the standard over the shoulder style set up, the two shots should match. Your camera positions should be parallel to the line between the two actors. If they aren't, the audience will sense that there must be a reason for the change of angle and they will be trying to figure it out whilst your scene plays. Due to confusion on this point, I have drawn a little diagram.

As your editor, I would try to avoid using the offending shot where possible but excessive avoidance is more likely to draw attention to it's eventual usage. As with crossing the line, it's fine to ignore this if you have some creative reason for doing so but make sure you don't do it in error.

### **5. Starting shots static**

I see this time and time again. A shot will begin with an actor standing stock still, waiting until the scene begins. This is completely useless in the edit and will make the ensuing scene very difficult to cut to. You should always begin your shot from the previous moment of action. If a character leapt out of their chair at the end of the last shot then they should leap out at the beginning of the next. If the movement is

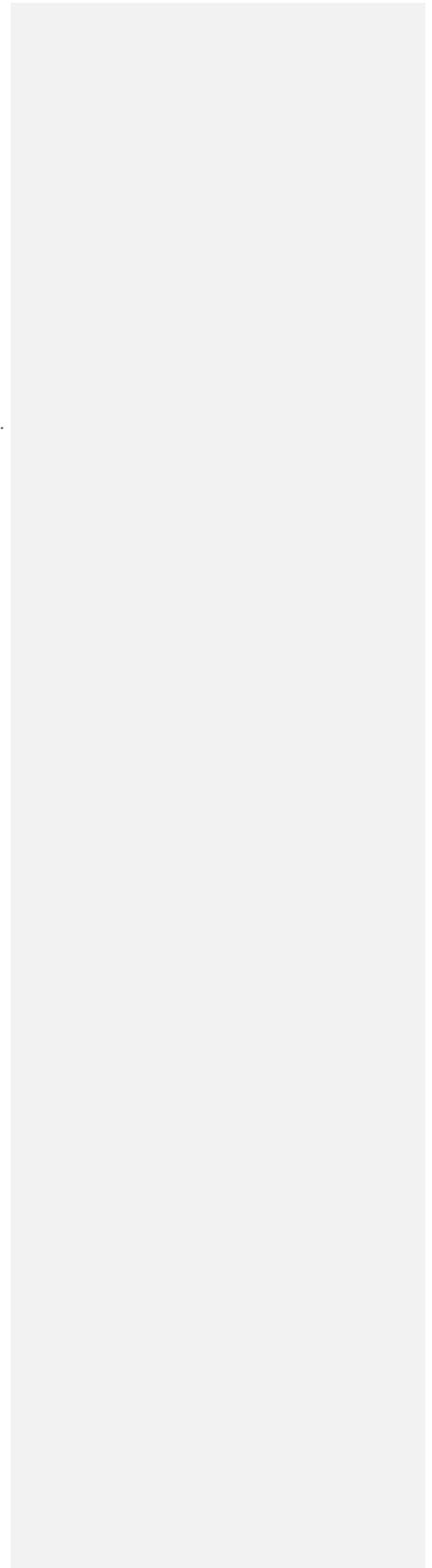
only shown in one shot then that means holding the other shot for longer, often beyond the desired cutting point.

## **6. Not being aware of proceeding and following scenes**

A scene does not exist in a vacuum. As the director it is your job to be aware of the scenes place within the film. How does it fit into the story? What is the pace of the next scene? What is the pace of the previous scene? If you didn't keep these questions in mind then your film will not form a coherent whole. It will be a series of stops and starts and self contained actions.

I dream of a day when editors and directors shall co-exist in peace...

Methinks I'll be dreaming a long time. But please, prove me wrong.



2. Kane, Brad. "Filmmaking Visionaries: The Top Ten Writer-Directors." *Torcom Filmmaking Visionaries The Top Ten Writer-Directors Comments*. 14 Dec. 2014. Web. 10 Sept. 2016.

## Filmmaking Visionaries: The Top Ten Writer-Directors

Brad Kane

Wed Oct 16, 2013 11:00am 30 comments 1 Favorite [+]

Watching *Gravity* in IMAX 3D this weekend, I was struck by the audacity of Alfonso Cuarón. From the precise attention to zero-gravity physics to the heart-pounding interplay of noise and silence, this movie wasn't simply *written*—it was *authored*, from start to finish, by a visionary. In the film world, such adepts are known as "auteurs"—creatives who don't simply write or direct a film but conjure the entire thing wholesale. While only a small number of projects are made this way, they include some of the most successful and beloved movies.

Consider the numbers. The seven highest-grossing films of all time were writer-director films: *Avatar*, *Titanic*, *The Avengers*, *The Dark Knight*, *Star Wars I*, *Star Wars IV*, and *The Dark Knight Rises*. If you look at the Best Picture Oscar nominees for 2011 and 2012, a full half of them were written and directed by one person. What does this tell us? That when a single visionary owns a project from

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Comment [2]: Something I aspire to be. I want to be able to write and direct my own material.

conception to production to release, the result is a special kind of creative magic. That ability to imagine a movie and bring it to life is perhaps the most prized of all creative skills.

With that in mind, let's take a look at ten writer-directors (many of whom are also producers) whose story worlds have established them as masters of their medium. This is not a definitive list, just a brief foray into the topic, so feel free to jump in with your own favorites in the comments at the end of the article.

#10 Alfonso Cuarón (*Gravity*, *Children of Men*)

Alfonso Cuarón has established himself as an auteur with a unique visual style that includes, among other things, jaw-droppingly long takes. (The opening take of *Gravity* lasts an incredible seventeen minutes.) In both *Gravity* and *Children of Men* (which was written by Mark Fergus but re-written by Cuarón), the director demonstrates an integrity of vision that began with the screenplay and continued to the cutting room floor. With *Gravity* smashing October box office records, it will be interesting to see what Cuarón tackles next. For my money, I'd love to see an entire action film shot in one epic take...

#9 M. Night Shyamalan (*The Sixth Sense*, *The Village*)

Once upon a time, M. Night Shyamalan was Hollywood's golden child. His films *The Sixth Sense*, *Unbreakable*, and *The Village* were eerie and amazing, the kind of movie only a writer-director could create. In recent years, he's gone a bit off

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**Comment [3]:** Interesting how he created his vision and style through directing and writing. Writing can make the difference between a good and bad film and can show artistic choices from directors.

the rails; after *The Last Airbender*, Hollywood insiders said he'd never direct again, though he did, with this summer's flop *After Earth*. So why is he on the list? Because at his best, M. Night was a true craftsman, breaking new ground, pushing the boundaries of genre work, using the camera in ways that were uniquely his. Perhaps one day he'll reclaim the lofty heights of his golden years. If not... hopefully he won't be remembered for *Lady in the Water*!

#### #8 Brad Bird (*The Incredibles*, *Tomorrowland*)

Brad Bird is a ten-year-old kid in a fifty-five-year-old body. His boisterous enthusiasm for storytelling is contagious, and it's led to some of Hollywood's most exciting action films. As a writer-director, Bird created *The Incredibles* and saved *Ratatouille* (re-writing the script penned by Jan Pinkava); he didn't write the nail-biting *Mission Impossible: Ghost Protocol*, but next year's secretive *Tomorrowland* is entirely his own, and one of the most highly-anticipated films of 2014.

#### #7 Joss Whedon (*The Avengers*, *Firefly*)

A decade from now, Joss Whedon might be nearing the #1 spot on this list; he's certainly got the talent. *Firefly* and *Serenity* had limited success during their initial airings, but they developed huge followings; Whedon subsequently wrote and directed *The Avengers*, which holds the record for best opening weekend and is one of the most highly-rated summer tentpoles ever made. Like Brad Bird, Joss Whedon might not be considered an auteur as such—his movies don't have that

Lauren Goodman 12/16/2016 12:58 PM  
**Comment [4]:** Screenwriting saved *Ratatouille*. If he had not re-written the script the film would have been perceived completely different.

artsy quality, they're just extremely good—but Whedon definitely has the gift of vision. It will be interesting to see if he leverages his success on the *Avengers* films to launch a box office masterpiece of his own.

#### #6 Wes Anderson (*Moonrise Kingdom*, *The Royal Tenenbaums*)

Wes Anderson films are so unique and idiosyncratic that they're almost their own genre. He developed a cult following with movies like *Rushmore* and *The Royal Tenenbaums*, but has taken his quirky form of filmmaking into new territory with *Moonrise Kingdom* (the most charming film of 2012) and *The Fantastic Mister Fox* (ninety minutes of are-you-kidding-me stop-motion animation). Anderson specializes in characters rather than worlds, but don't let that fool you: *Moonrise Kingdom* is a story world, and one that even jaded Wes Anderson fans can joyfully visit over and over again.

#### #5 The Wachowski Siblings (*The Matrix*, *Cloud Atlas*)

Look, the Wachowskis aren't perfect. But Andy and Lana have made some of the most ground-breaking movies in film history, most notably *The Matrix*, which is still front and center in our cultural zeitgeist. *Cloud Atlas* is a masterpiece in its own right; I'll be exploring it in detail next week. The siblings have certainly had their low points, e.g. *Matrix Revolutions* and *Speed Racer*; but they also get bonus points for writing and producing *V for Vendetta*. The real test will be their next project, *Jupiter Ascending*; if they pull off another cinematic *coup d'etat*

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**Comment [5]:** Wes Anderson's quirky and weird directing style is shown through characters' dialogues and line. Writing makes up part of the storytelling.

they might finally shake off the endless criticism and earn their (proverbial) stars on the Walk of Fame.

#### #4 George Lucas (*Star Wars, Episodes I-VI*)

George Lucas created *Star Wars*, from his imagination. I repeat: he pulled the entire *Star Wars* universe out of his rear end. In terms of being a writer-director, purists will argue that *The Empire Strikes Back* (the strongest of the films) was directed by Irvin Kershner, but the fact remains that Lucas redefined the film industry, practically invented special effects, and took the world of film merchandising by storm. Regardless of your feelings about the prequels and re-releases, you have to give George Lucas credit for being George Lucas.

#### #3 Peter Jackson (*The Lord of Rings, The Hobbit*)

Peter Jackson (along with writing partners Fran Walsh and Philippa Boyens) might not have pulled *The Lord of the Rings* from his back side—that honor falls to JRR Tolkien—but his visionary approach to adapting the epic books stands as one of the great feats of modern filmmaking. Only love and devotion could have led his trilogy to become the most successful film series ever produced (factoring in box office receipts and industry awards), and while Jackson has been hit or miss on other projects (the jury's still out on *The Hobbit*), the sheer scale of his work in Middle Earth earns him this number three slot.

#### #2 Christopher Nolan (*Inception, The Dark Knight Trilogy*)

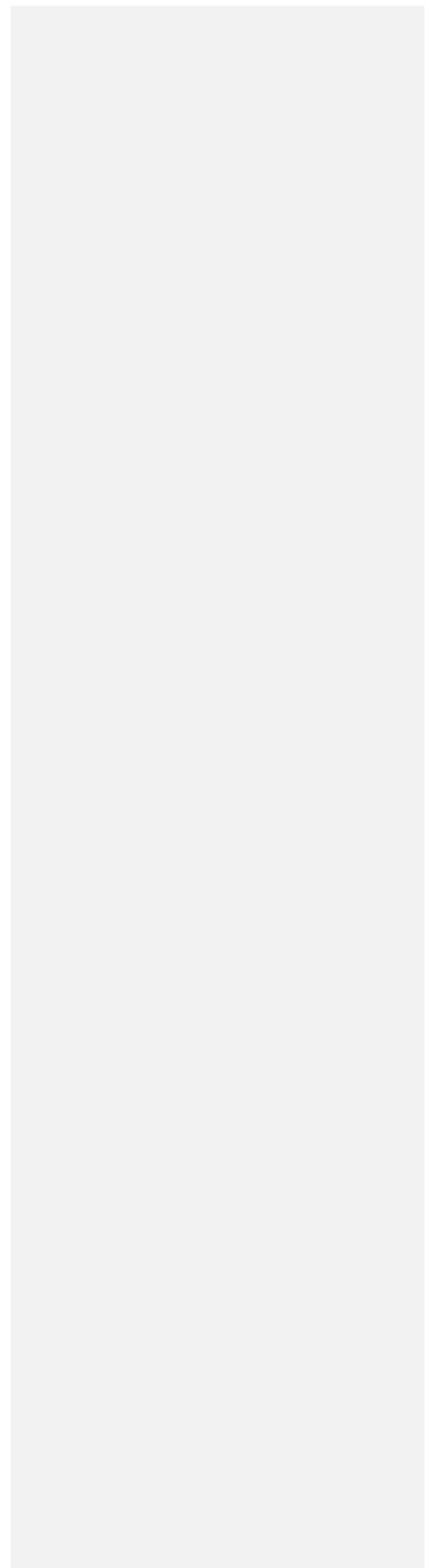
Christopher Nolan is perhaps the most impressive writer-director to emerge in Hollywood over the last decade. His range is astounding: along with his writer brother, he has been the visionary behind *Inception* (smartest sci-fi film of the decade); *The Prestige* (best magician film of all-time), and the *Dark Knight* trilogy (two installments of which are among those top seven biggest money-makers.) But the best thing about Christopher Nolan: he's just getting started. Fans are quivering in anticipation of next year's *Interstellar*. I can't wait to see where he goes from there.

#1 James Cameron (*Titanic*, *Avatar*, *Terminator 2*)

Call it cliché, but James Cameron is the best writer-director of them all. He's the Steve Jobs of film: he knows exactly what the world wants long before we know we want it. He created the two highest-grossing films of all time (*Avatar* and *Titanic*), one of which swept the Academy Awards and the other of which ushered in the era of 3D. His legacy extends far beyond those two of course: with groundbreaking movies like *Terminator*, *The Abyss*, and *Aliens* under his belt, it's clear that Cameron is a one-man industry capable of pushing any envelope. Are we excited for three years of *Avatar* sequels beginning in 2016? You bet. Anyone with that much talent and ambition is a gift to the art they pursue.

There are many, many more writer-directors producing popular material in both mainstream and independent film, from Quentin Tarantino and Woody Allen to

the Cohen Brothers and the much-maligned Terrence Mallick. Who do *you* consider the best (or worst) writer-directors in Hollywood?



3. Kroll, Noam. "Why All Film Directors Need To Know How To Act." *Noam Kroll*.  
13 Dec. 2013. Web. 10 Sept. 2016.

## Why All Film Directors Need To Know How To Act

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*Posted On December 14, 2013*

Most film directors today take an auteur approach to their craft. They are the driving force behind all creative elements of their narrative film - writing, cinematography, acting, sound, etc. This doesn't mean they do all of the work themselves, but just that they have a heavy influence on each, and are guiding every facet of the production. In the early days of cinema though, a directors one and only job was to direct their actors. And while so much has changed over the years in regards to what directors are responsible for, I still feel that above and beyond all else the primary focus of a director should be to direct their talent. **And that's coming from me - a person that regularly shoots/directs/edits/writes/multitasks like crazy on my own productions and thrives on being in creative control over as much as possible. So in other words, it's not that I believe other creative components shouldn't be a high priority for directors, but simply that from a**

Lauren Goodman 12/16/2016 12:54 PM

**Comment [6]:** This totally describes me: I want to have as much creative input as possible, but I know I can't control everything. I have to trust in my actors and to do that I need to effectively communicate with them.

traditional standpoint working with actors is the essence of directing and should be at the top of the hierarchy.

Before I ever directed my first project (a short film about ten years ago now), I already had a lot of experience on film sets as an actor. I started acting at a young age as I was always fascinated by the craft of story telling, and as a kid it was the only way I could actually get on set professionally. It was invaluable for me and taught so much about how things worked. In fact some of the most important lessons I've ever learned (creatively and business-wise) came from my background in performance. I understood how to work with a team, how to handle success and rejection, and most importantly the dynamic of working with directors. At the time though I didn't realize the importance of any of it. It really wasn't until I decided to pursue directing professionally and actually got out on set that I gained an appreciation for the fact that I had this background.

A still from one of my first acting gigs:

When I first started out as a narrative director I made loads of mistakes on set and off. I learned my lessons through trial and error - sometimes the easy way and sometimes the hard way. But like most other things in life I found that the more I learned about the craft, the more I realized I didn't know. After completing nearly every early project of mine there would be one component that would bother me, whether it was the sound, cinematography, locations, or something else. But after a

Lauren Goodman 12/16/2016 12:55 PM

**Comment [7]:** Again, totally me. I think acting helped me learned how the entire process worked. I was able to appreciate what each person does and knew what directors were expecting out of me.

while I realized the one thing that I would be happy with was the acting. I felt that my saving grace was my ability to inherently understand the dynamic between myself and the actors, and the only reason I got it was because of my background as an actor. For this reason (and many others that I'll get into below) I would urge every director that doesn't have real experience acting to go out and get some, no matter how experienced you may be.

You may be thinking that acting isn't for you and it very well may not be at all, which is perfectly okay. I'm not suggesting that you start acting full time, but just that you consider taking a deeper interest in it than you may already have to develop a more in depth understanding of the art form. Take an acting class or two, do some improv, learn a monologue, or do anything else that will get your mind thinking like an actor and you'll start to see the benefits almost immediately. **It will literally open your mind and change the way you approach nearly every aspect of what you do. You don't necessarily need to train with an acting school or an acting coach, but you could. Be careful when doing this though, because the relationship between an acting teacher and an actor is very different from that of a director and an actor and you don't want to get those lines crossed.** The same message goes out to actors. I've worked with a couple of actors that didn't get the most out of themselves because they wanted me to hand hold them through their scenes as if I was a dialogue coach or an acting teacher. They didn't trust themselves enough and didn't understand that they were cast for a reason. I wanted to see what they would naturally bring to the table. I trusted them with the lines but they just didn't trust

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**Comment [8]:** Being a director and being able to speak "actor" is key because you are able to get across their objective and tell them how you want them to feel.

themselves. Although we eventually got there, the root of the problem was the fact that they did not understand the different relationship an actor has with a director and their acting coach. So the same goes for you as a director. Take acting classes for a new perspective, but don't let it sway your directing style – remember that acting coaches are not directors and work very differently!

I'm going to break down three main areas that I really feel that having experience acting will benefit you. Each of them covers a stage of the process (pre-production, production, post-production), but they are really only three of many more examples. If you choose to take a step in this direction and brush up on your acting skills, you'll quickly realize the benefits are bigger than you might imagine. And if you're skeptical about this, I really suggest thinking about this with an open mind. I can't count how many directors I know that are exceptionally talented but aren't seeing their full potential because they don't have a deep enough appreciation for the craft of acting. I find this almost baffling as just like I mentioned at the top of this article, directing first and foremost is about working with your talent and that's something that shouldn't be taken lightly. Directors that don't have an appreciation and a trust for what their actors are bringing to the table are really missing the mark, and no matter how talented they are in other ways, their work will never be as good as it could be.

Casting

When you understand acting on a fundamental level, you will be in a much better starting point when casting. First off, you'll know what you're looking for before you even step into the casting room. But more importantly you'll know what you want when you see it. You might feel that you can spot out great talent already, and you're likely right. But your instincts will be exponentially better if you understand how actors work. You'll know when a really talented actor is just having a bad read, and when a less seasoned performer is getting away with using some cheap techniques that won't actually help your film. It will ultimately mean you'll choose actors that are not only good, but that will make your film better by bringing something new to the table.

## Production

This is where the most obvious benefits will come in – actually working with the actors. You're going to naturally feel more comfortable communicating with your talent as you'll be able to speak their language. It doesn't matter what particular discipline or school your actors have studied under, it just matters that you get the headspace that they are in. It matters that you understand what they need before, during, and after the scene to make sure they give you the performance that you want. You'll instinctively know when you should give direction and when you shouldn't. I find that directors with acting experience (myself included) tend to give less direction on set and instead fuss more over the casting process to find the right talent that don't need to be guided as much. That's not to suggest that you don't let

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**Comment [9]:** So true, because as an actor you've already learned those early techniques. You can pick out more-seasoned talent which will make your film all the more better.

your voice be heard, but rather to help you avoid micromanaging your actors and getting them to deliver a less than stellar performance because they're not comfortable with the delivery of their lines.

## The Edit

Even when it comes to the editing process, your knowledge of acting is going to come into play in full force. So much of acting is timing. This is especially true in certain genres (like comedy or horror), but really applies to every genre. When you learn to act, there is a certain rhythm that comes along with it. You understand where lines should land and when pauses need to come into play. And as long as you have shot enough coverage during production, you'll have options in post that will allow you to finesse your edits to a point where the rhythm is spot on. In some cases your actors may have nailed takes and there is little adjustment to be made, but in other cases they may need some help. I've cut some scenes where the verbal delivery from my actors was spot on, but their timing was completely off, making the take unusable on it's own. But with some creative editing and careful cutting to ensure the rhythm was in check, everything else fell into place beautifully. Once again, you're likely already doing a lot of this to one degree or another, but having a stronger knowledge of acting will help your precision will improve dramatically.

## Summary

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**Comment [10]:** Good acting makes editing a lot easier and good actors are determined by directors. Also, good actors understand what the editor's job is like.

We're always told that a good producer is someone that has done every job on set. It gives them an understanding of how things work from the ground up, and allows them to oversee the process from a grand perspective. The exact same logic applies to directors. The only difference is that directors need more experience in the creative areas – acting included. By familiarizing yourself with acting techniques and getting into the mind of an actor, you will have a massive advantage when directing a film. You'll choose the right actors, communicate with them more effectively, and understand how to edit their work so it shines. It will also put your primary focus back on the talent, which is the going to improve your film from the core outwards.

You don't need to spend 40 hours a week acting to get it, just start small. Take an acting class here or there and learn a monologue or two. Understand techniques, visualization, rhythm, improv, and interaction. It will not only make you a better director, but a better filmmaker in general. Acting can be very therapeutic and who knows, maybe you'll enjoy it more than you think.

Understanding acting goes hand in hand with understanding story, so if you haven't already checked it out here is my article on [Writing Better Characters Into Your Screenplay](#).

And for those interested, below is the trailer for my first feature film 'Footsteps'. It was just released as one of the first feature films through [BitTorrent Bundles](#) and

**can be downloaded here. The film will be available on other online platforms including iTunes in the near future.**

