



What Is An Acting Teacher?

Before you buy a car, have your hair trimmed, choose a university, go to a restaurant, rent an apartment, work with a personal trainer, therapist, doctor or dentist; before you find a teacher to learn to fly a plane, scuba dive, play a musical instrument or turn your life over to another human being in marriage, do you investigate the person or people in whom you hope to entrust your future? Do you ask the important questions? Do you research the subject and make sure that the choice you make is right for your financial, personal and professional future? If you do not investigate, you are making yourself vulnerable. Your future is your wealth. Finding an acting teacher can be a daunting challenge, and becoming one should be a responsibility not lightly entered. With that in mind:

Bona fide acting teachers should possess the following qualifications:

- **Be a Working Actor.** The teacher should have a documented history of years as a SAG, AFTRA, EQUITY (or similar, if not an American teacher) member earning a living as a working actor, performing in numerous professional TV, film, commercial and/or theater productions in a principal role, or members of an acclaimed theatre company. They should be listed in IMDB. They should have personal reviews from major news outlets. They should currently be working as actors, going out on auditions, keeping themselves in the current climate, reminding themselves about what it actually takes to win a role and create a memorable performance.
- **Training.** Acting teachers themselves should have years of extensive personal study in classes, training with the most highly acclaimed teachers on this industry. Often such teachers will still be in class today.
- **Education.** Acting teachers should have a broad-based college education with foundations in literature, knowledge of film, theater and an extensive cannon of plays from contemporary to the classics.
- **Teaching.** It takes a minimum of 15 years to truly develop as an acting teacher. To be an acknowledged teacher in New York or Los Angeles you should have a teaching resume that includes teaching classes at universities or graduate programs. These institutions are

confirmation that teachers have already been carefully screened and vetted as a professional actor who has had extensive training, career success, and has been employed for these services within the commercial film, television and theater community.

- **Authorship.** An acting teacher should be an author. They should have written documentation of what they believe, who they are while displaying a written knowledge of acting; they should be leaders in the field with the ability to articulate on the page, in the written word what they know about the given subject; acting.
- **Relatable to You, the Student.** If the teacher you choose has accomplished most or all of these qualifications, then the last test is - the student's response to that teacher. Do they engender your trust? Do you feel that teacher will make you a better actor? Have they trained other actors who have gone on to become SAG members and won roles in professional productions? Does that teacher have your best interests in mind or are they in it to take your money? Do they have the ability to change your life for the better and help you to carve your dreams into true reality?

Gary Swanson's life has been based around his career as an [actor](#), [acting teacher](#), [acting student](#) and all other categories of my work have been explorations of my dedication to that form, both in New York and Los Angeles. To find out more, please click around this website, or if you have any specific questions, please [contact us](#).