

The “Moment Before” An Essential Actor Tool

From Cast It Talent – By Adam Lazarre-White

What leads you into the scene? Consider, not only the “Moment Before”, but the “Hour before”, the “Event Before” and the “trip” to where you have arrived: Was it hard? Was it easy? Are you late? Rushed? Or have you been waiting? Is it raining outside? Or cold? Or hot, humid and muggy? Did I get fired that afternoon? Or did I get a raise? Or did I fall in love (at first sight) this afternoon? And now I’m here to tell my brother.

WARNING: Do not ever come on stage to play the scene. You are ALWAYS coming from somewhere, and your life is simply continuing on stage, or in front of the camera. ALWAYS.

The life that led up to your coming on stage will effect your choices, mood, physical state—everything. The life you lead up until any given moment **INFORMS** the very moment you are in. If you are a character who has come to ask someone for money and you come in from the freezing cold, the entire scene can become about you politely getting close to the fireplace, drying your mittens, and stopping your teeth from chattering. Meanwhile, you respectfully ask for the money, with as much dignity as you can muster. This behavior of trying to conquer the difficulties of your life will go much further towards getting your acting partner to say yes, and an audience to root for you, than simply entering and asking for the money very politely and pitifully.

This truthful and poetic behavior is created from **KNOWING YOUR “MOMENT BEFORE”**.

Don’t just choose. **EXPLORE**. When rehearsing a scene or play, an audition or even shooting on set with a director who wants variety from take to take, **CHOOSE 5 DIFFERENT “MOMENT BEFOREs”** – and play the scene truthfully from that different ‘point of departure’ each time. You will be delighted with your easy ability to play scenes different ways, to surprise yourself, your scene partners and your audience with your ‘in the moment’ acting – all built on your **“MOMENT BEFORE”**.