

HITTING YOUR MARK

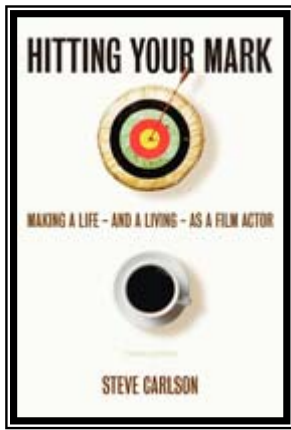


MAKING A LIFE – AND A LIVING – AS A FILM ACTOR



THIRD EDITION

STEVE CARLSON



Here is the authoritative book that reveals what it takes to work consistently and successfully on a Hollywood set. A veteran of TV and film, Steve Carlson covers information that is very difficult to come by, yet every actor is expected to know the first time he or she steps in front of the camera.

"Steve Carlson's book offers a complete, non-nonsense approach to learning the ins and outs of television and film technique from the actor's point of view. It should be required reading by anyone beginning a career in this field." -John C. Zak, Supervising

Producer, *The Bold and the Beautiful*

"I so appreciate, as my students will, the solid coaching and positive approach combined with a realistic appraisal of the actor's life when working and when preparing to work. The sense of humor makes it most appealing and readable and the depth and breadth of experience makes its content extremely valuable." - Diane Carson, Editorial Vice President, University Film and Video Association

*"Steve Carlson's book, *Hitting Your Mark*, is the only source I know of for an actor to learn about the set and filming process from an actor's point of view. A very needed addition to the new film actor's library."* - Danny Goldman, Top Hollywood Casting Director

"Steve Carlson has given us a book that is a must read for anyone new to performing on camera. This is a handy reference book that will be useful for years to come." - Alan Pultz, Director, *General Hospital*

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– Danny Goldman
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– John C. Zak, Supervising Producer
The Bold and the Beautiful

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“Steve Carlson has given us a book that is a must read for anyone new to performing on camera. This is a handy reference book that will be useful for years to come.”

– Alan Pultz, Director
General Hospital

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– Diane Carson, Editorial Vice President,
University Film and Video Association

“There is nothing quite as valuable as experience. That being the case, Steve Carlson is passing on a tremendous amount of invaluable experience in this book. Sure, you could learn some of this stuff in a classroom, but there are a lot of things that can only come from experience. This book is a must-have for actors looking to improve their craft. If you’re wanting to get into film acting — or even if you’ve done acting and merely want to learn from the experiences of a seasoned professional — *Hitting Your Mark* is definitely worth the cost. They say that experience is the best teacher; consider this book to be a full course.”

– *Microfilmmaker Magazine*

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– Matthew Terry, Screenwriter/Teacher
Seattle Central Community College

hitting your mark

3rd Edition

MAKING A LIFE – AND A LIVING – AS A FILM ACTOR

Steve Carlson

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*To my wife, Mary Ann, without whose support, patience, and ideas this
book never would have been written.*

And to my son, Quinn, of whom I am so proud.

I love you both.

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INTRODUCTION

The response to the first edition of this book, *Hitting Your Mark: What Every Actor Really Needs to Know on a Hollywood Set*, was not exactly what I expected. Since I dealt primarily with the technicalities actors face in shooting on film, I expected questions to follow suit.

They didn't. It seems I covered my subject well. The readers and students were interested, appreciative and thanked me profusely... then came the questions.

How do you get started? How do you get an agent? How do you deal with rejection? Can you ever actually feel secure living the life of an actor? Et cetera, et cetera.

I realized I had more work to do.

The first book (and the first part of this one) deals with the unique realities of acting on film. At the time of first writing, there were no classes and few books on the subject. It covers information that is very difficult to come by, yet every actor is expected to know it all the first time they set foot on a set.

Very crucial stuff. But the audience wanted more. Equally as hard to come by is knowing the realities of life as an actor. They wanted to know what to expect, how they could best deal with it and, if possible, prepare for it.

This, I realized, was another area seldom ventured into. Actually, there are very few qualified to even talk about it, only we who have done it.

Let's look at the normal scenario.

The lure of show business usually starts with your first show. Perhaps it was a play in junior high or high school that you got coerced into, or you just wanted to give it a try. Your thoughts at the time, of course,

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didn't go much beyond that production; hoping you remembered your lines and didn't make too big a fool out of yourself.

But you did it! The accomplishment felt good, the applause sounded great and the gratification was instantaneous. You were going to do this again!

And so you did. Productions in high school, college, or regional theater followed, as perhaps did acting classes and theater arts programs. Perhaps you also got interested in music and/or dance. Everyone's path is different but the mindset is not.

How far can you go? How good can you get? Are you good enough to be a professional? Could you really do this for a living? More classes and productions follow as well as, perhaps, a move of some sort, maybe to where there's a good summer stock program, a repertory theater or even a bigger move to New York or Los Angeles.

As exciting as it all is, what you are trying to do is to get work. Whether it's on film, TV, commercials, a play or whatever, you're auditioning for a job. (You will be amazed to learn how many actors never give much more thought to their careers than just that.)

If you're trying to get cast on film, you might find yourself hampered by a couple of things. The first is that all your training and experience has been on stage. No one ever taught you what to expect on a film set (which is considerably different than a stage). You know nothing about cameras, lighting, or shooting out of sequence. You don't know who all those people around the set are or even what they're doing.

You also don't know where you're going. You want to get this job, then that one, and if you string a few of these together, next thing you know, you've paid the rent for a few months.

If you can keep it up for a few years, you may look back and realize that you've actually made a career for yourself... with hardly any

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thought at all. In this look back you might also realize that you missed a few opportunities that could have changed your life drastically if you'd only recognized them as opportunities at the time.

How could you have known? There are no rules, no lessons, especially in show business. Many times you never know what's going on from day to day. How can you possibly plan a life or career in an environment like that?

That's what this book is about.

In Book One, we deal with the work itself. What exactly are the differences between acting on stage and on film? It's all "show business" but that's where the similarities stop. The fact that there are both Tonys and Oscars shows that the industry realizes there is a distinct difference between acting on stage and acting on film.

Although each film project is unique, there are certain basics of filmmaking that never change whether you are making a movie, a commercial, a TV series, or a soap opera. You'll learn them here.

This business isn't an elusive mystery but it is a business, and like any other business, people who want to succeed in it should know as much about it as possible.

One of the most important things you'll learn in Book One is what's expected of you as an actor on the set. That's another thing no one teaches but as soon as you step in front of a camera, you are expected to know.

Book Two goes where few books have ever gone before. What is the life of an actor really like? What skills must I have besides being able to act? (You mean, that's not enough?) What is a professional POV and how can I get one? We all know we're going to lose more auditions than we get. Doesn't that get you down? Can I really face this whole

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thing as a business? How can I set my life up in such a way that will help my career?

We'll also talk about handling money, competition, and enjoying your life off the set. (There's still a person inside there, you know, not just an actor.)

All right, let's get on with it. Sit back, relax and come along as we explore in Book One this most intimate of audiences — “the camera” — and how we, as actors, can please her.

BOOK ONE

CHAPTER 1

CAMERA, SET, and STAGE BASICS

Before we get fully underway, let's take a moment to go over some basics that every actor should be aware of. Many people are intimidated by a movie set because they don't understand what's really going on. Who are all those people? Before you know how something works it can seem like the most complicated thing in the world. Isn't it amazing how simple things become when you understand them?

Throughout this book we'll be discussing people, places, things, attitudes, and most everything you will need to know about filming and acting for the camera. What follows in this chapter is phase one.

There are certain people every actor should know, or know about, before setting foot on a film set.

DIRECTOR

The director, quite simply, is the boss. Once the shooting schedule begins, everybody works for him.* Since he is responsible for *everything*, all cast and crew alike take their orders from him.

This is the person you talk to if you have any questions about the scene, technical or creative. As an actor, this is also the person you want to make very happy.

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FIRST ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

If anyone on the set is busier than the director, it would be the first AD. His job is basically to “run” the set. He makes sure the director’s wishes are carried out. He’s the one that calls for quiet, activates

*When the masculine pronoun is used, it is meant to include both sexes.

rehearsals, calls for the camera to roll, notifies cast and crews of breaks, directs extras, and generally keeps the set moving along at a good, healthy, professional pace. It’s a tough job.

Still, if you pick your times right, he’s usually very accessible for questions.

SECOND ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Although it’s written in singular, there may be many second assistant directors. They take care of much of the logistics on the set. The “second” is the person the actors check in and sign out with each workday. They are also the ones you go to with questions concerning the set, such as getting directions to wardrobe or finding out which dressing room or trailer is yours.

It is also generally the second that you clear it with when you have to leave the set for a few moments. (It’s not that they have the authority to release you; it’s just that you hardly ever see them without a walkie-talkie, and they will soon either get authorization for you or not. If they find that you are going to be shooting soon, they’ll tell you and ask that you don’t leave the set.)

It is their job to know where you are.

PRODUCERS

There are many different types of producers, all sorts of levels and echelons that vary from film to film which we won't go into here. Just know that these are the "money guys." These are the people that bring all the various aspects of filmmaking together so the picture can be made.

They put the script with a director, help cast the roles, hire a production company to shoot it, make distribution deals to sell the picture (TV rights, cable, tape, etc.), and figure out a way to pay for the whole thing.

Actors generally don't run into producers that much but when you do
— be nice!

STAGE DIRECTIONS

As we progress through the book, we will run into many things which are not taught since it's assumed that everybody knows about them. Stage directions, however, are certainly taught and since this is the language in which the director will be speaking to you, it's good to have a working knowledge of them. Some of these are unique to film, some aren't. Let's take a quick look at the basics.

UPSTAGE - This is the area of the set or stage that is toward the back, or the furthest away from the audience or camera. (The name comes from the practice of having the stage "raked," where the back of the stage is higher than the front, allowing the audience to see much more of the stage area. The back of the stage is literally "up.")

DOWNSTAGE - The area of set or stage that is closest to the audience or camera.

STAGE RIGHT & LEFT - This is right or left as the actor sees it. (as he looks toward the camera).

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CAMERA RIGHT & LEFT - This is right or left as the camera or director sees it.

CROSS - This is when an actor moves from one point to another in the set.

CROSS DOWNSTAGE - When the actor passes between the camera and the object or person specified.

CROSS UPSTAGE - When the person or object being passed is between the actor and the camera.

CU - Close-up

POV (Point of View) - As if the camera were looking through the eyes of a character. We see what the character sees (as seen by...).

PAN - The camera moves side to side horizontally, pivoting on its base.

TRACKING SHOT - The camera may not pivot at all, but the entire camera itself moves on a “dolly” alongside some action (such as a long walk).

BG - Background.

TAKE - When they actually “roll film.” (The order is blocking, run – through, rehearsal, and “take.”)

PRINT - When the director likes a take well enough to want to see it (more on this later).

ACTION - This is the director’s order to start the scene.

CUT - This is the director’s term for ending the scene. (Note that I am saying “the director’s term.” Officially starting and stopping the scene is the director’s job only. Cameras will continue to roll and actors should remain in character until he says “cut.”)

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Well, that's enough to get us going. Lots of other terms, phrases, and titles will be dealt with as we come upon them in subsequent chapters.

LINES (DIALOGUE)

It seems strange to me that this subject even has to be dealt with but it is, believe it or not, a problem. One of, if not the primary "given" is that when actors show up for work on the set they *will* know their lines. This is so basic it seems absurd to have to mention it, but you would be surprised how many actors don't. (Also, have you ever noticed how you may see an actor once in something, then never see him again?)

Knowing your lines is the first stage and the most basic step in creating your performance. How can you work on subtleties of delivery if you're hunting for what you're going to be saying next?

This was made clear to me very simply but effectively when I was a young actor working with James Whitmore. I had the good fortune of working with him a few times, and you won't find a nicer man or a more competent, professional actor.

We were working on a movie called *Nobody's Perfect*, a Universal quickie starring Doug McClure, Nancy Kwan, Mr. Whitmore, and me. Mr. Whitmore and I were talking about the business and life in general as we walked through this elaborate Japanese garden that had been built in the sound stage. It was perfect; grass, ponds, knolls, plants, ferns, and lanterns. The set designers had even gone so far as to have "tuning rocks" in the trickling stream.

After admiring the intricacy and complexity of it all, Mr. Whitmore said quietly, "Now tell me, how can an actor show up on the set and not know his lines?"

Short, sweet, and to the point — but I never forgot it. Fortunately, that wasn't a problem of mine!

Remember, besides simply being the professional thing to do (since it is, after all, your job), it also provides an outstanding degree of freedom. Not having to worry about your lines frees you to totally immerse yourself in creating your character and performance.

WHAT DOES HE WANT?

This is an oft-asked question on the set, “he,” of course, being the director. This is the person you must please. If you have questions about what he is after in respect to your performance, ask him. Simple as that. A confused actor will give a confused performance. The director will be glad to help you, but listen closely to what he says and don’t overdo it. His time is precious. The director is the last word for *everyone* on how a scene and, eventually, the picture will look.

Another way for an actor to get an idea of what types of performances the director is looking for, is to simply listen. Eavesdrop. Hear the directions he gives to other actors. Realizing that the dynamics of each character are unique, don’t take other actor’s instructions for yourself. However, looking at the picture as a whole, knowing what he wants from another character, may help give you an idea of what he expects from yours.

ATTITUDE

One thing that cannot be ignored on a film set is the crush of people that occupy it. There are a lot of specialized positions necessary in the making of a movie. The fact that there are so many people involved makes it even more important for everyone to work together. If that many people were to lose their central focus, the result could be a mess — an expensive mess!

A healthy, open attitude is one of the primary and most appreciated attributes you can bring to the set. Show business attracts many different types of personalities. You may be dealing with outrageous egos,

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insecurity, pomposity, brilliance, incompetence, arrogance, “too many cooks”!

Sometimes this leads to difficult situations that are hard to anticipate. Remember that you always want to be part of the solution, never part of the problem. Know your part, do your part, be as “user friendly” as possible, and “above all, do no harm.”

YOUR JOB

One common mistake actors new to a film set often make is to try to be too helpful.

Say, the director mentions that he’d like a table close to you moved over a couple of feet. A prop man from the other side of the sound stage starts walking over, but you are much closer to the table than he is.

Should you be a good person and say, “Here, I’ll move it,” and move the table for him? Absolutely not!

That may seem strange to most of us actors who came from years of school productions and summer stock where we did everything: designed the sets, built and painted them, set the lighting, then tore everything down after the production was over. Generally, we chipped in whenever we could.

Not here! Remember all those people around the set we were talking about? Each has a specific job. Unless personally asked, moving that table is a job for a prop man or a grip. If you do it, you are doing their job and it will be appreciated by no one (especially if a leg happens to fall off the table, or you spill something in the process).

Film sets are insured quite heavily, but you are not insured for any injury that may occur from you moving that table — the prop man is.

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Also, if you were to get injured in some freak way by trying to help, it would be much harder replacing you in the film (especially if you'd already filmed quite a bit) than it would to replace a grip. They'd have to go back and reshoot everything you'd already done and no one would be pleased. (Needless to say, this doesn't exactly help the actor's chances of being rehired by this company either.)

Be helpful, be courteous and aware, but be helpful in the carrying out of *your* job and allow the crew to do theirs — they will do the same for you. In professional filmmaking, the atmosphere may not seem as openly supportive and demonstrative as it was in school or “little theater.” Actually, it is, it's just different. Just as professional sports don't have the emotional “rah-rah” aspect to them as much as high school or college sports do, it's still there. The difference is, instead of raw emotion, the pros are driven by a professional desire for excellence — to be the best of the best. They are still supportive, but they might not be as openly emotional about it.

Acting for a living, day after day, year after year, the pros' support usually ends up as professional pride in what they do. A feeling that they fully expect you to have also.

Never forget, please, that professional filmmaking is a business. Some sets and some situations are still great fun, but most of the time it's just a bunch of very qualified people setting out to do their jobs well and expecting you to do the same. Everybody wants you to do a good job...for different reasons.

The producers want you to do a good job because it shows they made the right choice in casting you. The director wants you to do a good job because it shows that he's doing a good job directing.

Your fellow actors want you to do a good job because we all learned a long time ago that we do better work when we're working with someone good. Even the camera and support crews are behind you because if *you* look good, they look good.

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Sometimes a film crew looks like a collection of different, disparate groups (and sometimes they are), but they all have one thing in common; they all want a good film to come out of this day's work. Plus, if they and everybody else on the set perform successfully, chances are they will all be hired again. (We're back to a *business* again.)

Sometimes there's an even more pragmatic reason for them to be rooting for you — the sooner you get the shot done, the sooner they can go home.

CHAPTER ONE — SUMMARY

Although the producer is the overall boss, the director and the ADs are the ones you will be directly involved with. Remember, your job as an actor is to give the director the performance he wants. Keep an open, flexible attitude and *listen*.

Stage directions are the language of the set. You should know them as well as you know your lines.

Do your job, allow others to do theirs and realize, for their own reasons, everybody wants you to succeed.

WRAP UP

The following is a list of thoughts I sent my son as he embarked on an acting career. I am pleased to share them with you.

Many of these points have been covered in depth in the book but, because they all are vital, let's just underline a few.

The following is my personal list for being a good actor and an even better person.

Thoughts to Live By

Not necessarily in this order:

Do not act like a “star.” People, especially in the business, know who a star is and who isn't. If you have to try to convince them — you aren't.

Loyalty. Be good and true to the people who are being good to you. Never take that for granted, even when it's inconvenient.

Keep your word. Many people forget how appreciated it is to be able to count on someone actually doing what they say they are going to do. Be one of those people. Be consistent and truthful. It'll amaze them.

Keep your personal life as simple as possible. Save the drama for your work. If anyone “needs” you more than you need them — run.

Keep good care of money matters. Keep your monthly nut as low as possible. You must be free to try things, to experiment, to reach. You won't have that freedom if you don't know how you are going to pay your rent or feed your new baby at home.

Never be in a position where you *have* to have this part. That makes for a desperate actor and desperate actors can be spotted a mile away no matter how good they are. They are also never hired.

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No one was ever hired out of pity and never will be. Being broke and “in need” will only show the casting people that you are not handling your life very well, so why should they think you could handle their project very well? They won’t. They want someone confident, able, secure, and solid. Someone they can cast and never have to worry about again. Feeling sorry for someone does not fit in that category.

Do not borrow money from anyone except the bank and even then, only in dire necessity or when buying a house. (After your career is off and running.) Even if you pay your friend back, it still puts you in a crowd you don’t particularly want to be in. There are those who borrow money from their friends and those who don’t – period. Don’t have people dread running into you (and, yes, it can happen to someone even as charming as you).

And what happens if something doesn’t come through or goes awry and you can’t pay it back on time? (“Stuff” happens all the time, you know?) Then you’ve just stiffed your friend, which is the first, if not the last, step in losing that friend. It’s also the start of a reputation. Word gets out and flies around this town and this industry. The evil that you do *will* live after you.

Don’t ask, or even permit, someone to do for you what you wouldn’t do for them. Stay out of any kind of debt, not just financially, but emotionally and humanly as well.

You have to be good to play this game. Remember that all the young actors and actresses in Los Angeles and New York were the best actors in their schools, their towns, maybe even their states. Then they all get together to play hardball with the big guys on the coasts.

That’s what you’re in the middle of. Very seldom, if ever, are you going to simply “out act” someone, but you may be better prepared, be more the right type, or may bring a more interesting element to the role, etc. Have respect for your fellow actors. They’re going through the same thing you are.

HITTING YOUR MARK

Let me share a personal philosophy with you about all this.

Years ago, I found what to me is a common denominator in everyone who wants to be an actor (actually this holds for most of the performing arts). And that is: There was a time in each of their lives when it was *very* important that they be loved. There was a time when they needed to be appreciated, recognized, made to feel special. (Not wanted, but *needed!*)

Usually this need comes from family, but it can also come from friends, peers at school, etc. The draw to the stage (and/or dance, music) is natural. Applause is a narcotic. Few things give such instant and total gratification as an appreciative audience.

Plus, if the world loves you, Mom or Dad (or even a spouse) would have to love you, too, right? If everyone else loves you, how can they not? Visible success is a great pay-back to people who have hurt you or shunned you. (Living well is the best revenge.)

I mean this across the board; Robert Redford, Jim Carrey, Julia Roberts, Tom Hanks, Jodie Foster — name somebody — like me, like you. At one point or another in our lives it was *very* important for us to get the attention performing can bring.

But all of us don't continue to live our lives that way. What happens after one is attracted to this business is up to the individual player. Most of us get ourselves together and grow up. It's no longer necessary that we be loved by everyone. Some, however, never outgrow this "need" (love me, love me) and are the petulant, insecure, neurotic actors you read about in the tabloids. Others of us, who go through this period, realize, after we've made our individual peace with our individual "needs," that we really enjoy this business and, if we're good at it, decide to make it our profession.

Sometimes it may seem like everyone is against you. Not true. Everyone involved in the casting process *really* wants you to succeed.

They're casting because they need an actor to play this role. They want you to be so good that you leave no doubt in anyone's mind that you should be the one to play it.

It's an age-old adage, but it's true. "The only truly original thing that you can bring to a role that no one else can bring — is you." Use your own approach, your own personality, your own sense of humor, maybe even a personal petty foible or two to color your characters.

Emulate and learn from others more successful than you, don't try to imitate them. Whatever they're doing has already been done — by them! The gauntlet is going to be passed to whomever can take it from here.

Avoid negative people. There's a lot of negativity in this business. People complaining, putting others down, bitching about the unfairness of most anything, gleefully spreading hurtful rumors, etc. Do not let them be a part of your life. If they already are, phase them out. Let them go.

Life in this business and maintaining a positive attitude is hard enough. Being surrounded by negativity makes it much harder. If you feel yourself becoming one of these people — get out of the business. I mean that sincerely. This business is not for everyone. The uncertainty of it and the rejection drives some people crazy.

If you are one of these people, don't view it as a failure — be glad you were astute enough to recognize it before you spent a major part of your life being unhappy. Go back to school. Chalk this up as an interesting chapter in your life, one you'll always have, then move on.

Let show business be your occupation, not your life. Always have something else going. It will make you a much more secure and interesting person. Learn, grow, experience things. You're in the business of interpreting life. The more life experiences you have, the better you'll be at it. Knowledge and experience are never wasted, none

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of it. It makes you a deeper, more well-rounded individual and that makes for a much more interesting actor than one who knows nothing but theater and movies.

Don't procrastinate. Do as much of what has to be done today, because tomorrow you may get your series and not have time to do them.

(This incidentally, is an example of the narcotic of show biz and keeps people in it even with few or no rewards; the next call could change your life. And it could!)

Watch TV, movies, and commercials with awareness. Know who's doing what and why. Why is someone considered good? What are they doing? Try to see as many plays, programs or commercials as you can that you didn't get. What did the actor who did get it do that you didn't? What can you learn from that?

You don't want to imitate or act like another person, but there may be attributes, attitudes, maybe even movements that you may integrate into your own abilities.

Know what made and is making the great, great. Is there anything there that could be added to your personal arsenal?

Keep in touch with family and friends. Make sure those you love know you love them. Don't set yourself up for regrets. Besides, a good support group comes in very handy.

Please don't make money, fancy clothes, and fast cars your goal. A young actor with his act together is much more impressive than one who is trying to impress. People who throw their money around and go in debt to drive a fancy car are certainly not respected for those traits — rather, they are generally taken advantage of. Do not confuse people who let you buy all the drinks you can for them as friends. They are not.

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No one expects actors at the beginning of their careers to have all the trappings of success. There is dignity in the struggle. Nothing that comes too easily is essentially worthwhile. Let the spoils of success come and grow with your success. This is the main instance where it is very important to *be* the part, not act the part.

Remember, most regrets come from “not having done something,” very few from actions actually taken. Inaction and inactivity are villains.

And finally, you’ll hear this to death but it’s true, “Have fun with it.”

Show business is one of the toughest businesses in the world. There is a huge “luck factor” and you never know which side of that you are going to be on. But if you handle it wisely, there is an amazing sense of freedom in it all.

Keep your attitude positive, be true to your mentors, learn as much as you can about everything, hang out with people who are smarter than you. Learn what a professional in this business means, then become one. Don’t do anything you wouldn’t want shown on TV — it just may be.

Remember, this year’s secretary is next year’s casting director. Be courteous to everyone. Grow in the business together. Don’t burn your bridges. Don’t be a “flake.” Be the one people can count on.

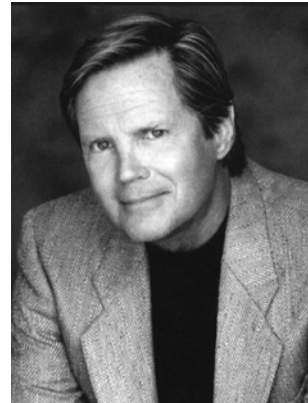
Don’t dwell on all this. Read it over a few times, think about it, then let it go and live your life as naturally and as interestingly as you can.

You’ll find these points will be there when you need them.

All the very best to you. You’re heading down an historic road. Be proud of it. Be worthy of it and... have fun with it. And please remember how lucky we are. There are few who, at the end of the day, will have enjoyed themselves as much as we.

About the Author

Steve Carlson has been a working actor for nearly 40 years. In his varied career he has been a “regular” on three TV series (*General Hospital* on ABC, *The Young & the Restless* on CBS, and *A New Day in Eden* on Showtime). He has re-occurred in many more, has guest-starred in over 50 TV episodes and starred or co-starred in ten feature films.



Over the years he has also become one of the most successful commercial actors in the country having filmed or supplied the voice for over 400 TV & radio commercials.

Steve is currently semi-retired and lives with his wife, Mary Ann, in Southern Oregon.

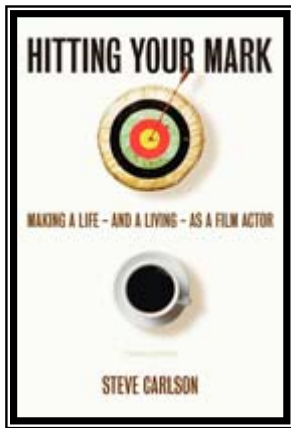
For more information go to: www.stevecarlson.tv

Other Books by Steve Carlson:

The Commercial Actors Guide, Creating, Building, and Maintaining a Career (Heinemann)

Almost Graceland, St, Martin's Press

Final Exposure, St, Martin's Press



Here is the authoritative book that reveals what it takes to work consistently and successfully on a Hollywood set. A veteran of TV and film, Steve Carlson covers information that is very difficult to come by, yet every actor is expected to know the first time he or she steps in front of the camera.

"Steve Carlson's book offers a complete, non-nonsense approach to learning the ins and outs of television and film technique from the actor's point of view. It should be required reading by anyone beginning a career in this field." -John C. Zak, Supervising

Producer, *The Bold and the Beautiful*

"I so appreciate, as my students will, the solid coaching and positive approach combined with a realistic appraisal of the actor's life when working and when preparing to work. The sense of humor makes it most appealing and readable and the depth and breadth of experience makes its content extremely valuable." - Diane Carson, Editorial Vice President, University Film and Video Association

*"Steve Carlson's book, *Hitting Your Mark*, is the only source I know of for an actor to learn about the set and filming process from an actor's point of view. A very needed addition to the new film actor's library."* - Danny Goldman, Top Hollywood Casting Director

"Steve Carlson has given us a book that is a must read for anyone new to performing on camera. This is a handy reference book that will be useful for years to come." - Alan Pultz, Director, *General Hospital*

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