

**Actors Think Tank**  
**Wednesday, 6/16/21**  
**Andrew Susskind Guest**

The guest on Actors Think Tank Wednesday, 6/16/21, was Andrew Susskind, Program Director, TV Production and Media Management; Associate Teaching Professor at Drexel University who has had an accomplished career, holding a variety of leadership and creative positions in nearly all aspects of primetime network television programming.

Per Susskind, actors must remember that acting is what they do, not who they are. Whether presently cast or not, acting does not define who they are as a person.

Andrew Susskind's dad was a successful producer in television for over 40 years, which is how he got his start. Susskind worked in New York and for Norman Lear in L.A, producing sitcoms and dramatic television shows.

Regarding casting directors, Susskind said they don't always know good from bad acting, which impacts their choices. An actor can be good and the casting director not see it due to having a preconceived idea of the role. The best casting directors allow for surprises and creativity.

To be memorable, an actor should have a good take on the scene and know what they're going for, as well as, know the genre. The late Casting Director, Marianne Doherty, redefined casting and Susskind recommended that we look at her documentary. Don't be afraid to ask casting director's questions about the scene. If you book a series watch the show prior to going on set to be sure you fit in, as there probably won't be much information given to you. Also listen to hair and makeup staff and wardrobe people to learn more about the show. The 2nd assistant director is also a good source of information. Many actors who are not the most talented, but are nice and easy to work with, consistently work, so it is important to bring humanity. Remember, there

are no small parts, just small actors. An unknown actor nailed his two minute role as a mailman on “This Is Us” because he brought the character to life. It’s not “roles,” but “characters.”

Read Meisner acting techniques. Meisner defined acting as: truthful behavior under imaginary circumstances. Be present. Connect. Bring your best every day.

95% of what gets pitched on television fails, which is why it’s great that there is Hulu, Netflix and other streaming services.

Theatre is a great way to connect. Read the book called, “Actors at Work,” which has information from some of the best actors in the industry. Susskind likes the metaphor of the synapse because sometimes the magic happens and things come together and sometimes they don’t. Give it your all, leave it all on the stage and rebuild.

Respectfully submitted by,

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