

## How to Memorize Your Lines!

How do *you* memorize? It's a must for all actors, but how you memorize can determine how you take direction. Most actors rush to have their lines down cold. If you're one of them, you may be doing more harm than good. Whether it be for an audition, play or TV/Film script, you're saying legally approved copy, so you need to say the words as written, with permission to improvise if compelled. But what if the director wants you to do it a different way? What if your thoughts as to how to play the character didn't agree with the thoughts of the director or client? If you're locked into one way of internalizing the words, it will be very difficult to change. If you rush to memorize, you may be locking yourself into one way of thinking about the character and lines.

Actors tend to go through the back and forth process of staring at the words, then pulling the script away, trying to repeat what they just tried to memorize. Danger, warning Will Robinson. You may be locking yourself into one way to think about or internalizing those lines. You'll lose the ability to adjust to the direction given to you by a casting or set director if they want to see it a different way. Thus, your best bet is to not memorize in with one particular way of feeling the lines. Let these lines come at you in many ways, so you can see and internalize them in many ways.

Here's a few ways to help you memorize lines that will help prevent you from being locked into one way of internalizing or thinking about how to speak them.

- [Get a partner to repeat your lines back and forth with you, over and over again.](#) Start with each individual line, then expanding to several lines at a time, so you hear them aloud from someone else. The continuous hearing of these lines in different tones and inflections will keep you from being locked into one way of memorizing them. The same lines, your lines, back and forth. Each moment will bring a slightly different read.
- [Write your lines down on paper.](#) Whether monologue or scene, writing your lines on paper will help you solidify them in your mind. You can do this many times., it's for you only. A pain, sure...but it helps.
- [Speed Read.](#) Don't act, just say the lines quickly. You'll trip up at first, but after several attempts, you'll get them down.
- [Actively Listen to Your Partner.](#) Once you have the memorization down, has someone do the scene with you. Focus on actively absorbing your partner's lines before you say yours. No two moments are alike, and if you listen and absorb honestly, you'll get in the habit of responding honestly each time.

In short, acting isn't about the words, but you need to have them down because time is money. It's part of professionalism. The above steps should help you memorize and learn lines in a way that allows yourself the ability to internalize, adjust and stay in the moment. You won't be locked, and taking direction will much easier.