

SOME THOUGHTS ON TECHNIQUE

1. Technique is preparation that allows you in performance to improvise in the moment truthfully within the given circumstances of the scene.
2. Your technique is a very personal thing, built up over years of trial and error as you try, score, fail, keep and discard. No one single system or method is going to suit everyone. But a technique is a useful framework to build on and make sense of with your experience.
3. Technique or craft varies from person to person because what works is very different from individual to individual.
4. The final aim of acting is not to perfect your technique. What matters in acting is the end result, and no one scores you on how you got there. They just applaud.
5. How you prepare is your business. Don't think there's a code to break, or a key to unlock what is wonderful in your acting. With each new script you are a detective, always working a fresh crime scene, trying to find your way in. What works for you will change job to job, script to script, audition to audition, year to year – and sometimes day to day. Be in touch with that.
6. It's you, not me, and certainly not the big heartless old industry, who must take responsibility for an exploration that adds over time – and often accidentally and unconsciously - to your understanding of what turns you on in your acting.
7. Technique should give you a meaningful way to prepare but it cannot, and should not, be an insurance against failure; sometimes there is no safety net. Fear or nerves will never go away entirely. But there is no ritual to perform that can cloth your sense of nakedness and vulnerability the moment before performance. That odd mixture of dread, longing and excitement is a sensation you must learn to live with. You have to learn to live with the ever present fear of slipping up. That sense of danger can make your acting fascinating to watch.
8. Separate preparation from performance. Do the work, then throw it out. Preparation involves the brain in an attempt to stir the instinct. Performance is mostly instinct with a little bit of brain.
9. As you get to know your acting better you'll learn to trust yourself and your instincts. Your technique will become less conscious and more automatic. That is where your craft will ultimately reside. In your instinct: unconscious competence.
10. Only you know what works for you.