

Helpful Hints for Memorizing Lines

Study the script: If you haven't already, read the script all the way through at least once on your own. This will help you memorize your lines, give them context so they make sense, and be aware of the gist of everyone else's lines so you know if they miss one and you can improv in response. **(If someone misses a line, it is NEVER ok to stop the scene and call them out on it. It's your job to keep the scene going!)**

Record your scenes: Bring a handheld recording device so that you can tape your scenes. Then you can listen to the tape while you're not at rehearsal, and you can say your lines in your head while still being able to have another "person" to practice lines with.

Write your lines down: This is especially helpful if you have a particular line that you can never remember correctly. Write the exact line down (as many times as it takes...start off with five) and you'll probably never forget it. If you don't have many lines, this can help you memorize them fast.

Say your lines to the mirror: Practicing your lines in front of a mirror helps with line memorization, movement, and facial expressions. Your facial muscles will begin to 'remember' the lines for you due to muscle memory. You will also be more inclined to correctly memorize intonation and other affectations of speech this way. Practice your blocking while in front of the mirror too, even though the space isn't the same. For instance, you can still achieve the same hand gestures and posture in even the most confining space.

Sing your lines: No it's not a musical, but you can still sing your lines to commit them to memory. Always use your actual lines (don't ad lib). Try to put your lines to music that helps you familiarize yourself with the tone of the line you need to deliver (ie: you don't want to use a melancholy tune for anything in this show....).

Know what's being said: The most likely thing to make your character unbelievable (and not in a good way) onstage is that you don't understand what your line means or why you're delivering it. Read through each scene, and pay attention to what is really being said (by all the characters, not just your own). Figure out what your motivations are, and what drives your character in the scene. Though we will be working in detail on this subject further along in the rehearsal process, it is your responsibility to take the time to think some of this stuff through **BEFORE** we get to that point.

Be fully present on stage: When you are on stage, don't worry about the fact that you may not have all of your lines memorized to a tee. Just **BE** your character. That is much harder to do if you are socializing with your fellow actors in between lines. If you remain focused and in character, you are much more likely to remember your lines because you are less distracted and your brain can organize your show-pertinent thoughts correctly.

Use your body: Once you've been blocked, there's **NO REASON** that you should be stationary while working on lines. It helps if you stand, move, etc. while saying the lines,

even if you aren't saying them out loud. Even if it's just pacing, the more you are moving around, the more you'll be in character and the easier your lines will come to you.