

# BECOME A HOST

By  
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What is a Host? Hosting is a completely different animal; it's very different from theatrical or commercial, it's really asking you to be you, and in a town where you are not allowed to be you, this actually could be harder than it looks! So, sharpen your pencil - I'm going to teach you how to become a host.

Ten years ago, there were maybe a handful of working hosts because the opportunities were slimmer than if you chose to be an actor. Let's put it this way: back then there were maybe only three stations, not counting syndication; now, if you scroll through your channels there are like 800. So the opportunities now are greater, and you can actually go out all year around as talent. The great news is that you don't even have to have a lick of talent to be a host! Aren't you happy? But please don't make that a default of why you want to be a host, because you still have to have a strong sense of self, which in my opinion, can actually be harder than pretending to be someone else.

## CHAPTER ONE

Hosting is the great balancing act. It asks you to be you. You need to learn how to disseminate the information, the FUCKING WORDS, THOSE FUCKING SHITTY pieces of FAX PAPER YOU ARE HOLDING ONTO so tightly during the audition, and you need to see way beyond the copy, see the people beyond the lens, the people actually sitting at home watching the show you are actually hosting or about to audition for. That is tip number one: define the junkie.

How can you see beyond you, and the copy, and your insecurities and fears, and all of your other bullshit and baggage, and actually speak to the junkie sitting on the coach eating nachos? How do you actually connect to the person the show is made for? For example, if it's a fishing show then the people watching this show are fishing junkies; if it's a sports show: sports junkies; if it's entertainment, well: entertainment junkies. You get the point. Figure out what junkie you are talking to and actually visualize talking to them and connecting with them, and it will never be about that horrible piece of paper you are white knuckling because the host world is rarely ever about the copy. It's about you and what you as you bring to the copy. Plug into your audience and connect to the people who will be actually watching the show. In order to plug into your audience you need to determine who they are because buyers want to hire a host who their audience will relate and connect to. Make the teleprompter your lover, brother, and best friend or just pick one because it's a tool to love, and it will help you see past the paper, the

cameras and the producers and casting director to really connect to your audience

This isn't to say you shouldn't learn the copy. You will definitely need to look at that copy. Just ask yourself one thing: what do I need to concentrate on? There is only one thing that you should focus on: the TV Junkies. Go beyond the camera and the transitions and all the technical bull shit that makes you get nervous and not being able to concentrate on you and your junkie/demo/audience. My meaning is this: you will never get the job for not fucking up the copy. Producers and casting directors would rather hire someone who screws up the copy but knows who they are as a host and how to plug into their junkie because the copy will wrap itself around you and choke you if that is what you put all your focus on. Any monkey can read copy; you need to wrap yourself around that copy and kill it, because you actually know who you are connecting with. So, don't let the copy wrap itself around you, we wrap ourselves around the copy.....learn that that really is the key to hosting.

Let's start to think about who you are. What are five things about your personality or life experiences you bring to your read? What makes you you? Ryan Seacrest does that brilliantly on *American Idol*. He goes beyond the lens and communicates directly with the people who are actually watching this show, and really is himself: the same guy you hear on the radio and the red carpet. Know your audience, and they will know you, like Oprah, Rosie, Doctor Phil, Jerry Springer, Maury Povich, etc. They play into their audience so well that they are one of them - and that, folks, is the key to your success. For example, you either like Jay Leno or you are a David Letterman fan. Either way, when Jay Leno or David Letterman are hosting their shows, they know who their people are and they are also very different, because we all are different aren't we? So find yourself. That's the start to the key to your success. I think Rosie was and is a prime example of that on her daytime talk show. She knew her audience so well, that she was one of them and they felt like they were her best friend, and in some sort of way they were. I think of her on *The View* and I think what Rosie does so well is that she is one hundred percent comfortable being herself no matter what. Oprah does that as well....you get my point

Okay, time for you to get busy, grab a pen. and write three things you are really good at.....

1)

2)

3)

Now write three things nobody would know or guess about you and dig down deep and don't be afraid to dare to be true:

1)

2)

3)

Okay, so read what you just wrote and it should start to get the engine churning and the creative juices flowing because these will be the things you will want to come back and re-read over and over again when you start to create your host materials. In the host world, it's very important to have materials unlike the theatrical or commercial world where a headshot and a resume are ok to get by. In the host world, you need to create an EPK (electronic press kit). I will address what your press actually will be a little later.