

Basic Information about Talent Agents

What can Agents do for you:

1. **Submitting you for an audition** — They can submit you for auditions using the marketing tools you provide, such as headshots, resume, and reels. It is your responsibility to keep headshots, resume and reels up-to-date.
2. **Pitching you to industry leaders** — They spend a lot of time on the phone talking to casting directors, directors, and producers in order to get you an audition.
3. **Following up** — They will follow up for you when you get callbacks. Make sure and be available to make it to callbacks and show up for 100%.
4. **Negotiating higher pay** — They go over the details of your contract including salary, travel arrangements, billing, and other special arrangements.
5. **Re-negotiating contracts** — When your contract is up for re-negotiation for a TV show, or network commercial extension, they negotiate an increase in pay for you.

What Agents CANNOT do for you:

1. **Taking you shopping** — Finding clothes for auditions or holding your hands for auditions. They won't tell you what to wear or how to present yourself.
2. **Advise you on which media to pursue** — You need to decide your own category to pursue, whether you should go for primetime TV, films, or commercials.
3. **Being a marketing or life coach** — Discussing marketing strategies or life choices is not their job. Booking appointments and negotiating contracts are their business. You need to find your own manager and plan a successful marketing campaign.
4. **Telling you how to create your image** — They are not going to tell you where to study or with whom to take class. They will not create your image or hairstyle.
5. **Networking for you** — they do not tell you how to network with casting directors, writers, directors, executives, etc. They will expect you to know how to do this and that you will do this! Not every job will come from your agent.

Talent Agents are:

1. *Licensed* by the State. This a lengthy, involved process that includes putting up a *\$50,000 bond* to the state guaranteeing your payments to your clients. You have to keep the license up to date, renewing it every year. There is a background check completed with fingerprints. You have to register your business with the State as either a Corporation or an LLC.
2. Constrained by state law on the amount of commission they can take, *10% for SAG-AFTRA jobs, 20% for non union jobs.*
3. To *submit, pitch, and negotiate work* on their clients' behalf for commercials, voice over, television, film, internet, new media, and all kinds of other acting related work. Agents only get paid a percentage of talents' work in the area in which they are represented in. Talents are essentially paying the Agents for acting on your behalf in *negotiating, reading, approving, and signing the contracts.*

Learn the Basics of your Career ~Get to Know the Industry~

A talent agent is responsible for finding *jobs* or *gigs* for people in the entertainment industry. As a talent agent, you can expect to receive notices from *casting directors* and other *managers* in the entertainment industry looking for people for upcoming productions. Upon receiving an inquiry, you will run the gig requirements by your client to determine his or her level of interest. If your client appears interested, you need to quickly gather his or her resume, at least one high-quality headshot photograph, and video footage of previous performances if the show calls for it, and forward it all to the talent scout. It's essential to act *quickly*, so your client doesn't lose out to someone who submitted their credentials faster. If the scouting manager requests an audition, it's up to you to check your client's schedule and make an appointment for one. Once the talent scout has confirmed the audition, you will provide your client with a sheet of specifications to get ready for the tryout. The sheet typically contains the date and time of the audition, the venue, and sections of the script, music or other type of performance the agency wants your client to perform. You will likely coach your client to prepare for the audition as well. Should your client land the gig, part of your duties include negotiating his or her contract with the production company. This covers his or her compensation and benefits, work expectations, dates the contract covers, and other essential details. You receive commission based on the contract you negotiated with the talents. In this case, You are getting 15 percent of the contract value. Talent agents *must* pass state licensing where they do business and follow any regulations imposed by the state.

What to look for in talents to represent

1. **Professional Headshots**—At least a few different characters/attires)
2. **Experience**—On camera training, theater experience & film experience etc.
3. **DEMO Reels are a MUST**—A proof of their ability and skills for casting directors
4. **Commitment**—willingness to work 100% everyday for every single gig/audition
5. **Acting resume**—All credits/experience and needed information included

One of the first things that talent agents looks at on talents acting resume is the *demographics*. The demographics help the talent agents assess the marketability, whether they can sell you to casting directors and producers. Demographics include your height, weight, ethnicity, clothing sizes and age, especially if under 18 (*We are not representing minors). In the cover letter in Resume should show how serious and experienced the talents are. As talent agent, it is important to specify what kind of gigs would work and would not work for the talents to represent. Finally, if talents have more of background work on their resume than actual acting gigs, that might be a red flag.