



CASTING

ESSENTIAL INFORMATION FOR A CASTING BRIEF

CREATIVE BRIEF

- How many characters to cast?
- Are they all featured or are there any secondary roles to cast?
- Casting brief for each character-
- Playing age, description of the character.
- Is there dialogue?
- Accents/dialects if needed.
- Any skills needed?
- Not to type cast
- Casting all ethnicities
- Any allergies/ intolerances to check?
- Are there any legal age requirements to advertise the product?
- Kissing/nudity- will you need an intimacy coordinator?
- You may need to check with your insurance company on some aspects of the casting process

INFORMATION

- Shoot dates
- Travel dates
- Location
- Recall date
- Fitting date
- Will you need a rehearsal?
- Self Tape and session turnaround time- please allow as much time as possible. The guidelines for tapes is minimum 48 hours and this doesn't include the weekend.
- The script in a word document and not embedded in a treatment.
- Are there children in the script? If so, allow plenty of time for licenses. At least 10 working days.
- Please put all the info in one document or email where possible.

ESSENTIAL INFORMATION FOR A CASTING BRIEF CONT...

CASTING SESSIONS/ BUDGET

Will they be in person or self tapes for the first round?

Allow enough time for feedback before the next session.

How many sessions and prep days have you budgeted for?

When will the recall be?

Always speak to the casting director to get a quote when budgeting - each job is different and requires a different amount of work / prep days etc

The APA rates are a guideline but with widening briefs to take in to consideration & inclusivity on all levels there is quite often much more prep work than one day.

APA Session fees (this is the same for tapes)- 1 session is UP TO 4 characters and up to 4 hours (in person). 1 prep day should be budgeted per session. An additional prep for uploading tapes is pretty standard now too.

If you have 4 characters though remember 1 session is probably not going to be enough. If we are casting in person then realistically you will only see 6-8 people per hour which doesn't give many options.

Work with the director and casting director to see what will work best for them. Maybe a mix of tapes and in person sessions.

Real person/ research based casting- all casting directors charge different rates for this. Allow time to cast in this way!!

CASTING DIRECTION FOR TAPES

Ideally the casting director and director have a chat about the script and characters and work out what the actors should do in the self tapes or casting session. Usually choosing 2-3 beats of the script that we think will get the most out of the actor and for you to see the script come alive.

Please don't expect the actors to do the whole commercial. They often have several tapes or castings a day/ week to do. As well as a full or part time job and a family.

TOP TIPS for making the most out of the process of Casting to release the potential of your ad

Be present- at the recalls or if you are at the sessions then please be present. Don't just sit on your laptop typing away.

Respectful- Be kind and friendly to the actors. If we can create a nice environment for them when they come in then they are going to relax more into the role.

Creative- Your chance to be involved in this fun and creative process. Director or Casting Director would love your input or encouragement that you think it's funny or on the right track

Experiment- You can try new ideas out in the castings. See what the actor brings and work around it. It's like free rehearsal time! Use it to your best ability. Allow time!

Time- A recall is when we get the most out of the sessions so try to allow time and budget for 2 sessions if possible. That way we can schedule a lunch break and not having to eat (smelly food) in the session with the actors.

Script- a chance to develop the script and see what works and what doesn't

Collaborative- a chance for you to invite agency to callbacks for their instant feedback. It should feel like an inclusive process. Check with your director and agency though! Be wary of people dialing into the session as it can sometimes be off putting to the actor if they suddenly feel more people watching them.

Considerate- trying not to keep actors on pencil for too long or too many on pencil. We are at a point where agents will be asking for a fee to keep them on hold. Remember when casting children to be courteous of the (often working) parents/family too. Another reason to give them as much notice as possible for self tapes and auditions.

Director relationship- During recall/ casting sessions you get to see the director at work and see how they might direct. You are hanging out with them and learning more about them.

Resource- Check out the CDA (Casting Directors Association) a representative of commercial casting directors and the CDG the Casting Directors Guild. You'll see so many casting directors working across film, tv, commercials and theatre as well as gaming. If you are unsure of buyouts or budgets then contact your casting director on the project. The CDA is a great source of knowledge about working hours and best practice and have the following working guideline documents for you- for young adults, dancers & children- including child working hours. The AYPAs (agents of young performers association) is another great resource for advice and clarity.

Notes by Casting Director Leanne Flinn. Guidelines only & notes are subjective as every casting director works in a different way. Updated in Feb 2025

Production Form: Artist's Casting Brief

Template

Published Date

11 May 2023

Share this



IPA Production has worked with the APA, Equity and ISBA to develop a new Casting Brief Template which aims to encourage diverse and inclusive casting and authentic on-screen portrayals.

- [Download Casting Brief Template as pdf](#)
- [Download Casting Brief Template as word file](#)

The template aims to encourage:

- A pause for thought at the moment of transition from the creative development and treatment phases, where agencies might want to reflect with directors and clients about whether unnecessarily specific pre-conceptions about the characters have arisen.
- Creatives not being faced with a 'blank page' when asked to draft a casting brief under time pressure.
- Greater diversity, equity and inclusion in the hiring aspect of the casting process.
- Authentically diverse and inclusive on-screen portrayals, properly integrated with the aims of the agency, production company, brand and campaign.
- Thorough best-practice in communicating the requirements of the role and specifics of fees and usage by attaching those in detail to the casting brief from the outset.

Endorsed by APA, Equity and ISBA



EQUITY

