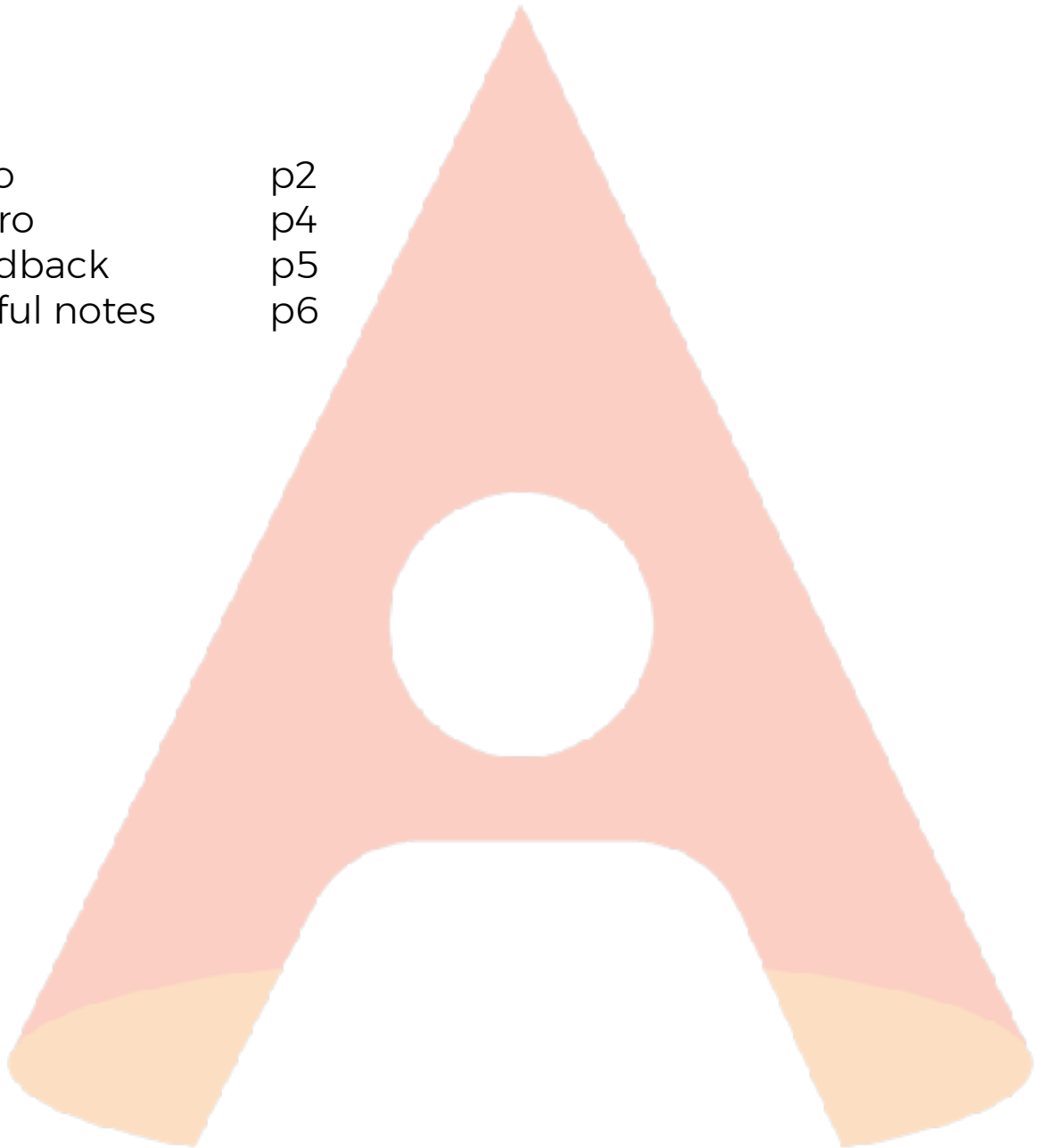


# The ActorBank Actor's Guide to Conducting Role-play

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# INTRO GUIDE

A good intro should achieve the following five things from the client's perspective:

I feel good about myself.

I am open to new learning.

I have confidence in the actor.

I have a clear understanding of how the session will run.

I have a clear idea of how this will benefit me.

## Build Rapport

Take the time to establish a good relationship before embarking on the role-play. It should be a valuable human exchange in which the client feels safe and comfortable. This may mean spending more time on the introduction but it will help the rest of the session run more smoothly and be much more productive.

- Greet your client with their name and introduce yourself
- Ask how they are - and be prepared to follow this up if they are nervous/blasé/reluctant.
- You could ask if they have done anything like this before - they may say they hate role-play!
- Do not gloss over any anxieties they have.
- Do not use blanket phrases such as "It will be fine!"
- Ask open questions to find out more about what has led them to feel that way and then help to reassure them by telling them how other clients have found it.
- Reassure them that it is common and normal for them to feel apprehensive.
- Tell them that from the feedback we have had, other people found that it was much more realistic than they expected and they soon forgot their nerves/etc.

## Exude Positivity

We need to come across as passionate about what we do - not necessarily verbally - think of shiny-eyedness.

- Exude positive, friendly energy and be charismatic.
- Look and act like we want to be there and be fully present.

## Change your client's state

Your client may not be open to new learning. It is worth trying to change their state so they can get the most out of the session, however it might not be possible. You may need to be a bit blunt and say something like 'Well, this is the situation we are in. How do you think you can get something out of this for you?'

Try helping them to see for themselves how they can make the most of the session.

- It is a safe place for them to try things out without the potential risks/consequences of a 'real' situation.
- No one is going to see this. The session is totally confidential.
- You want the best for them.
- This is their opportunity to see into the mind of someone they communicate with.
- They are in control of how it runs.
- The session is for them to make full use of. It is for their learning, so if they want to focus on a particular aspect, then that is what we do.
- They have the opportunity to receive sensitive and constructive feedback from someone neutral and independent.
- They will have the chance to review the session in their own time for their own personal learning and to evaluate with a line manager if they wish.

### Housekeeping

- Remind them how long the session will be.
- Break this down, i.e. you will talk them through how the session will run, followed by a 15 minute roleplay. (maybe less if you feel the intro needs to be longer to get them into the right state)
- Explain that you'll stop with three to five minutes to go, to give time for feedback if they wish to receive it.
- Reassure them that they are in control of the scenario and that they can stop it at any time by saying 'Stop'/'Time out' or by putting their hand up or making a T symbol. They can re-run a section or choose to move on as they wish. Tell them that you will stay in character until the resolution of the scenario or until time dictates you stop.

## OUTRO GUIDE

A good intro should achieve the following things from the client's perspective:

I feel good about myself.

I understand how booking another session would increase my learning.

I would use AvatarJo again.

- Ask if the client found the session useful
- Thank them for their time and contribution. E.g. "I've enjoyed working with you today"
- Share the feedback form link and ask them to open it. Re-inforce how much their opinion is valued and acted upon and that you are always looking to develop your skills to help clients as much as you can.
- If the client clearly enjoyed or benefitted from the session, mention that working with another actor would give them further insight and a different perspective. Suggest that if they tried the scenario again they could try another approach.
- If a client asks to book another session please direct them to our [www.avatarjo.co.uk](http://www.avatarjo.co.uk)
- Say Good bye and exit the call with a smile.

All Client sessions are confidential. You should not talk to another actor or anyone about the content of your sessions.

# FEEDBACK GUIDE

The key to giving good feedback is to be paying exquisite attention to your client from the moment they start the call. You can pick up a lot about them in the first few minutes that will help you give great feedback at the end.

- DURING THE INTRO : ask the client what they would like feedback on (or look up the key focus of the training event if it is part of one)
- DURING THE ROLE-PLAY : take notes of SPECIFIC EXAMPLES of what the client said or did which affected your character.
- CONSIDER PAUSING THE ROLE-PLAY : Will the person learn more if you stop in the middle of the role play and give them some feedback? People often learn more by being able to do it again with improvements rather than leaving at the end thinking they made lots of mistakes.
- BEFORE GIVING ANY FEEDBACK : Get their thoughts on how they thought it went
- WHILST GIVING FEEDBACK: Pay exquisite attention to your client! You can change the way you are giving feedback if it is not being received in a valuable way
- COMMENT ON BEHAVIOURS AND ACTIONS : not the client's personality
- SPEAK ON BEHALF OF THE ROLE YOU PLAYED : never from your own perspective.
- USE YOUR NOTES: give specific examples of the client's actions. E.g "When you let me speak for all that time about my mother, I felt you cared and were interested in me".
- GIVE FEEDBACK CHRONOLOGICALLY : giving feedback in a chronological order tends to be more valuable than a feedback sandwich. In the feedback sandwich, clients often don't listen to the good bits because they are anticipating the not-so-good bits
- Make sure you give feedback on any areas that they asked for feedback in the intro.

## USEFUL NOTES TO CONSIDER

You are there to help the client see inside the mind of those they communicate with.

You are there to facilitate learning, not to teach or dictate. Your client will learn more by being listened to than talked at. For every 5 words you say, your client should say 20.

It is the client's responsibility to decide how much they want to get out of the session. You can only do your best to guide them towards their own learning. You cannot force the client to learn.

You are simply there to notice how the client made your character feel, not to solve problems.

It can sometimes feel disheartening if the client does not appear visibly happy with themselves after the session. The chances are, the PENNY DROP MOMENT will happen after the call has ended. Trust that you have done enough.

