

Should you be an On-Staff Animator, Freelance Animator, or Studio Owner?

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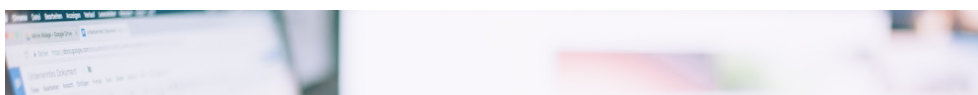
4 Important Skills Animators Need

Drawing is arguably the essential skill that aspiring animators need. Accurate as this may be, relying on just this particular skill alone will not be sufficient to go a long way.

Many challenges that animators face daily - such as working on a tight schedule, thinking about ways to pack the content in a relevant manner, or even dealing with all the stress - mean that other aspects of the profession need to be considered for animators to thrive.

In this blog post, we share some of the important skill sets that starting animators need to kick-start their careers.

1. Research



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Good animation requires not just extensive research, but also the ability to sift through the information that you have gathered.

On one side, some topics require you to do research on a broad spectrum of subjects; In contrast, others need you to do the exact opposite - understanding specific concepts in an in-depth manner.

To better organize these research challenges when dealing with a given topic, you might want to ascertain that you have allocated enough time in understanding the issue you are trying to depict through animation.

These questions might help you give a better idea on what to look for when doing research:

1. Does the animation provide relevant enhancements to the topic?
2. Does the animation give the audience a more thorough understanding of the matter?

You can also use the countless resources that the Internet can offer to learn from other fellow animators.

There is a lot to pick from a pool of talented animators - but the bottom line here is that you would want to make sure that you get a glimpse of both sides: animators who have similar styles and tones to you, and those who possess contrasting styles.

The former may give valuable insights into what can be improved from your work. On the flip side, animators with contrasting styles may inspire you and add relevant variations to your original tone.

2. The Ability to Fit Content Into

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Creative content can either be enhanced through animation, or it may fall flat due to various reasons. To best avoid this, consider the context of the content and the story behind it.

In regards to context, it is crucial for you to use the appropriate kind of style and tone. You might want to consider these questions when defining the proper context for the animation:

- What messages are you trying to convey through the animation?
- What kind of tone is relevant for the underlying messages of the animation?
- Does the style of animation fit the overall theme that you are trying to cover?

The next step would be to make sure that the tone and style match the content's intended meaning or purpose. Not to overlook that the tone and style also have to be aligned - this way, the message does not change when the content is given a "shell" - that is, your animation design.

Part of this process is also using storytelling as a helpful tool. The story's usage plays a vital role in animation since it gives the audience a more immersive experience when witnessing the clips.

Good storytellers and animators need to piece together information and give meaningful connections to them while making sure that it does not distort the

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1. How did the content develop into its present condition?
2. Who was involved in the process of creating said content?
3. Are there any relevant details surrounding the development and the people involved in it?

These questions will help the viewers understand where the content is coming from as it provides them with the big picture.

For instance, when people understand the sequence of events of how a particular concept came to be and other necessary details surrounding it, it will leave little room for misconceptions to occur. Keep in mind that the details you provide are scant to avoid distracting the audience from the key points.

To support the well laid-out stories you have constructed, you can add to its significance by giving your animation specific traits.

These traits will help with piecing together meaningful information through complementing particular acts or words that are being said. It would also help the viewers at large in attaching significant associations to them.

In the process of attaching said traits, think about *how* you would like the characters to come across as, and make sure that the characteristics that you have given to them match the nature of the story.

3. Understanding the Audience's Reception



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Another skill that is related - but distinct - to the previous aspect is the ability to predict and understand the audience's reception.

When working on an animation project, you would surely not want people to have the wrong idea about what you are trying to tell them. This specific skill can be breakdown into two concepts of understanding:

Knowing How People Might React to Particular Styles and Tones

There is a reason - and a good one - why starting animators need first to establish their target audience for the project.

Numerous factors may affect how the audience perceives a video, but demographic characteristics, particularly age, plays a significant role. That is why animators must understand how different people - across various target demographics - might interpret the product.

For example, a particular animation style might be easier to comprehend for adults, but children might not find the content understandable.

Understanding Different Cultural Backgrounds

As discussed in the previous point, different demographics may result in a different understanding of the content, [especially in the case of cultural differences](#).

The importance of culture needs to be emphasized since the consequence of not paying enough attention to differences in cultural norms [might result in hostile reception](#). Certain contents might be perceived as useful or helpful in a given region, but it may not apply to other areas.

4. Establishing Ways to De-Stress Yourself



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It may seem trivial to most, but it is crucial to know your limit and build self-strategies in the process of tackling your animation projects. These considerations might help regulate your stress-level.

In the long-run, it can contribute to your emotional and physical resiliency as an animator. To get started, consider asking these questions to yourself:

1. In what order are you most comfortable working on any given project?
2. Do you prefer working on projects based on their level of difficulty?
3. Or do you like working on projects based on their deadlines?

After deciding on a specific preference for working on tasks, set realistic goals that you can work comfortably with. These questions might help you settle on the most appropriate plan:

1. How many projects can you finish in a period with varying degrees of difficulties?
2. How many projects can you complete in a period with specific timelines?

The process of finishing an animation project can be too daunting; that is why it is essential for you to unwind once in a while. To make the best out of your resting time, make sure that you have done the following:

1. Make a clear and distinct separation between your resting place vs workplace;
2. Add items that you can easily associate with productiveness near your workspace (e.g. a lineup of books, stationery sets).

To complete, you can try and give yourself small rewards after hitting personal targets or deadlines. Keep in mind that the reward you give yourself is worthwhile and subjectively fulfilling; this way; you will look forward to the upcoming tasks even more - as they will seem less daunting.

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Hard skills - such as drawing or designing - alone will be insufficient if animators overlook other equally important skills.

With these other fundamental skills, animators can find a more worthwhile and enduring experience working on new projects. It is especially beneficial for those who are just starting to pave the way for their animation journey.

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