

The Mistakes 98% Of Student Animators Make

Why are a few student animators able to find work instantly, while the rest just end up wallowing in *torturous silence* - *praying* for any kind of response from a studio?

- You could say some are just super talented.
- You could say some are just lucky.

But if you believe that your just making excuses.

98% of the time it boils down to *3 mistakes* that *rarely* ever get mentioned.

And it's because these mistakes are hard to hear.

In fact they can sting like a bitch.

But the good news is all of these mistakes you have control over - all of these mistakes can be fixed.

And no matter the pain or effort - it sure beats sitting around just waiting for your dream job to fall from the sky.

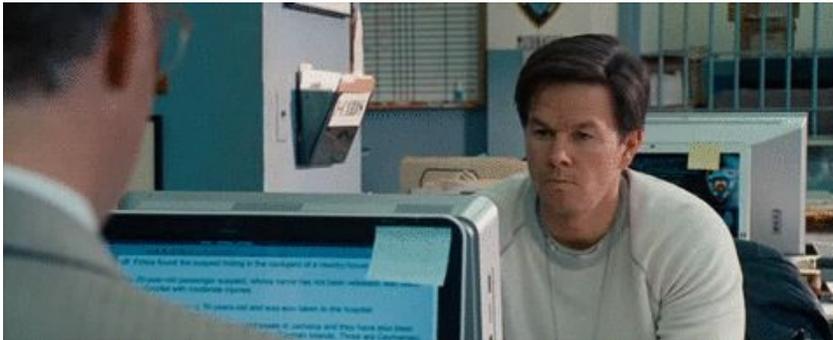
So let's dive in..

Mistake #1 - You Only Applied Online

Applying on a studio's website is a black hole.

If this is all you've done, you've already lost.

Your demo reel won't even be seen, especially if it's at a big studio. There are just too many other applications.



Often this has nothing to do with your animation skills, and everything to do with who you know.

I mean who would you rather hire for your own film - a random dude from latvia or a classmate buddy?

Of course the people with connections get bumped up to the front of the line and asked for interviews.

You need to know someone on the inside.

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- A former classmate / friend
 - A recruiter / HR
 - A former teacher / mentor that works there
 - A supervisor from another studio that gives you a recommendation

If you can have 1 on 1 conversations with any of these people you'll get on the studios radar, you'll get fast responses with behind the scenes info, and you'll get the offer before everyone.

Your chances of course increase if they hold a high position in the company.

An Animation Supervisor or HR Manager will obviously have more pull than a junior animator or HR assistant.

So, reach out to the people you know - see if they can pass your reel along.

You might be thinking *"AH MAN but I don't know anybody - I don't have a network!"*

Well, you probably do, you just haven't really thought about it:

- Who do you know in Animation Facebook groups / Forums?
- Who do you know in the schools you've been to?
- Who are friends of a friend?

But let's say worst case scenario that's true. You have 0 animation friends.

There's still an easy way to increase your chances:

- Go to LinkedIn and search for a studio you want to work at
- Search for a recruiter at that studio
- Ask them to join your network but with a real genuine intro message.
- Don't ask for a job straight away - start a dialogue with them.
- Ask them specific questions about what the studios working on - what they are looking for. That way you're not some stranger just asking for a handout.

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- BAM! - you now have an inside track when there are openings!
 - ❑ YES, I Will Start Today by contacting 1 person I know or introducing myself to a recruiter
 - ❑ NO Thanks my dream jobs just not worth it.

Mistake #2 - You Learned From The Wrong School

This one probably stings the most...

Mainly because school's expensive, student loans suck, and you've probably already spent time you can't get back. Years of learning for what?

School's are most definitely not created equal and most make it difficult to succeed.

Far too many operate under these terrible assumptions:

1. Going to College Guarantees You a Job - *It doesn't*
2. Degrees especially from a prestigious (expensive) schools are what makes all the difference - *They don't*
3. Generalized knowledge about all of 3D (lighting, modeling, sculpting, rigging) makes you great at everything - *It doesn't - it makes you mediocre at best*

You fell into the trap.



It's ok, the rebels still won and so can you.

Online schools bypass the colossal cost of degrees (\$30K - \$100K+) , they focus 100% on animating, and you learn from professionals who work at your favorite studios like Pixar or ILM.

This makes you learn far faster, at a far higher skill level, and with far better connections.

A lot of them also allow you take a single class. That way spending is minimal upfront, and you can learn when your schedule is best.

Here's the Online Schools I recommend:

- [Animation Mentor](#)
- [Ianimate](#)
- [Animschool](#)
- [CG Tarian](#)
- [AnimSquad](#)

There's also one brick and mortar exception. For those who live in San Francisco or can afford to move there - attend the [Animation Collaborative](#). You're taught hands on by current artists at Pixar, directly across the street from Pixar.

- YES, I'll review the online options available, see when classes start, and assess if I need to improve my animation skills.
- NO thanks I'd rather just sit and wait around - praying for a job offer.

Mistake #3 Your Demo Reel Is Boring

"Your shots are boring. Yes, yours!"

"That dialogue looks like two creepy zombie muppets mouthing a bad joke in Chinese"

"Oh look – you also have a block guy pushing a box while having what looks like a unplanned seizure – how exciting!"

It sucks but somebody had to say it.

There are still too many demo reels full of these types of shots. And maybe your shots really aren't that bad but if you're not landing interviews it's time for a reality check.

Do people react to your reel like this?



Your art has to leave an impression or you'll spend years empty-handed.

All it really takes is 1 – just 1 – amazing animation to open all kinds of closed doors for your career. Something I've detailed how to do in [The Key to Memorable Animation](#).

And once that shot exists, it can pay its dues for decades to come.

Create 1 masterpiece. The *very very very* best you can do at this moment and begin your reel with it. Pair it only with your 2nd and 3rd best shots. Abolish the rest.

Yes! You've got to get brutal. Delete, Burn, Disintegrate your old shots from your reel.

We're after entertainment – lame shots will only kill the mood.

With this quality over quantity approach you'll make the audience believe you've always been this good.

Then, suddenly, getting hired becomes easier.

Turn These Mistakes Into Your Secret Weapon

What is the upside to 98% of student animators making the same mistakes?

Overcome 1 - just 1 - of these setbacks and you'll *instantly* stand out from the masses.

You'll be on the fast track to your dream job.



Simply knowing these mistakes has already saved you years of doubt, depression, and boatloads of cash.

But to really take advantage you need to do something about it.

You can continue to sit around in torturous silence waiting for your dream job to magically appear...

Or you can start fixing 1 - just 1 - mistake and make your dream job happen

Although, you don't need to go it alone.

If you're unsure where to begin - reach out to me here: rusty@rustyanimator.com
and tell me what mistake has been affecting you the most.

We'll work on it together.