FREE FROM SECRET ACTOR SOCIETY

7 O-1B visa myths actors still believe

From my class Understanding The O-1B Visa.

Hi, Kym here.

If the US is your market, this one's for you.

My guest in this class went from O-1 to green card to US citizen. Her own agent once told her she'd never get an O-1.

As she puts it, the O-1B isn't for the actor who's about to arrive. It's for the person who has arrived. And a lot of what actors believe about it is wrong.

Rules and wording change, so treat this as a starting point. **This is general information, not legal advice. Talk to an immigration attorney about your situation.**

Kym

01 **"You need about 7 IMDb credits."**

It's not the number. It's the weight of the credit, and that comes from how many people saw it.

02 **"Immigration judges your acting."**

Nobody is watching your performances. It's a government body assessing papers. It's a process.

03 **"A big-name sponsor makes up for thin credits."**

Each criterion has to reach the standard on its own. One strong area can't cover a weak one.

04 **"Get your letters of support sorted now."**

The wording changes. Beyond your credits, start nothing until you're applying, with your attorney.

05 **"Only a talent manager can sponsor you."**

Not true, according to my guest. And on the O-1, your sponsor isn't your employer.

06 **"Get a US agent first."**

Not until you have the visa. Casting finding out late is a first impression you can't undo.

07 **"My friend got it with no credits."**

There's always a story behind the story. Your timeline is the only one that matters.

> **CHECK WHICH O-1B**
>
> At the time of recording there were two: one for screen acting, and an arts version for theatre that didn't let you work on screen. What to do today: build credits. When you think you're close, get your case assessed by at least 3 US attorneys who specialise in the O-1B.

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Not all credits count the same

The test my guest uses: how many people saw it? Audience size is what gives a credit its weight.

LOW WEIGHT	HIGHER WEIGHT
The best performance of your life in a short film that never leaves your living room.	A supporting role in a feature that gets real recognition. Major festivals. A big streamer.
One TV co-star or guest star on its own.	A recurring role across 2 or 3 episodes.
Background work. Never dress it up.	Commercials you auditioned for. National beats regional; big brands help.
Several self-made films. Keep it to one credit.	Films accepted into two or more of the biggest festivals, not just submitted.

MY CREDIT	PLATFORM / FESTIVAL / BRAND	AUDIENCE SIZE	WEIGHT (L/M/H)

> **BEFORE YOU SAY YES TO A SHORT, ASK**
>
> "What's the post-production schedule? When's it releasing? Which festivals? Who's submitting?" Asking makes you look more professional, not less.

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This guide comes from **Understanding The O-1B Visa**, one of the 18 masterclasses in The Journey at **secretactor.com**.