

The Concept of *STATIC ACTION*

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Bringing Life to the Layout

The Concept of Static Action

When placing figures on a layout, as often as possible, try to avoid freeze shots, for example, people running, who aren't.

An Individual with a raised hammer is going to get a very tired arm, however, a person who looks like they are loosening or tightening a bolt is going to be in that position for a while.

A person rolling a tire is really going to move, but the person fixing the tire is going to be in that position for a few moments.

If you've got a ball game going on, a conference on the mound looks more realistic as you watch then waiting for the pitcher to finish their wind up.

An engineer oiling looks better than one (not) walking along the engine. conversing with the conductor on the ground makes a better scene than climbing, but never getting into the cab.

Try having people in conversation groups, they are probably going to keep that position for a least a brief period of time.

The scene will generally look busier if you place several people in close proximity rather than taking the same number and spreading them singly across a large area.

Together, people look like they're "doing something", even if the only thing in action is presumed to be the mouth.

However, where a particular scene or idea calls for it, go ahead and put that action figure in. If it works, use it!

But, the layout will probably look more real, and for longer, if people are seen in a position that they would generally keep for at least a few moments.

The viewer's imagination will fill in all of the normal aspects of the scene that you imply, but don't actually model.

What you are trying to do is to imply action that doesn't need visible movement.

Rule #1: It is your model railroad.
Rule # 2 Model Railroading is Fun.

Some Rules Guidelines

The 2 foot guide.

If yo can't see it from 2' away, you probably don't need it.

(This of course, doesn't apply to contest models or photo shoots.)

The viewer's imagination. Don't bother to try to do detail that is too small to be seen or which is so small that it can't be done well. Facial features, buttons and belt buckles come to mind. But it is amazing what can be done, ie. individual numbers on the back's of a n-scale ball players.

The stage set approach and false fronts.

It is not necessary to detail the back of the building if it can't be seen. (Again, this doesn't apply to contest models)

The larger the scale, the smaller the items that can be modeled, but they end up the same size, for example, the O-scale nut and bolt equal the N-scale wheel and tire.

Yes, you can overdo the detailing, but time and money will most likely prevent that from happening.

Where to Get Ideas for What Your People Are Doing

Your ordinary everyday activities.

(Cutting the grass, taking out the garbage)

Your families activities.

(Working in the garden, working on the car, playing ball, playing with the dog)

Memorable moments in your life or
your family's life.

(Some bodies wedding, a big family party)

Unusual events that have happened to you or to
others.

(Having a farmer tow the car out of a ditch,
cutting up a fallen tree)

Thing that you'd like to have done, but haven't.

(Mountain climbing)

Alternative hobbies.

(Taking pictures, working a fossil dig, barbecuing, gardening,
kite flying)

Put your friends into the scene.

(Doc Fleming flying a model plane, which could be
activated.)

Recreate scenes from a book or movie.

(Stan and Ollie trying to move the piano up
a long flight of steps")

ETC!