Editing ‘Rules’...?

Murch and Dmytryk
Edward Dmytryk (1908-1999)

Director: Crossfire, The Caine Mutiny, Broken Lance, Warlock
Author: ‘On Film Editing’

“Technical skill counts for nothing if it is used only to manufacture films which have little to do with humanity.”

“In art, the obvious is a sin.”
Edward Dmytryk

1) Never make a cut without a positive reason
2) When undecided about the exact frame to cut on, cut long rather short
3) Whenever possible cut ‘in movement’
4) The fresh is preferable to the stale
5) All scenes should begin and end with continuing action
6) Cut for proper values rather than proper matches
7) Substance first - then Form
“Looking at a first assembly is kind of like looking at an overgrown garden. You can't just wade in with a weed whacker; you don't yet know where the stems of the flowers are.”

“Film editing is now something almost everyone can do at a simple level and enjoy it, but to take it to a higher level requires the same dedication and persistence that any art form does.”
1) Emotion - Does the cut reflect what the editor believes the audience should be feeling at that moment?

2) Story - Does the cut advance the story?

3) Rhythm - Does the cut occur at a moment that is rhythmically interesting and ‘right’?

4) Eye-trace - Does the cut pay respect to the location and movement of the audience’s focus of interest within the frame?

5) 2-Dimensional place - Does the cut respect the 180-degree rule?

6) 3-Dimensional space - Is the cut true to the physical/spatial relationships within the diegesis?
Readings and Resources

The Cutting Edge - The Magic of Movie Editing
http://ifsstech.wordpress.com/video-channel/

Using Colorista in Final Cut Pro Introduction

Using Colorista in Final Cut Pro Advanced

Adobe DV Primer
http://ifsstech.files.wordpress.com/2008/06/adobe_dv_primer.pdf

Adobe Digital Audio Primer
http://ifsstech.files.wordpress.com/2008/06/audaudioprimer1.pdf