

STAGE MANAGER JOB DESCRIPTION

PLEASE NOTE: Our theatre is some times rented to other groups during our rehearsals. It is important that the S.M. checks the Rental Calendar in the Club Room informs the Tech Producer and the Director of our current production and ensures that all members of the cast and crew leave the stage, dressing rooms, bathrooms and club room in a clean and tidy manner before the renter arrives. Thank You.

THE STAGE MANAGERS ROLE: Listed here are tasks for the Stage Manager (SM), with the overall goal of creating a production in an efficient and positive manner. The SM is the “King Pin” for a show. Your ability to successfully lead and work with the company, although at times possibly stressful, will be of utmost importance. Your overall purpose is to work directly with the director and all cast and production people to bring a show from its beginning to its end. So much of what an SM does is actually related to your personality and the nature of the working relationship you establish with your director, cast and crew. In many cases you will be involved in personal and confidential information needing to deal with “personality” problems or issues. Your “personal interrelationship” skills and diplomacy will be challenged. Have a GREAT SHOW. .

WHO MAKES A GOOD STAGE MANAGER?

1. Someone who is organized.
2. Someone who knows their theatre building.
3. Someone who knows how to problem solve.
4. Someone who has a basic understanding of all the technical demands of a production: lights, sound, props, set changes, make-up changes, and special effects.
5. Someone with a firm, kind, polite, respectful, and calm manner who can encourage and lead a large number of people to achieve a high standard of back stage discipline.
6. Someone with a lot of stamina and a good sense of humour.

PREPARATION- 3 WEEKS BEFORE REHEARSALS:

1. Purchase a good sized notebook
2. Get to know the building. A large part of your job description is the safety of the cast, the crew and the audience.
3. Make notes of potential safety problems. Pass on concerns to VP.Tech (Willem, this season)
4. Know location of fire extinguishers and how they operate.
5. Check that all fire exits are clearly marked.
Advise VP Tech of ideas you have to improve safety and offer to help organize a work party in the area of concern.
6. Know the location of all fuse boxes.
7. Check the backstage first aid kit and replace any missing supplies.
8. Read job description for production positions.
9. Become familiar with the basic operation of the following:
 - a. Operation of main curtain.
 - b. Where to turn on work lights, running lights, house lights, rehearsal lights, the stage lighting console.
 - c. The sound system.
 - d. Head set intercom system.
 - e. Hearing assist system and where it plugs in.
 - f. Monitor system
 - g. Fly line system..
 - h. Masking
 - i. Heating System
 - j. Alarm and sign in system
10. Make arrangements to be trained as necessary. When in doubt, stop and ask for help.
11. Check the SM desk for flashlights and batteries.
12. Have a reliable watch or a clock at the S.M. desk

13. Know the location of the tool room and the key.

14. Know how to remove front row seats to accommodate wheelchairs. The two seats left and right in the front row 'A' are left out to accommodate last minute wheelchair patrons.

GETTING TO KNOW THE PRODUCTION TEAM – 2 WEEKS BEFORE REHEARSALS START

1. In our theatre the production meetings are run by the Producer or Tech Producer. Find out from the producer when the production meetings will take place. Attend ALL production meetings and help support your Technical Production Heads to solve any problems they may have. All heads of production must have a chance to voice their concerns and should be assured that they will get help if they need it. If someone is feeling overwhelmed or overworked, they need to know that help can be found.

2. Read the script several times (three?)

a. Make notes of set changes, lighting needs, special effects, sound needs, and any special rigging.

b. Make notes of costume and make-up changes, especially those that happen back stage.

c. Start to make notes on how to best move set pieces as this will have an impact on number of running crew required.

3. Meet with the set designer and arrange a time to help tape out the set.

4. Arrange a time to meet with set décor head and props person to find rehearsal furniture and props before first read-through.

5. Deliver a copy of script to each crew head: Lights, Sound, Props, Special Effects, Costumes, Make-up/hair, & ASM.

6 If the play is a period piece, ask the costume designer to have rehearsal skirts etc. ready for rehearsals.

7. Arrange a time in the near future to have a fire drill for all cast and crew. Do this on a night when all cast and crew are there and before rehearsals get underway. If you don't know the procedure, ask David Jones 250-542-2129 or Sarah McLean 250-542-7027.

Call Front of House Manager to remind of Fire drill Procedure for front of house staff.

Set a time with the Director, the Tech Producer, Admin Producer, yourself and Designers to have a meeting to do the PRODUCTION SCHEDULE

Each person will enter their deadlines in the schedule and a large copy will be displayed in the club room and smaller copies will be given to each head of the production team..

8. Starting at the Strike and working backwards, will be the run of the play, preceded by tech week, preceded by opening night, and depending on the complexity of the show, it might look like the following:

a. Opening Night

b. Preview Night, audience is PH members and invited audience from the community.

c. 2 - 4 nights of full run through – all cast and crew, sound, lights, etc. one of these nights may be a family night/afternoon. (Director's choice)

d. 2 nights of run with fine tuning with make-up and hair and costumes

e. 1 night with lights, sound and special effects and full crew for cue to cue. You are in the booth.

f. 1 night cue to cue including actors, technicians and all crew. You will then record your cues in your SM Script.

g.. 1 night or Saturday morning start for all day lights and sound to set levels, and looks for all scenes. Lights and sound can be done at the same time or separately. Arrange a time with and the Director and the Light and Sound Designers. It may be desirable to have one or two, or more bodies available.

h. 1 night or all day for lighting person to have theatre to themselves – dark.

9. Establish which nights to have an early call for a costume parade with the director, the actors, and the Costume Designer. Ask Costume Designer which night would be appropriate.
10. An early call might also be necessary for make-up and hair.
11. You may, depending on the complexity of the production, have to call a few rehearsals of just your crew to rehearse changing scenes or props. These changes have to be orchestrated so that they will be smooth, swift, and economical.
12. Make sure that all the crew, lighting, sound, props, costumes, make 1 up/hair, and special effects have a copy of the timeline.
13. If there are any problems with lights, sound, props, make-up/hair or costumes, refer it to the Tech Producer.
14. Prepare your script for the run of the play. This will be separate from the rehearsal script.
 - a. Photocopy each page. Paste onto larger page.
 - b. Arrange in a 3-ring binder with a blank page to the left of the script page. The blank page will have all cue #'s written on it. You can have arrows indicating where they occur on the script. You may also want to color code them.

REHEARSALS: Encourage respect. Set a good example for everyone by being supportive to all. Cast and Crew.

1. If the Tech Producer or Producer has not given you a list, collect phone numbers and or e-mails from all actors and crew.
2. Arrive at least ½ hour before call time, SM is always first to arrive for each rehearsal and last to leave..
3. Arrange set furniture for the scene.
4. Help Props people arrange props on and off stage.
5. Get coffee ready to turn on – saves time later.
6. Call actors who are late.
7. Record all blocking in pencil – you may need to erase later.
8. Time rehearsals. 90 minutes then a break, unless there's a new group of actors. Call actors after break. Ask them to wash their own coffee cups or use Styrofoam. This prevents spread of germs. (Especially 2 weeks before opening)
9. Find out the next nights rehearsal, then you know which scene to set up.
10. Leave notes for crew heads of changes or that may have taken place when they haven't been at rehearsal.
11. Close down all lights, close all fire doors, and reduce thermostats where they have been manually set.
12. Turn off coffee machine.
13. You are the last person to leave the theatre so set the alarm and lock the door.

TWO WEEKS BEFORE PREVIEW: Continue to build morale of cast and crew. Help foster a good team spirit.

1. Remind Tech Producer of time line so he/she can arrange their rehearsal schedule and remind heads of crew.
2. Remind crew of their time line.
3. Remind crew that it is all hands on deck for the rest of the time.
4. Set up a table in the house with two head sets. One for you and one for the director.
5. The A.S.M.'s are backstage.
6. Set up work lights for props and quick costume changes backstage.
7. Tape down all extension cords (run overhead whenever possible.)
8. Apply lure (GLOW) tape where needed.
9. Put down backstage sound proofing when needed. (old carpets)
10. Make sure fire exits are clear (both onstage and in scene shop)

11. Remind all running crew, lights, sound, props, makeup, hair, special effects, set décor, costume designer and dressers and ASM to be at ALL rehearsals from now on. It is also helpful if they stay for notes at the end of the night as sometimes notes can be lost in translation from one person to another.

12. Start timing each act.

13. During the upcoming technical rehearsals, all cues are numbered and recorded by the SM. The lighting and sound people may also record these numbers (lighting and sound cues are numbered separately).

i. Sound cues are labeled SQ

ii. Lighting cues are labeled LX

iii. Special effects can be labeled SPE

iv. Each may be given a color code.

v. Each is called approximately a ½ page before they happen and are called on STAND BY. When they have to happen you say GO. So it would go like this:

“SQ1 STAND BY LX 1 STANDBY” They respond by saying “Standing By”, You then say SQ go, LX go etc. or “sound go”; “lights go”

14. For your information, the house lights, (although done manually) the pre set lights, & the pre show music may also be numbered, Black outs are also numbered.

15. Stay organized and the next two weeks will go smoothly.

TWO NIGHTS BEFORE OPENING:

Stay focused and supportive to the whole production team.

1. Make sure that the backstage area is tidy & swept and damp mopped.

2. Stage is swept and damp mopped every night by you and or the ASM.

3. Inform cast and crew where they are NOT allowed to go during the run. They should be limited to backstage and dressing rooms.

4. Post the sign-in sheet at the stage door.

5. All crew must wear Black and good, sturdy quiet shoes.

6. Inform the house manager about any special exits or entrances from the foyer.

7. Inform house managers about when to seat latecomers.

8. Do a last walk through of the entire building. Ropes tidy? Carpets stapled down? Lighting instruments all safety chained? Fire exits clear inside and out? This is very important!!

9. Be prepared for the unexpected:

(a) No “visitors” in backstage area or in the booth. If someone should enter, introduce yourself and ask them if you can help them. If not, explain why it is important for them not to be where they are:

Example: Safety or fire regulations do not permit but you will be happy to relay a message to whoever they need to contact. (b) No house people backstage other than the house manager to inform you or the ASM that the house doors are closed. (c) No visitors in the dressing rooms unless cleared by the Producer. For example: if a child must wait in the dressing room for a parent who is helping in a pre-show capacity only. (d) ASM or SM will deliver flowers to dressing rooms.

DURING THE RUN:

Have a secure place for show members to place valuables.

1. Be there 1½ hours before curtain or earlier depending on the complexity of the show.

2. Inform house people EVERY NIGHT about special procedures.

3. Inform actors about checking props before house is open - usually ½ hour before curtain.

4. Check that lights and sound have done their sound and lighting checks, and they are ready to go to first cue before the house opens.

5. Check that special effects are ready to go.

6. Check that all masking & set pieces are in the correct place and that all props are in their correct places. If not, respectfully ask props to remedy.

7. You are the one responsible for everything and everyone to be ready and to maintain director's intentions.
8. Inform house manager that you will tell them when to open the house.
9. Give actors and crew a 30 minute call, a 15 minute call and 5 minute to curtain; a beginners on stage. Ask actors to respond to your calls, and then you know you've been heard.
10. At 5 minutes to curtain ASM will alert audience by lights or sound. Button on wall outside stage door to foyer.
11. **START ON TIME.** If you always start late, your audience will always be late.
12. Ask ASM to inform you when doors are closed.
13. Sometimes house will ask you to hold the curtain if someone is running for the front door. Give them a couple of minutes to seat people – it is less disruptive than seating them during the show.
14. Should an audience member need to enter during the show, it must be while the actors are speaking and never during a blackout. And they must enter through the upstairs door.
15. Any damage to set pieces or props must be repaired before you leave the theatre.
16. Valuable items or weapons should be locked in the cabinet in the control booth.

HAVE A GREAT SHOW!

AFTER THE RUN:

1. Be there for the strike.
2. Make sure that all heads of departments know that they are responsible for returning borrowed or rented items.
3. All stage areas should be cleaned, set pieces put in storage areas, stage swept, damp mopped and painted back to black.
4. Light and sound booth must be cleaned, tidied vacuumed. Patch bay tidy.
5. Dressing Rooms, Club room, Bathrooms cleaned, Scene shop swept and garbage put in the dumpster.

Remind all Production Team members to return their front door key to the Key Masters box in the Club Room. Their codes will then be discontinued and their keys will then be available for the next production Team.

Thank you for a job well done!

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