

Theatre Midwest

Job Description, Duties

STAGE MANAGER

This information is inspired and supported by the book The Backstage Guide to Stage Management by Thomas Kelly. It is worth its price on Amazon.

Fulfill all requirements outlined in the document: General Expectations for Project Leadership.

- Meet with the director and establish specific expectations for the production process. Set up weekly meetings with the director during the course of the process.
- Conduct pre-production analysis including: preparing a prompt script complete with 1/8" = 1'-0" scale floor plans, meeting with director to create rehearsal schedule, creating lists of scenic, lighting, costume, sound and props needs for the production, etc.
- Arrange with prop master/designer to procure rehearsal props and rehearsal furniture and with the costume designer to acquire any rehearsal costumes necessary.
- Assist the Director in maintaining rehearsal decorum, by noting blocking and noting changes in blocking in the Prompt Script as they happen.
- Record and update the director's blocking or movement of actors in the Prompt Script.
- Create and publish Rehearsal Reports for each rehearsal noting new concerns for each of the production areas and clarifying old concerns.
- Serve as liaison between Director and Cast and Technical and Design staff to coordinate scheduling of matters relating to access to spaces, condition of spaces, access to props, costumes and scenic elements and as a conduit to facilitate scheduling and communication between all parties.
- Be prepared to run, or assist producer in running, production and other meetings.
- Create and publish Production Meeting Reports for each production meeting noting new concerns for each of the production areas and clarifying old concerns.
- Collaborate with the director, technical director, and the production team to create a tech rehearsal schedule to include: company run-throughs, dress parade, paper tech, dry tech, technical run-throughs, dress rehearsals, photo calls and to assign cast and crew call times for the same.
- Record Preliminary Cues for all areas in Prompt Script during formal Paper Tech or before First Technical Rehearsal.
- Oversee or conduct all pre-rehearsal and pre-show checklists and verify that all cast and crew meet assigned call times before tech rehearsals and performances.
- Call each Technical Rehearsal and Performance.
- Create and publish Tech Rehearsal and Performance Reports for each rehearsal and performance noting any irregularities.
- Supervise and train Assistant Stage Managers in the duties of a Stage Manager and delegate the preceding responsibilities responsibly.
- Other duties as circumstances or needs require.

PRE REHEARSAL DUTIES:

- ❖ Set up your prompt book
- Obtain a copy of the script that you can Xerox in a workable format.
- Mark the scene/act divisions with tabs or dividers
- Divide the book into sections for the other information. The layout is a personal preference, but you should have the following:
- Contact sheet
- Audition forms
- Rehearsal reports
- Script
- Prop list
- Technical drawings
- Blank paper



- Minutes from production meetings
- Anything else that you find useful
- Stage Manager's Handbook

❖ Develop (with the Producer, Director, other staff) a production calendar

Important dates that should appear on this calendar:

- Audition dates
- Design meetings
- Rehearsal and build target dates
- Design due dates
- Rehearsal props complete
- Final props complete
- Lighting, Sound, and Set Complete
- Costumes complete Updated September 2017
- Lobby complete
- Production meetings
- Work call
- Tech week
- Run schedule

❖ Run auditions and callbacks for the show.

◆ Auditions

- Reserve audition spaces
- Communicate with Production Assistant about sending audition forms online
- Arrive at audition site at least 30 minutes prior to audition time.
- Set up space as instructed by director, and be sure you have the following:
- Audition forms (extra paper copies and computer)
- Pencils
- Cold readings
- Audition sign up schedule – One copy for you and one copy for the director
- Send actors into audition at the appropriate time

◆ Callbacks

- Set up space as director instructs
- Have a list of callbacks and schedule.
- Make sure you have scripts or scenes ready

❖ Set up a meeting with the Producer or Production Manager, and Assistant Stage Manager(s).

◆ Discuss division of duties

- Blocking – use a pencil for changes, and make sure you record all blocking
- Taking line notes - see example, email to actors and director
- Prompting actors
- Timing scenes and acts as needed for the director.
- Take out and put away props each night.
- Call breaks and start times.
- Calling actors who are late. Start calling 5 minutes before start time.
- Developing and updating props list
- Tracking props
- Filling out rehearsal reports
- Be flexible as duties may change depending on the show.

❖ Prepare the rehearsal space

-If possible/allowable, spike the space

-Familiarize yourself with space and equipment.

-Confirm with producers, building managers or pertinent personnel what key, opening, access, lock-up protocols are.

REHEARSAL DUTIES:

❖ First Rehearsal

-Prepare and distribute a contact sheet.

-The contact sheet should include the entire company.

-Phone numbers and email addresses should all be included on the sheet.

❖ Ongoing Rehearsal Duties

-Arrive at the rehearsal space 30 minutes prior to the beginning of each rehearsal. Be sure it is clean and set up for the first scene. The space should be swept before each rehearsal.

-Take role as actors arrive. 5 minutes prior to go, if actors aren't present you should contact them immediately.

-Rehearsal report

-Each night you should keep a rehearsal report documenting all activities at the rehearsal.

-The rehearsal report should include any problems, additions, or changes for each area of the production that occurred at rehearsal.

-Include any running time.

-Note who was absent or late.

-Distribute the report as an e-mail attachment to all production staff before noon the following day.

-If problems arise within rehearsals, discuss the problem with the individual personally. If the problem continues, the SM should discuss appropriate action with the director. The SM should not, however, discuss the problem with any other company member.

-After rehearsal, you are responsible for making sure that the space is clean, props and set pieces are put away, building lights are off, and doors are locked.

-The stage manager should be the last person to leave the building.

TECH WEEK AND PRODUCTION:

❖ Preparation

-Double check with Producer, TD or other pertinent person/s about running lights, headsets, tech tables, prop tables, changing areas, and other backstage needs.

-Meet with director and designers for a paper tech. Write all cues in your book, making sure you use pencil so you can make changes. When writing cues, find a method that is most beneficial to you.

-Discuss the duties that each crew member is responsible for.

-Discuss all scene and costume shifts that will need to take place and make a shift schedule.

-Make up tech schedule, put all call, house open, warm up, and go times on the schedule.

-Create and post a check-in sheet for all personnel. Explain its use and purposes to all parties. Confirm regularly that it is being used correctly and, most importantly, that people are present at their call times.

❖ Tech Rehearsals

-Be sure call times and go times are followed as much as possible. Note, however, that there may be delays due to unforeseen directing or design difficulties.

-Meet with tech crew prior to the first tech and explain each of their duties to them.

-Run tech rehearsals as close to show standards as possible, there will be a lot of starting and stopping at first. Make sure all parties, and especially actors, know what terms you are using for "Stop/Hold", "Standby/Wait", "Go", etc.

❖ Calling Cues

- Warn board operators of any upcoming cue a full page ahead by calling "Warning LQ1, SQ A" ◆ Give a standby cue halfway down the page by saying "Standby LQ1, SQ A"
- If cues are called separately, give warnings together clarifying that they are called separately. Give them as "LQ 1 GO" and "SQ A GO"
- Board operators should indicate to you that they have heard you by responding "Warned," "Standing," and "Complete" or similar.

❖ Running the show

- Tech crew call should be 90 minutes prior to curtain. Actors call should be around the same time, but this may vary depending on complexity of makeup, costumes, and warm up needs. Call times should be discussed with the director, pertinent designers, and others.
- Prior to house opening you must make sure actors have checked their props, crew has completed all set up, and light and sound levels have been set/checked. Use your checklist and walk the set to make sure all presets are up.
- Inform the actors when house is open.
- Give company calls at regular intervals (e.g. 30 minutes, 15 minutes, etc.) before "places" five minutes to curtain.
- Stay in contact with the house manager and be prepared to hold the go if necessary. Keep company members informed if a hold is necessary.
- If headsets are used, remain on them at all times during the show. Keep conversation over headset to a minimum.
- Prepare a performance report each night and distribute to the company.
- Make sure that the booth is clean before leaving each night.
- Unless otherwise established, the SM should be the last to leave the building, making sure lights are out, doors are closed and locked, etc.