

Victoria Theatre Guild and Dramatic School at
Langham Court Theatre



STAGE MANAGER &
ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER
HANDBOOK

December 12, 2008

Proposed changes and updates to the Producer Handbook can be submitted in writing or by email to the General Manager. The General Manager and Active Production Chair will enter all approved changes.

Stage Manager & Assistant SM Handbook

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1. INTRODUCTION

This handbook has been prepared to help you understand the responsibilities that come under the stage management umbrella. We want you to fully enjoy your involvement and to give you guidance as you take on this very important role within the production.

The key stage management positions are Stage Manager (SM) and Assistant Stage Manager (ASM). These two positions involve support for both the director and the producer(s). Regular dialogue related to expectations and sharing of responsibilities need to be ongoing from day one in order to build a teamwork environment. The success of the production depends on the leadership provided by this teamwork.

This Handbook should be reviewed with the Director and Producer very early in the production process, and adjusted in keeping with individuals' strengths and preferences, and the vagaries of circumstance. As long as everything gets done, and someone assumes responsibility for each task, there is considerable flexibility in who does what. Reviewing these expectations early in the process avoids confusion and frustration later. Gaps and overlaps in communications and role expectations are hard on everyone involved with the show. It's worth the time to have the Director and Producer review this handbook and have a short meeting about the contents.

Stage Manager

The SM has a unique function because of the dual role: during the rehearsal period the SM provides support/assistance to the director and production team; during the actual performance period, the SM takes charge of the production. In addition to the requirements common to all productions, each show will have its own unique challenges. The duties and responsibilities listed here are, by the nature of the position, incomplete; they serve as a guide to help create a successful experience.

The SM is the key assistant to the director; however the SM also serves as a support to the designers and entire production team. Regular contact must be maintained with the entire production staff in order to communicate all of the various bits of information pertaining to the production. The SM relies on good working relationships with several key personnel at the theatre, for instance, the General Manager, the Technical Director, the Production Coordinator.

The SM has an immensely interesting and satisfying job, works in close co-operation with the director of the play and is an essential person in the production. As the name implies, the SM literally "manages" the stage. All backstage facilities and staff come under their administration, including the actors

once the rehearsal process is over and the director's work is finished. The SM attends all rehearsals and necessary meetings.

While the director is responsible for *what* happens onstage and has artistic control of a production, the SM is responsible for *how* it happens and has complete working control of a production to ensure the integrity of the show as created by the director.

The SM is a practical person, a first-class organizer who enjoys working with people. Necessary skills include an instinct for preventing trouble before it happens and a good "rhythmic" sense to time cues in conjunction with the movement of the actors and the mood of the scene. Also essential is a basic knowledge of each aspect of a theatrical production.

The SM needs to be an unobtrusive time and personnel manager, creating an atmosphere of ease in which everything seems to run smoothly. The three most important aspects of stage managing are "Communication, Communication, Communication".

For an average production, the SM will require a staff of one or more assistant stage managers, lighting board and sound board operators, properties assistant(s) and stage crew to assist with set changes. In addition, they may require costume maintenance person(s), dressers to assist actors with quick changes, hairdresser/wig assistant and any other "specialty" crew to assist with special effects. It is the SM's responsibility to see that all production assistants are informed of their responsibilities and trained to perform the duties required for the production.

Stage Managers are expected to mentor others into the role. We are a both a theatre and a drama school. If you are an experienced SM, you should consider giving additional responsibilities to your ASM if they are interested in learning the SM role. You may also be asked to mentor an SM who is new to the role and will be involved in an upcoming production. This handbook will be a helpful resource in all of those situations.

Assistant Stage Manager

The Assistant Stage Manager (ASM) reports to the Stage Manager.

Most productions at Langham Court will require only one ASM. If the show has a lot of backstage activity with complicated scene changes or special effects, a second ASM may be needed. Each production has different requirements, thus ASM responsibilities will vary from show to show. As well, SMs have individual preferences for how to manage production staff and what tasks are assigned to the ASM.

The ASM, like the SM, fills a dual role: during rehearsals, they are likely to be responsible for all sorts of routine support from placement of props and set furnishings to making the coffee and tea; assisting with prompting or taking blocking notes. During performances, the ASM is usually assigned to be in charge of backstage, overseeing the stage crew and ensuring all technical aspects occurring onstage and in the wings are taken care of.

The ASM needs to have a lot of patience, be willing to accept routine assignments as well as be able to tackle difficult technical jobs. They should have a knack for finding solutions to problems. The ASM assists the SM in the smooth running of rehearsals and performances.

2. AUDITIONS

This phase is initiated by the director about 4 months before opening. The producer and director will recruit the production team. Actors will be chosen through the audition process.

a) Pre-Auditions

Prior to auditions, the SM might meet with director, producer and designers if requested. This may not happen on all productions but is useful when a show is particularly technical as it gives everyone an opportunity to consider approaches to solving potential difficulties.

THINGS TO DO:

- Obtain a script (sources include the General Manager, the Director, the Producer)
- Make note of technical requirements
- Assess staffing needs:
 - producer will want an estimate of staffing needs for initial recruitment
 - staffing needs may be revised as rehearsals progress

b) Auditions and Callbacks

The SM assists the director and producer as required.

- arrive about 30 minutes prior to the start of the audition
 - bring extra pens/pencils and notepads
- assist the Producer(s) with running the auditions
- ask the director what sort of set-up is preferred
 - place tables and chairs as required
- provide organizational assistance to the Director:
 - make notes as required by the director

- help keep audition forms organized
- record pertinent information about individuals, e.g., not available on certain dates, additional contact information, etc.
- keep scripts and audition scene copies organized

c) Post Auditions/Pre First Rehearsal

Contact the Director:

- Ask whether he/she has particular expectations of the SM
- discuss specific plans for how the first rehearsal will be conducted
 - will it be a sit down read through?
 - Does the director want you to read out stage directions?
- Ask for information about rehearsal preferences
 - Are guests allowed in the rehearsal area?
 - Preference for breaks; should SM call and warn director a few minutes in advance or will they just happen informally as rehearsal permits
- ask if the script will be divided into smaller scenes for rehearsal purposes
 - if so, obtain the scene breakdown details
 - discuss who will create the *Scene Breakdown Chart* listing the actors required for each scene
 - A sample *Scene Breakdown Chart* is at the end of this handbook (See SM Tools & Templates #1) which can be modified for your own use.
- discuss the **Rehearsal Schedule**:
 - the producer will need to be involved to check on dates/times the rehearsal hall is available
 - decide who will create the Rehearsal Schedule and who will keep it up to date
 - if SM is to do it, obtain the details from the director
 - if possible, put it together before-hand to be distributed at first rehearsal
 - preferably, create the schedule in a format that can be sent as an e-mail attachment.
 - See the *Rehearsal Schedule Guidelines and Template* (SM Tools & Templates #2).

Contact the Producer:

- obtain the SM keys to the theatre
 - find out who the Facilities Manager (FM) is and how to contact FM with building-related issues
 - find out who the Technical Director is
 - find out who the Head Builder (Production Coordinator) is
 - ask about obtaining supplies such as spike tape, masking tape
- discuss items that will be reimbursed from the production budget
 - ask about coffee break supplies:
 - what is supplied by the theatre?
 - what needs to be purchased?

- what items are reimbursed?
- discuss initial crew requirements – will need to review as rehearsals progress
 - If an ASM has not been recruited, decide whether an ASM is critical at the beginning of the rehearsal period. If so, ask the producer to locate one as soon as possible. If the production needs are such that the ASM can be brought on board later, let the Producer know as this may make it easier to recruit someone for the job.
- discuss the **Contact list**
 - to be sent to production team and relevant theatre personnel
 - if possible, create in a format that can be sent as an e-mail attachment
 - usually created by the Producer; updates might be done by the SM
 - *A Contact List template is in the Tools & Templates section of the Producer's handbook.*

Contact the General Manager:

- get information about use of building (lights, doors, heat, security system, locking up procedures)
- See *Use of Theatre during Rehearsals in the Rehearsal Hall – Guidelines for Stage Management* (SM Tools & Templates #3)

Contact the Set Designer:

- ask for a copy of the floor plan/ground plan/set design
 - some designers will also provide letter size copies; these are useful for adding to the prompt book
- discuss any technical issues that will affect crew requirements, such as:
 - extremely complex set changes with lots of furniture being shifted and changed
 - set design requiring a large number of crew to perform the scene changes quickly and safely
 - set pieces that will be assembled and/or broken down during the show
 - set dressing that must be placed or attached during the show
 - storage for large items that are moved on and off during the show
 - unusual special effects: trap doors, items being flown in from above, windows that break on cue, doors that swing open “on their own”, pictures that fall off walls
- ask for a rough timeline of when set items will be constructed
 - ask about specialty items, particularly those the actors will need time to work with, e.g., sinks with working faucets, chairs that collapse, etc.

Contact the ASM:

- discuss roles and responsibilities:
 - each person who expresses interest in being an ASM brings different interests and expectations to the job. Some will be very new to theatre and would like a lot of coaching; others have had previous experience and are interested in eventually performing the SM role. It is very

important that you are both clear about what the ASM job will or might involve.

- at this early stage of the production it is often not possible to provide the ASM with a detailed job description. A script that starts out being straightforward might become complicated with the introduction of special technical effects or vice versa. For instance, the director may decide to simplify some of the actions and setting, leaving the stage crew with little to do.

THINGS TO DO:

Start to build your Prompt Book (also known as Production Book). It will eventually contain ALL the information about the staging and running of the production. Information about the Prompt Book will be covered in each section of the SM Handbook: Post Audition and Pre Rehearsal, Rehearsal Period, Tech Week and Tech Weekend. Refer to SM Tools & Templates #4, *The Prompt Book*, for an overview of the Prompt Book at each stage of the process.

The prompt book can be organized in any way that works best for you but should be able to be used by others if someone else has to take over your job.

- Get a script if you don't already have one:
 - Make a couple of copies for yourself (make a few extra copies to give to production staff as they come on board, unless the producer has lots of extra copies)
 - punch the copy of script and place in a binder
 - it is best to use a binder that holds letter size paper
 - attach a single page of the script to each page in your binder
 - leave enough space around the text on the page for recording notes about where the actors are to be move ("blocking").
- If you have copies of the floor plan, photocopy extra copies in letter size to insert in the script; these can be used for recording blocking, particularly when the set is complicated or there are large numbers of people onstage
- Use tabs to separate Scenes and Acts:
 - directors often break the play into even smaller scenes for rehearsal purposes.
 - if the director is going to use the smaller scenes for rehearsal scheduling, make note of these divisions in the script.
- Review the script; highlight or make note of obvious technical needs.
 - these can include:
 - sound effects (e.g., a gunshot, telephone)
 - props
 - furniture
 - special effects (e.g., fog, smoke)
 - special lighting (e.g., a working table lamp)
 - quick costume changes
 - elaborate scene changes

- you may want to put together a document recording all of this information.
 - See the *Production Technical Requirements* template (SM Tools & Templates #5).
- talk to the director early in the rehearsal period to confirm whether the technical requirements that you have noted will in fact be required. Often a director will have a different vision than what appears in the script so certain items may not be needed.
- Include a section for contact lists, rehearsal schedules, scene breakdown charts, attendance sheets, and any other reference documents you will need at hand. (e.g., locking up procedures, emergency procedures, etc.).

Additional THINGS TO DO prior to the first rehearsal:

- Review the *Rehearsals in the Rehearsal Hall – Information Sheet for Cast & Crew* (see SM Tools & Templates #6).
 - Revise as necessary for your production
 - Print out to distribute to cast, crew and production heads
- Create a check-in list for rehearsals
 - See *Rehearsal Attendance Sheet* template (SM Tools & Templates #7)
- Assemble your SM toolkit of supplies. Suggested items that are useful for different periods of the production process, are in the *Stage Management Theatre Kit* (See SM Tools & Templates #8).
 - Make note of additional items that might be useful for your particular production and check with the Producer to see if any of these items are available from the theatre (borrowed or bought) or will be reimbursed.

3. REHEARSALS

The SM should be the first member of the production to arrive and the last to leave. Arrive early enough to have the rehearsal space set and ready for the rehearsal to begin on time: the doors are unlocked, the lights are all on, the thermostat has been adjusted to a comfortable temperature, and the stage and properties are set.

For more information about opening and closing the theatre see the SM Tools & Templates #3, *Use of Theatre during Rehearsals in the Rehearsal Hall – Guidelines for Stage Management*.

The SM is responsible for the overall discipline of cast and crew during rehearsals and performances. This includes being aware of noise levels (talking, laughing, etc while rehearsals are in progress), showing respect for the theatre, its furnishings and fittings, props and costumes. The SM should ensure all theatre rules and policies are followed.

a) Read Through / First Rehearsal

At the first rehearsal, the Director often decides to have a read-through of the script followed by a discussion. The Director will take this time to communicate their vision for the play. Designers may want to show a model or renderings of the set, lights, costumes, etc.

THINGS TO DO:

- If the first rehearsal is to be a read through, arrange seating for the cast and for production team members and crew who will be attending.
- If it will be a regular rehearsal with actors being blocked for position and movements, set the rehearsal stage with appropriate furniture and props:
 - Furniture will usually be of a temporary nature and should be of the approximate size and shape (where possible) of the performance item
 - Props will also usually be of a temporary nature (called rehearsal props):
 - During early rehearsals, while the actors still have their scripts in hand, it is not always necessary to have props available. Check with the director and actors to see what is preferred.
- Check that all those who are expected to attend are present (particularly the cast members). When everyone has arrived, let the director know.
 - If someone is late, locate their contact information and call them
- Let director know you would like some time to talk to the cast about housekeeping details.
 - Distribute the *Rehearsal Hall Information Sheet for Cast & Crew*
 - Distribute the *Contact sheet* – ask everyone to fill in missing info and correct errors (the Contact Sheet might be handled by the Producer)
 - Distribute the *Rehearsal Schedule* if it is available
 - Ask everyone to give you dates they will be unavailable
 - Mention the dates for Tech Week/Tech Weekend, as well as performance dates
 - Inform everyone of the location of:
 - bathrooms
 - fire extinguishers
 - first aid kits
 - telephones
 - kitchen facilities
- **Expand on the Prompt Book**
 - At first read-thru, the SM should time the length of the play.
 - Director may want the SM to read the stage directions, sound effects, extra lines
 - Make notes of any items mentioned by the director or designers
 - Record changes to wording and note if there are any cuts (words, sentences or whole sections are to be removed)

Rehearsal Schedule

- If a rehearsal schedule was not previously done, it should be put together following the first rehearsal
- Update as necessary based on information from cast and production team about their availability
- Send to all cast, crew and relevant theatre administration personnel.

b) SUBSEQUENT REHEARSALS

Rehearsal Hall

- measure and tape details using the floor plan
 - the Rehearsal Hall has different dimensions than the Mainstage:
 - Check with the director as to which direction is preferred; one way will lose acting depth, the other will lose width.
 - use painter's tape only; if there is more than one setting, different coloured tape can be used to indicate the applicable Scene or Act
 - It is not necessary to tape everything shown on the floor plan – only those details of importance to the actors: doorways, windows, stairs, platforms and any large fixed item for which there is nothing to put in its place at this time (e.g., piano, bookcase, built-in bar, etc.)
- locate furniture to be used for rehearsal purposes
 - Rough shapes and sizes are okay for early rehearsal period
 - Position them as needed for the scene to be rehearsed
 - this is often the responsibility of the ASM
- at the start of the rehearsal, let actors know what the tape lines indicate or what a rehearsal prop or set piece is standing in for or represents
- tidy the rehearsal space/stage at the end of the rehearsal
 - this is often the responsibility of the ASM.

Attendance

- an attendance sheet can be posted in the Rehearsal Hall for cast and crew to sign-in prior to rehearsal or you can personally greet each person as they arrive and check them as in attendance
- about 10 minutes before rehearsal is to begin, check to see if everyone needed is present and ready to rehearse.
- about 5 minutes before rehearsal is to begin:
 - check with the ASM that the rehearsal stage is ready to rehearse the scheduled scene(s)
 - check to see if anyone has not yet arrived – call them if necessary
- about 1 minute prior to rehearsal beginning:
 - Assemble everyone and confirm with the director that you are ready to begin

Coffee Breaks

- coordinate “coffee breaks” with the director
- make sure supplies for the break are available:
 - *packets of coffee and tea bags are available from the theatre*
 - milk and cream (and specialty teas) will need to be purchased as needed:
 - keep all receipts in order to get reimbursed by the producer
- see that the “kitchen” is left clean at the end of the rehearsal.
- the responsibility for making coffee/tea and keeping the kitchen area tidy is often delegated to the ASM.

The Prompt Book

- capture all the blocking (cast movements onstage) - during the rehearsal process the script will need to be updated constantly as the blocking evolves. See *Sample Blocking Notes* (SM Tools & Templates #9).
 - record movements of actors:
 - By making notes on the margins of the script pages and/or
 - Making notes on photocopied pages of the floor plan
 - Be as concise as possible by using abbreviations and symbols, while also being understandable to anyone else reading it
 - For example, Julie enters from the upstage right kitchen door, crosses downstage to Sue, gives her an envelope, then exits upstage left through the door could be recorded as:
 - J enters USR, X DS to S, hands envelope to S, X USL, exits
 - There are many different abbreviations that can be used when writing down blocking notes. The most important thing is to be consistent.
- Record information about set changes, scene changes:
 - Note what needs to be moved and when
 - Note who will be moving it – cast or a crew member
 - Know where all of these items start, when and where they move, who moves them and where they end up
 - This allows you to prepare accurate, detailed preset lists for your crew; it also allows you to quickly reset the stage during rehearsals if the director wants to pick up in the middle of a scene.
- Record timing of sound effects such as a telephone ring, gunshot, etc.
 - During rehearsal, provide the sound effect vocally; for instance, if a gunshot is required, shout “BANG” at the appropriate place in the script.
- Make changes to script as required
 - Record word changes or deletions
 - Make sure everyone who needs to know about these changes is advised

Prompting

- Can be done by the SM, the ASM or a “prompter” who attends rehearsals for this specific purpose

Once an actor is off book (no longer carrying a script onstage), it is necessary to provide prompts as they are trying to remember their lines. Prompting is a skill that requires knowledge of the script, of the individual actor’s speech patterns and all of the actions onstage that affect the timing of the delivery of lines. When prompting it is important to:

- Wait for the actor to ask for the prompt by saying “LINE”, unless they have gone astray and are not aware of it or if someone has jumped a cue causing everyone to become confused
- Wait for the acting pauses an actor employs as part of their character before jumping in to give a prompt
- Deliver only enough of the line to allow the actor to get back on track

Technical Co-ordination

It is critical to listen to the director expand on the vision for the play – often these ideas will require a technical component that the SM should discuss with the director.

- Record technical requirements as they arise during rehearsal:
 - Keep a notepad for this purpose, OR
 - Set up separate boxes for each department (props, set, costumes, etc.) and throw quick notes pertaining to each into the appropriate box, OR
 - Record notes on a *Rehearsal Report* (see SM Tools & Templates #10)
- If changes to the set, props, costumes, sound, etc. have been identified at a rehearsal, notify the appropriate head of department as soon as possible
- Time play as required. After the first read-thru, it probably won’t be necessary to record the time again until an entire act is being run. Run-throughs usually aren’t scheduled until about half-way or later in the rehearsal schedule.

Rehearsal Schedules

The SM is responsible for distribution of Rehearsal Schedules.

- SM will confirm rehearsal calls with the cast/crew and makes sure changes to the rehearsal schedule are communicated to everyone involved in the production.
- The SM or ASM may call “extra” rehearsals to rehearse the running crew with set changes in order to avoid delays during the tech rehearsals.
- In the event a cast member needs to be replaced, the SM will provide the new cast member with blocking notes and any other technical details about the role in the play. This may require holding a separate rehearsal if it is not possible to incorporate into the regular schedule. It is the director’s responsibility for discussing character interpretation with the new cast member.

Production Communications

It is a good idea for the SM to do a Production bulletin on a regular basis listing the needs of and changes to the production as they evolve. Prior to creating the bulletin, contact the producer to discuss items that should be included. The producer may prefer to deliver some information in a separate communication or might ask you to include with your bulletin.

This bulletin could include the following:

- Updates to the Contact List
- Changes to the Rehearsal Schedule
- Announcements about special events, such as:
 - Publicity photo calls
 - TV shoots
 - Costume fittings

The bulletin can be sent by e-mail or it can be printed and posted to the bulletin board at the theatre. It should be sent to everyone who might need to be aware of the changes or new information

- See *Sample SM Production bulletins* (SM Tools & Templates #11).

Production Meetings

The SM needs to attend ALL Production Meetings to ensure any technical problems that arise during rehearsals are addressed and solved. The SM is first line of communication to the production team and needs to ensure lines of communication are operating effectively.

THINGS TO DO prior to attending the meeting:

- Review notes from last production meeting and be prepared to provide an update on your action items
- Review notes from rehearsals and make note of those that need to be raised at the meeting
- When necessary, ask the producer to add items to the agenda if they have been overlooked
- bring an up-to date rehearsal schedule to assist in scheduling events, such as costume fittings, props discussions, etc.

THINGS TO DO after the Production meeting:

- communicate important changes/updates/requirements to cast and crew
- update schedules as necessary, e.g., to add costume fittings, etc.

c) MOVING TO THE MAINSTAGE

On the Sunday after the current production's closing night, the next production is expected to assist at their Strike. Following the strike, the next production assumes possession of the Mainstage until their Closing Night and Strike.

THINGS TO DO prior to moving to the Mainstage:

- Review the *Use of Theatre during Rehearsals on Mainstage – SM Guidelines* (see SM Tools & Templates #12).
- About one week prior to the current production's closing night:
 - remind cast and crew about attending/assisting at the Strike.
 - Review the *Rehearsals on the Mainstage – Information Sheet for Cast & Crew* (see SM Tools & Templates #13).
 - Revise as necessary for your production
 - Print out for distribution to cast, crew and production team members
 - Handout at the Meet and Greet
 - Send by e-mail

THINGS TO DO at the Strike:

- Assist with the Strike
- With the assistance of the ASM and Props Person, tidy the Rehearsal Hall
 - Remove all spike tape
 - Remove your production's documents from the bulletin board
 - Move rehearsal set pieces upstairs to the wings
 - Move rehearsal props upstairs to the wings
 - Unlock and clear out items from the locked cupboard
 - Check that all items belonging to your production or to your cast and crew have been removed from the Rehearsal Hall
 - Clean the sink area
 - Vacuum if necessary

THINGS TO DO after the Strike:

- make sure the stage and wings are cleared of debris and obstacles and stage swept and mopped (if necessary)
- co-ordinate with the set designer/set builder to have the floor plan of the set taped out on the stage
- if it is useful for the ASM or cast, post the running order of the show on both sides of the stage
 - it should include a list of scenes and a brief description as well as who is in each scene
- arrange for table to be set up in the house for director and SM use (check with Technical Director)

Rehearsals on the Mainstage

- While the set is under construction, there will often be debris, including sharp items and dust that must be cleared from the stage prior to rehearsal.
- Someone, usually the ASM or a stage crew, should be delegated to sweep or vacuum the stage prior to each rehearsal.
- Valuable prop and set pieces can be secured in the booth each night or in the locking cabinet under the props table on stage right.
- At the end of each rehearsal, the theatre must be locked up.

Adding stage crew

- About two weeks prior to tech week, it will be necessary to start inviting stage crew to rehearsals. Depending upon the technical needs of the production, crew may need to be involved earlier.
- Stage crew members include:
 - **Props assistants** who are responsible for having all props for the rehearsal ready prior to rehearsal (or at the relevant point in the play). If few props are used in the production, this can be done by the ASM. Some responsibilities include:
 - props that need to be made or brought for each rehearsal/performance, such as beverages or food that is consumed onstage
 - props that need to be reset for the next rehearsal/performance, e.g., inserting blanks into a starting gun, loading a staple gun that gets used onstage, etc.
 - placing props onstage in the appropriate positions
 - when necessary, having a prop ready to hand to an actor backstage
 - checking wear and tear of props and fixing or replacing as necessary
 - **Stage crew/scene change crew** who are responsible for shifting scenery and performing any technical jobs backstage as assigned. Responsibilities could include:
 - Shifting panels, flats, large set pieces
 - Adjusting drapes
 - Opening and closing the main curtain
 - Placing and removing (striking) furniture and props during scene changes
 - Operating special effects equipment, e.g., fog machines, dry ice boxes
 - Assisting actors backstage
 - **Dressers** who are responsible for costumes during each performance. Usually they are not needed until Tech Week but sometimes they will be required if there are technical problems that need to be worked out in advance.
 - To provide practice time to assist cast who have quick costume changes in the wings
 - To make alterations to a costume if the quick change cannot occur in the required time

THINGS TO DO:

Stage Crew:

- meet with each crew member and discuss their role in the production
- give them current copies of the *Contact List* and *Rehearsal Schedule*

- introduce them to the ASM, who will give them more specific instructions
- at start of rehearsal, introduce them to the cast and production team
- put together a Preset & Scene Change Schedule (also called a Run Sheet or a Running Sheet):
 - at this point, it will likely have lots of blanks and question marks
 - it will probably not identify specific individuals who will be performing the tasks
 - it will need to be updated on a regular basis, usually after every rehearsal
 - discuss with the ASM to decide who will be the one to do the updates
 - See the *Sample Preset & Scene Change document* (SM Tools & Templates #14).

Prompt Book:

- begin to insert notes in the prompt book regarding cues: light, sound, effects. These will be tentative and should be written on sticky notes or in pencil
 - these notes will be added during rehearsals per comments from the director and/or designers
 - prior to Tech Week, ask the director to provide a bit more detail about when cues will occur
 - Often a “paper tech” or “dry tech” is held; this is a meeting with the SM, director, lighting and sound designers for the purpose of discussing the approximate timing of the cues
 - This session can prove invaluable in saving time and eliminating stress during the Tech weekend
 - The discussion should include the order things need to occur in and what is required to execute each series of cues as well as why each step is taken
 - Make sure you understand everything that has to happen and consider those cues that might need further attention to resolving a potential problem (e.g., a cue that requires timing with backstage crew who might not be able to be on headset)
 - Sometimes the cues can be tentatively numbered during this session

Attendance/Sign-in sheet:

- The Attendance Sheet needs to be updated to include all crew who will be required during Tech Week and Performances
- See the *Performance Attendance Sheet* (SM Tools & Templates #15)

4. TECH WEEK

THINGS TO DO in the week prior to Tech Weekend:

Send Schedule to Cast, Crew & Production Team

- Include call times for tech rehearsals and for performances
 - Be specific about who is required at each tech session
 - Running crew and board ops should be called early enough for all pre-show preparation, lights, audio and headset checks to be completed well in advance of the house opening to the public.
 - Actors are called 30 minutes before curtain time and it is up to the individual actor to arrive earlier if more than 30 minutes is needed to prepare for each performance. If actors prefer to use the stage for their “warm up” or need to check onstage props, they must be off the stage before the house opens.
- Note that tech sessions could run late/overtime

Meet with the Production Coordinator (aka Head Builder):

- The ASM should participate in this meeting
- Obtain information about use of building (lights and light switches, doors, heat and heating controls, security system, emergency procedures and locking up procedures) during performances.
 - Discuss the location and use of fire extinguishers
 - the ASM will need to ensure backstage crew are familiar with the location and use as well
- Arrange for:
 - carpeting in the backstage areas (reduce backstage noise)
 - the installation of “running lights” in the wings
 - flashlights for stage crew (these may need to be provided by the crew)
 - costume change areas
 - hangers and hooks for costumes
 - mirrors
 - a supply of Glow Tape, clear packing tape and spike tape (different colours if required)
 - the ASM applies as required during tech rehearsals
 - clear packing tape over glow tape will hold it in place
 - headsets and table to be set up in middle row of house

Meet with the Technical Director:

- The ASM should participate in this meeting
- Arrange for proper placement of the headsets in the wings to suit your production
 - review headset use
- Arrange for headsets and table to be set up in middle row of house
- Discuss the use of equipment in the booth:
 - Monitor speakers
 - Infrared stage monitor
 - Paging system
 - Bells for alerting audience to return to seats
 - How to shut down booth after rehearsal/performance

Meet with the ASM:

- Discuss responsibilities and expectations:
 - Call times for each show
 - When is ASM expected to be on headset?
 - Discuss headset etiquette:
 - When to be on – let everyone know you are on headset
 - When going off – let everyone know you are going off headset
 - Quiet – minimal discussion
 - Don't talk between a standby and a go unless there is an emergency
 - Turn off speaker when not needed
 - Position so we don't hear breathing noises
 - ASM to report to SM when stage is set both pre-show and at intermission
 - Discuss pre-show and post-show responsibilities
 - ensure stage and wings are kept clean and safe:
 - set and props are stored safely
 - adequate visibility for backstage activities
 - do a final check post-show to ensure everything is ready for the next performance
 - ASM to bring issues/problems to attention of SM
- Clarify who will perform what tasks:
 - Will the SM or ASM check attendance?
 - Who will give the calls to actors?
 - Start and end of show – who will turn on/off running lights? Work lights?
- ASM is in charge of backstage crew and organizes scene change assignments
 - ASM should give each backstage crew member copies of:
 - the *Stage Crew Guidelines and Information Sheet* (SM Tools & Templates #16).
 - *Rehearsals on the Mainstage Information Sheet for Cast & Crew*
 - a copy of the current *Scene Change* document
 - ASM should ensure backstage crew are informed of expectations and are able and willing to perform assigned duties

Meet with Board operators:

- Discuss responsibilities and expectations:
 - Call times for each show
 - Rules for using the Booth
 - *as provided by the Technical Director*
 - Quiet during show – keep vocal levels low
 - Wear dark, inconspicuous clothing
 - Headset etiquette
 - See prior notes under Meet with ASM

TECH WEEKEND

1. SESSION TO SET PRELIMINARY LIGHT LEVELS AND CUES

This session is the practical application of the director's vision being supported by the lighting designer's interpretation of that vision. The SM and ASM should be in attendance.

- Prior to the session:
 - recruit volunteers to be stage walkers (substitute bodies for the cast so that the lighting levels can be determined).
 - If set needs to be adjusted (it usually does), recruit stage crew for the session if the stage walkers will not be able to do the set changes.
 - Make sure to have enough pencils and post-it notes for recording the cues
- At the session:
 - Record all the cues in the prompt book – at this stage it is best to use pencil or record on post-it notes
 - Confirm the position of stage walkers by checking your blocking notes in the prompt book.
 - Anticipate the scenes coming up to make sure the relevant set is ready to be moved into place by quietly talking to your ASM.
 - Ask questions! If you are not sure what a cue is for or when it is supposed to happen – ASK!
 - Be sensitive to the fact the director and designer are having a creative dialogue. Wait for appropriate moments to ask questions or to volunteer information.

2. SESSION TO SET PRELIMINARY SOUND LEVELS

This session is the practical application of the director's vision being supported by the sound designer's interpretation of that vision. The SM should be in attendance.

- Prior to the session:
 - Make sure to have enough pencils and post-it notes for recording the cues
- At the session:
 - Record all the cues into the prompt book – at this stage it is best to use pencil or record on post-it notes
 - Ask questions! If you are not sure what a cue is for or when it is supposed to happen – ASK!
 - Be sensitive to the fact the director and designer are having a creative dialogue. Wait for appropriate moments to ask questions or to volunteer information.

3. TECH SESSION WITHOUT ACTORS

During the “tech without actors” the responsibility for the production begins to shift from the director and producer(s) to the SM. It is the SM’s opportunity to work through the script, Q to Q, running the light, sound and effects cues to refine how and when the cues should be called. The SM has control of the session and should run and rerun cues until the cues are working as required by the director. This is also a good opportunity to practice scene changes so the crew can sort out who does what and when. Usually the SM, Director and Lighting Designer sit in the house at the Production table and are connected to backstage and the booth on headsets.

Calling cues:

There are four main types of triggers for when to call a cue.

1. Visual Cues:

The cue is called when something happens onstage to trigger it. For example, when the actor kneels downstage or when the actor touches a light switch. A visual cue may be taken by the operator without the SM calling a “Go” – this is often the case when the timing needs to be precise to the movement of the actor, for e.g., the actor turning on a light switch.

2. Text Cues:

The cue is called when an actor delivers a word or phrase in the text. This is often broken down to the extent that the cue is called on a particular syllable.

3. Music (or Sound) Cues:

The cue is triggered by a moment in the music or the sound effect.

4. Timed Cues:

When calling timed cues, the SM usually watches a stopwatch to time out a complicated sequence of events.

A typical lighting cue might be called by giving a standby to the board operator as “Lighting Q 38, stand by” (or “Stand by LX 38”), with the lighting board operator replying, “standing by”; at the appropriate time the SM would say “LX 38, go” which would signal to the lighting board operator to activate the cue. [NB: LX is often used in place of LQ].

- See *Sample Prompt Book Cues* (SM Tools & Templates #17).
- No matter what words you use to give standbys or call cues, the most important aspect is that the board operators understand what you are saying and you remain consistent.

Scene changes:

- Allow the crew to run the change in full work lights. Then run it under the stage lighting but at a slow pace. Finally, run it at regular pace.
- It is not necessary to run the scene changes until they are perfect. The crew will have more time to practice during the Q to Q with actors as well as during the Dress Rehearsal. The ASM may also wish to call additional

scene change rehearsals when the stage is not being used for other activities.

Safety:

- Always provide a verbal warning prior to taking the stage to black unless it is part of a sequence of cues and is expected by the crew.
- If the ASM (or a crew member) identifies a backstage problem that could affect safety, take time out to fix the situation.
- Be sure to allow for breaks; tired people are more likely to make mistakes.

4. TECH / Q TO Q WITH ACTORS

During the “tech with actors” the SM takes complete charge of the rehearsal and works through the script from the pre-show preset cues to the final cue of the production with EVERYONE who has an involvement in the show. The SM rehearses the cast and production personnel Q to Q with all the technical effects so that everyone has a chance to familiarize themselves with the technical aspects of the production and how they are affected.

Depending on the complexity of the show, the Q to Q might occur during the Sunday afternoon before opening followed by a Tech Run in the evening. The Tech Run is often a Dress rehearsal without make-up.

If the show does not have a lot of technical cues or if there is not a lot of dialogue between cues, it may be preferable to hold a Tech Run without costumes in the afternoon followed by a Dress Rehearsal in the evening.

Before the tech/Q to Q begins:

- Invite the director, producer, etc. to provide directions, comments
- Deliver your SM pep talk. Remind the actors/crew:
 - this is a tech – it is a practice session; if we don’t perform a cue or transition properly we will go back and do it again
 - don’t leave after a cue has been run just because you aren’t in the next few cues; we may need to do it again
 - please have patience; we know it is tedious to have to reset furniture or wait in the wings for what seems like an endless amount of time while the proper timing of a cue is discussed, but it is essential for ensuring we have it right for opening night.
 - If anyone has any problems with safety, please let the ASM know (or any backstage crew member)
 - If you need something glow taped or adjusted for safety reasons, ask the ASM

During the Q to Q:

- Stay calm - you are in charge; don’t let others rush you.
- If in doubt about a cue, ask the director or designer for clarification
- Be aware of the needs of the cast and crew – always communicate with them before moving to another cue or going back to a previous cue; check that they are ready

- If you encounter a serious problem, stop and solve it; don't just move on in the hopes that it will fix itself later; this day is devoted to practicing all of the technical effects in the show and it is important that all of them are rehearsed.
- Don't dwell on minor issues or let others dwell on them
- Take time to thank people throughout the session.

Scene changes:

- Allow the actors to see the crew run the change in full work lights. Let the actors walk through their exits and entrances during the scene change (again with full lights) so they know where they need to move to get off or onstage in a safe and efficient manner. Then the scene change can be run in the scene change lighting.

Safety:

- If the stage will go to black during a transition, run the sequence of cues for the actors to observe prior to having them rehearse it.

After the Q to Q:

- During the dinner break, the SM rarely has time to sit down and relax. This is normal. You will need to talk to the director and the lighting and sound designers to confirm changes made to the cues during the Q to Q. You will need this time to rewrite these cues as well as other technical notes that were made in haste and are barely legible. You will need to talk to your board operators to clarify calls that might be a problem – ones that need to be visual or auditory, ones that have to be called with other cues, etc. You will also need to talk to your ASM about a number of technical issues related to the set, props, scene changes, etc. that arose during the Q to Q.

5. TECH DRESS REHEARSAL

The “tech/dress” is the first complete run of the production with all aspects of the show in place. The SM takes complete charge of this rehearsal including giving actors and crew pre-show calls and running the rehearsal. This rehearsal gives the actors the opportunity to run through the whole show with all the “technical effects” in place and it is the time for the director and designers to see costumes under the lights and make notes of cues which need to be adjusted. It is also the first opportunity for crew to run the show from beginning to end in real time and thus get a feel for the time needed to prep for backstage tasks and scene changes.

- Although this rehearsal is treated like a real performance, it is customary to skip the first pre show calls, such as the 30 minute and 15 minute calls. Usually the rehearsal commences with the 5 minute calls, unless there are technical cues that require starting at an earlier point in the pre-show period.
- Always check with your ASM prior to starting the Tech Dress to be sure they and the crew are ready. It is not uncommon that technical issues

which arose during the Q to Q will need to be addressed before the Tech Dress can commence. Confirm with your ASM when they expect to be ready.

6. DRESS REHEARSAL

There will be one or more “dress rehearsals” which are the opportunities for the cast and running crew to rehearse the production with all the production values in place. These rehearsals will help smooth out the technical elements and “tighten up” the production.

Dress rehearsals are also the last opportunities for the director to give notes to the cast and crew. After the last rehearsal, before the Preview Night, the director should officially turn the show over to the SM. The director’s job is finished and it is up to the SM to maintain the director’s vision and guide the run of the production. The Producer(s) will be available to assist the SM if need be.

THINGS TO DO:

- Review the *Use of the Theatre during Performances – Guidelines for SM* (see SM Tools & Templates #18).
- Create a *Production Info Sheet* to be given to Front of House and Bar Manager
 - Number of Acts and length of each
 - Curtain time – for patrons who are arranging to be picked up after the show
 - Note any special instructions or warnings
 - See *Sample Production Information Sheet for FOH & Bar* (SM Tools & Templates #19).
- Create a SM Preshow Checklist
 - See *Sample Preshow Checklist* (SM Tools & Templates #20).
- Create a SM Intermission Checklist
 - See *Sample SM Intermission Checklist* (SM Tools & Templates #21).
- Create a SM Post Show Checklist
 - See *Sample Post Show Checklist* (SM Tools & Templates #22). –

5. PERFORMANCES

a) THE RUN

SM Responsibilities include:

- Ensuring the director’s vision is carried out when the director is no longer attending shows and giving notes
- Establishing a professional working atmosphere overall

- Co-ordinating with the House Manager each night to ensure the front of house duties are performed in accordance with the needs of the production and the production allows for appropriate consideration of patron needs
- Calling the cues for all transitions (lighting, sound, etc.)
- Being accountable for production values and resolving any technical issues or problems with personnel

ASM Responsibilities include:

- Establishing a professional working atmosphere in all backstage areas
- Managing all backstage and dressing room activities before, during and after the show
- Performing a Pre-show and Post-show check
 - Ensuring the stage is cleaned before and after the show
 - Ensuring all props and set pieces have been set by stage crew and props personnel
 - Performing maintenance on special equipment, e.g., cleaning and filling fog machines
- Ensuring actors are in place for entrances
- Ensuring stage crew perform any assigned scene, set or property shifts/changes quickly and safely
- Communicating with and taking cues from the SM throughout the show
 - Being on headset SR or SL
 - If required, operating fog/smoke machines and other special equipment
- Handling backstage emergencies

PRESHOW

The box office is open on show nights until 8 p.m. The SM will not need to unlock and disarm the alarm system.

The SM will need to enable the stage door code so the cast and crew can enter through the stage door. You must arrive earlier than the call times for cast and crew.

THINGS TO DO:

- Check with the box office:
 - Ask what size house we are expecting (actors always like to know whether they are performing to a sold out crowd or to a smaller audience)
 - Find out who the House Manager and Bar Manager are
- Introduce yourself to the House Manager and Bar Manager:
 - Give them your *Production Info Sheet*
 - Discuss important points with the House Manager

- Confirm the procedure for opening the house to audience, starting the show and intermission (signals and go aheads between House Manager and SM)
- Check with the Bar Manager to find out if the bar will be open after the show to serve beverages to cast and crew
- Refer to your own Preshow Checklist or the Sample Checklist in SM Tools & Templates #20.

DURING THE SHOW

THINGS TO DO:

- Time the show – this is useful when bringing to the attention of actors/crew that production values may have changed – lines are being delivered with more pauses, scene change times have increased.
- Make note of technical issues that will require attention, e.g., prop or set item is breaking down; special effect not working as it should
- This information can be recorded in a notepad or sticky notes OR on a Performance Report
 - See the *Performance Report template* (SM Tools & Templates #23).
- **Intermission:**
 - Refer to your own *Intermission Checklist* or the *Sample Checklist* in SM Tools & Templates #21.

POSTSHOW

THINGS TO DO:

- Refer to your own *Post Show Checklist* or the *Sample Checklist* in SM Tools & Templates #22.
- The SM and ASM should remind the cast and crew to be quiet when leaving the theatre at night.
- If there is a technical problem that needs to be resolved prior to the next show:
 - Contact the appropriate person regarding the technical requirement: costumes, props, set builder, etc. and arrange a time for the work to be done.
 - If technical support isn't available, work with your ASM and crew to find a way to resolve it on a makeshift basis.

b) CLOSING NIGHT and STRIKE

Closing Night

After the show on closing night, a Closing Night Party is organized by the Producer. See the Producer Handbook for more information. As usual, the SM is

responsible for closing and locking the theatre. Encourage everyone to take personal belongings with them on Closing Night.

Some production team members may wish to stay and do some preliminary tidying up in order to permit an early start for taking apart the set, for e.g.:

- the props manager may want to remove all props from the wings
- the ASM might need to dismantle borrowed equipment, e.g., fog machines, etc.
- the lighting designer might want to remove cables, lighting trees, etc. that are located in the wings or onstage.

Strike

After the final performance of the show, all of the production elements will need to be dismantled, destroyed, put away, or cleaned up. All members of the cast and crew are expected to participate.

The SM, ASM and props person(s) should make sure all of the props and other items that lived in the wings for the past few weeks are removed. This must be done prior to the strike so there is room to tear the set down.

At the Strike:

- Return the SM Keys to the Producer.
- Tidy your section of the control booth.
- Assist at the strike.
- Submit the Post Production Report to the Producer or arrange to submit it at a later date.

6. SM Tools & Templates

1. Scene Breakdown Chart
2. Rehearsal Schedule
3. Use of Theatre during Rehearsals in the Rehearsal Hall – Guidelines for Stage Management
4. The Prompt Book
5. Production Technical Requirements
6. Rehearsals in the Rehearsal Hall – Information sheet for Cast & Crew
7. Rehearsal Attendance Sheet
8. Stage Management Theatre Kit
9. Sample Blocking Notes
10. Rehearsal Report
11. Sample SM Production bulletins
12. Use of Theatre during Rehearsals on Mainstage – SM Guidelines
13. Rehearsals on the Mainstage – Information sheet for Cast & Crew
14. Sample Preset & Scene Change Schedule
15. Performance Attendance Sheet
16. Stage Crew Guidelines and Information Sheet
17. Sample Prompt Book Cues
18. Use of Theatre during Performances – SM Guidelines
19. Sample Production Information Sheet for FOH & Bar
20. Sample SM Preshow Checklist

- 21. Sample SM Intermission Checklist
- 22. SM Post Show Checklist
- 23. Performance Report

TOOLS & TEMPLATES #1



INSERT YOUR PRODUCTION NAME
SCENE BREAKDOWN CHART

ACT ONE

| CHARACTER | Sc. 1 Pgs 1-8 | Sc. 2 Pgs 9- 12 | Sc. 3 Pgs 13- 19 | Sc. 4 Pgs 20- 22 | Sc. 5 Pgs 23- 30 | Sc. 6 Pgs 31- 35 | Sc. 7 Pgs 36- 46 | Sc. 8 Pgs 47- 49 | Sc. 9 Pgs 50- 53 | Sc. 10 Pgs 54- 55 | Sc. 11 Pgs 56- 62 | Sc. 12 Pgs 63- 65 |
|---------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Bashful | | x | x | x | x | | x | | | x | | x |
| Doc | x | x | | x | x | x | x | x | | x | | |
| Dopey | | x | | | x | x | x | | x | | x | |
| Grumpy | x | x | | x | x | x | x | x | x | | x | |
| Happy | x | | x | | x | | x | | x | | | |
| Sleepy | | | | | x | | x | x | x | | | x |
| Sneezy | x | x | | x | x | x | x | x | | | x | |
| Snow White | | | x | x | x | | | | | x | | x |
| Wicked Witch | x | x | x | | | | | | | | | |

X denotes that the character is in the scene

TOOLS & TEMPLATES #1



INSERT YOUR PRODUCTION NAME
SCENE BREAKDOWN CHART

ACT TWO

| CHARACTER | Sc. 1 Pgs | Sc. 2 Pgs | Sc. 3 Pgs | Sc. 4 Pgs | Sc. 5 Pgs | Sc. 6 Pgs | Sc. 7 Pgs | Sc. 8 Pgs | Sc. 9 Pgs | Sc. 10 Pgs | Sc. 11 Pgs | Sc. 12 Pgs |
|--------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Bashful | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Doc | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Dopey | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Grumpy | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Happy | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Sleepy | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Sneezy | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Snow White | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Wicked Witch | | | | | | | | | | | x | x |

X denotes that the character is in the scene

TOOLS & TEMPLATES #2



REHEARSAL SCHEDULE Overview and Template

Prior to the first rehearsal

Contact the Director to discuss the **Rehearsal Schedule**:

- the producer will need to be involved to check on dates/times the rehearsal hall is available
- decide who will create the Rehearsal Schedule and who will keep it up to date
- if SM is to do it, obtain the details from the director
- if possible, put it together before-hand to be distributed at first rehearsal
- preferably, create the schedule in a format that can be sent as an e-mail attachment.

At the first rehearsal

- Distribute the *Rehearsal Schedule* if it is available
- Ask everyone to give you dates they will be unavailable

After the first rehearsal

- If a rehearsal schedule was not previously done, it should be put together following the first rehearsal
 - Update as necessary based on information from cast and production team about their availability
 - Send to all cast, crew and relevant theatre administration personnel.
- confirm rehearsal calls with the cast/crew and make sure changes to the rehearsal schedule are communicated to everyone involved in the production.
- As new crew members are added, remember to send them a copy of the rehearsal schedule
- The SM or ASM may call “extra” rehearsals to rehearse the stage crew with set changes in order to avoid delays during the tech rehearsals.
- In the event a cast member needs to be replaced, the SM will provide the new cast member with blocking notes and any other technical details about the role in the play. This may require holding a separate rehearsal if it is not possible to incorporate into the regular schedule. It is the director’s responsibility for discussing character interpretation with the new cast member.

TOOLS & TEMPLATES #3



USE OF THEATRE WHILE REHEARSING IN THE REHEARSAL HALL

Stage Management Guidelines

Opening up:

- If first in building, disable alarm
- Key in SM backdoor code
 - Attach code enabled sign
- Cast and crew will use their own backdoor code
- Turn on lights (and heat) in Rehearsal Hall, downstairs hallways and Green Room

Locking up:

- Make sure the Rehearsal Hall (and any other space used by your production) is tidy
- Lock up the Rehearsal Hall Valuables cupboard
- Heat setting can be left at 15 degrees if desired
- Turn off the lights in the Rehearsal Hall and close the door
- If there is another production rehearsing upstairs, check to see if they are still in the building
 - The last SM in the building will ensure all doors and windows are properly closed and that all lights are off
- Remove code enabled sign from back door if previous SM did not already do this and key in SM backdoor code
- Set alarm

Heat:

- Adjust to comfortable temperature during rehearsal

TOOLS & TEMPLATES #4



THE PROMPT BOOK – An Overview

Prior to the first rehearsal

A prompt book will need to be assembled. It will eventually contain ALL the information about the staging and running of the production.

- Get a script if you don't already have one:
 - Make a couple of copies for yourself (make a few extra copies to give to production staff as they come on board, unless the producer has lots of extra copies)
 - punch the copy of script and place in a binder
 - it is best to use a binder that holds letter size paper
 - attach a single page of the script to each page in your binder
 - leave enough space around the text on the page for recording notes about where the actors are to be move (“blocking”).
- If you have copies of the floor plan, photocopy extra copies in letter size to insert in the script; these can be used for recording blocking, particularly when the set is complicated or there are large numbers of people onstage
- Use tabs to separate Scenes and Acts:
 - directors often break the play into even smaller scenes for rehearsal purposes.
 - if the director is going to use the smaller scenes for rehearsal scheduling, make note of these divisions in the script.
- Review the script; highlight or make note of obvious technical requirements.
 - these can include:
 - sound effects (e.g., a gunshot, telephone)
 - props
 - furniture
 - special effects (e.g., fog, smoke)
 - special lighting (e.g., a working table lamp)
 - quick costume changes
 - elaborate scene changes
 - you may want to put together a document recording all of this information.
 - See the *Production Technical Requirements* template (SM Tools & Templates #5).
 - talk to the director early in the rehearsal period to confirm whether the technical requirements that you have noted will in fact be required. Often a director will have a different vision than what appears in the script so certain items may not be needed.
- Include a section for contact lists, rehearsal schedules, scene breakdown charts, attendance sheets, and any other reference documents you will need at hand. (e.g., locking up procedures, emergency procedures, etc.).

At the first rehearsal

During the rehearsal process, the most important job the SM has is creating the prompt book.

- At first read-thru, the SM should time the length of the play.
- Director may want the SM to read the stage directions, sound effects, extra lines
- Make notes of any items mentioned by the director or designers
- Record changes to wording and note if there are any cuts (words, sentences or whole sections are to be removed)

During rehearsals

The prompt book needs to be created in such a way that in the event of something happening to prevent the SM attending a rehearsal or performance, an ASM or another SM can step in and be able to run the show flawlessly. Every SM develops their own system for creating a prompt book – as long as it works well and can be understood by others, any system is fine.

The prompt book needs to:

- capture all the blocking (cast movements onstage) - during the rehearsal process the script will need to be updated constantly as the blocking evolves.
 - See *Sample Blocking Notes* (SM Tools & Templates #9).
- eventually, during Tech Week, it will list all the warnings and cues for light, sound and any others effects and may also list standby calls for actors and crew.

Record movements of actors:

- By making notes on the margins of the script pages and/or
- Making notes on photocopied pages of the floor plan
- Be as concise as possible by using abbreviations and symbols, while also being understandable to anyone else reading it
 - For example, Julie enters from the upstage right kitchen door, crosses downstage to Sue, gives her an envelope, then exits upstage left through the door could be recorded as:
 - J enters USR, X DS to S, hands envelope to S, X USL, exits
 - There are many different abbreviations that can be used when writing blocking notes. The most important thing is to be consistent.
- Record information about set changes, scene changes:
 - Note what needs to be moved and when
 - Note who will be moving it – cast or a crew member
 - Know where all of these items start, when and where they move, who moves them and where they end up
 - This allows you to prepare accurate, detailed preset lists for your crew; it also allows you to quickly reset the stage during rehearsals if the director wants to pick up in the middle of a scene.
- Record timing of sound effects such as a telephone ring, gunshot, etc.
 - During rehearsal, provide the sound effect vocally; for instance, if a gunshot is required, shout “BANG” at the appropriate place in the script.
- Make changes to script as required
 - Record word changes or deletions
 - Make sure everyone who needs to know about these changes is advised

After rehearsals move to the Mainstage

Begin to insert notes in the prompt book regarding cues: light, sound, effects. These will be tentative and should be written on sticky notes or in pencil

- these notes will be added during rehearsals per comments from the director and/or designers
- prior to Tech Week, ask the director to provide more detail about when cues will occur
- often a “paper tech” or “dry tech” is held; this is a meeting with the SM, director, lighting and sound designers for the purpose of discussing the approximate timing of the cues
 - This session can prove invaluable in saving time and eliminating stress during the Tech weekend
 - The discussion should include the order things need to occur in and what is required to execute each series of cues as well as why each step is taken
 - Make sure you understand everything that has to happen and consider those cues that might need further attention in order to resolve a potential problem (e.g., a cue that requires timing with backstage crew who might not be able to be on headset)
 - Sometimes the cues can be tentatively numbered during this session

At the session(s) to set light and sound levels

Prior to the session, make sure to have enough pencils and post-it notes for recording the cues

- Record all the cues in the prompt book – at this stage it is best to use pencil or record on post-it notes
- Confirm the position of stage walkers by checking your blocking notes in the prompt book.
- Ask questions! If you are not sure what a cue is for or when it is supposed to happen – ASK!

Calling cues

There are four main types of triggers for when to call a cue.

Visual Cues:

The cue is called when something happens onstage to trigger it. For example, when the actor kneels downstage or when the actor touches a light switch. A visual cue may be taken by the operator without the SM calling a “Go” – this is often the case when the timing needs to be precise to the movement of the actor, for e.g., the actor turning on a light switch.

Text Cues:

The cue is called when an actor delivers a word or phrase in the text. This is often broken down to the extent that the cue is called on a particular syllable.

Music (or Sound) Cues:

The cue is triggered by a moment in the music or the sound effect.

Timed Cues:

When calling timed cues, the SM usually watches a stopwatch to time out a complicated sequence of events.

A typical lighting cue might be called by giving a standby to the board operator as “Stand by LX 38” (or “Lighting Q 38, stand by”), with the lighting board operator replying, “standing by”; at the appropriate time the SM would say “LX 38, go” which would signal to the lighting board operator to activate the cue. [NB: LX is usually used in place of LQ].

- See *Sample Prompt Book Cues* (SM Tools & Templates #17).
- No matter what words you use to give standbys or call cues, the most important aspect is that the board operators understand what you are saying and you remain consistent.

Tech Day - after the Q to Q

During the dinner break, the SM rarely has time to sit down and relax. This is normal.

- You will need to talk to the director and the lighting and sound designers to confirm changes made to the cues during the Q to Q.
- You will need to rewrite these cues as well as other technical notes that were made in haste and are barely legible.
- You will need to talk to your board operators to clarify calls that might be a problem – ones that need to be visual or auditory, ones that have to be called with other cues, etc.
- You will also need to talk to your ASM about a number of technical issues related to the set, props, scene changes, etc. that arose during the Q to Q.

TOOLS & TEMPLATES #5



INSERT YOUR PRODUCTION NAME
PRODUCTION TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

| ACT / SCENE / PAGE | SET | LIGHTING | COSTUMES / MAKEUP | PROPS | SOUND | SPECIAL EFFECTS |
|--------------------------|-----|----------|----------------------|-------|-------|--------------------|
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TOOLS & TEMPLATES #6



REHEARSALS IN THE REHEARSAL HALL

Information Sheet for Cast & Crew

Unless we are the first show of the season, two productions are in residence. We need to be sensitive to the production currently rehearsing onstage.

Parking

The theatre is located in a residential-zoned area. We are an anomaly and must work extra hard at being a “good neighbor”. That means being quiet in the evenings when we are leaving the theatre. It also means being careful where we park.

Parking is reserved on the side of the building for the cast and crew of the current show and the one in rehearsal. Additional parking is available on certain streets – signs permitting. And be careful not to block the residents’ driveways. Parking in the front of the theatre is reserved for vehicles displaying a handicapped permit. An access ramp is available as a barrier-free access route to the theatre. The front of the theatre parking is also reserved for fire department vehicles.

The theatre assumes no liability for damage to vehicles parked on theatre premises or elsewhere.

There have been quite a few thefts from parked vehicles – please do not leave valuables in your vehicle.

There is limited parking during rehearsals if the current production has a large cast. Once the current production begins performances, the cast/crew in rehearsal should no longer use the parking lot on performance nights.

Procedures for entering and leaving the theatre

Entrance is through the Stage Door off the parking lot:

- If the door keypad has been enabled, there will be a sign on the door
- Enter the code given to you by your SM and open the door
 - *Insert code information here*
- If the code doesn’t work, try it again; if it still doesn’t work, it probably means that the SM hasn’t arrived or has forgotten to enable the code. Knock or go to the front door to the theatre.

The current production will be rehearsing on the Mainstage. On their rehearsal nights, do not enter the theatre through the lobby

Attendance

It is absolutely essential that you arrive early enough to be ready to start on time

- When you arrive sign-in on the Attendance Sheet in the Rehearsal Hall

If you are going to be late or can't make a rehearsal, please contact the SM or Director

If you are aware of dates you will not be available during the rehearsal period, please let the SM or Director know.

Breaks

Let us know if you prefer tea or coffee. If you don't drink either, let us know so we don't make a pot that goes to waste.

While we are rehearsing downstairs, we are not permitted to use supplies (mugs and glasses, etc.) from the bar area upstairs

Contact lists

Check the contact list to be sure we have recorded your information correctly

- Give your corrections and updates to the Producer(s) or Stage Manager

Technical support

Let the SM or ASM know, if:

- You have any safety issues
- your prop is not working
- you need something added to or altered on your costume
- You have any other concerns related to the production

Communications

- Rehearsal schedules, Contact Lists, Scene breakdowns, etc. will be posted on the Bulletin board in the Rehearsal room
- Updates will be sent via e-mail on a regular basis
- Emergency or short-notice changes to rehearsals – you will be phoned:
 - please make sure we have the correct contact information for you

TOOLS & TEMPLATES #7



INSERT YOUR PRODUCTION NAME
REHEARSAL ATTENDANCE SHEET

Updated on *DATE*

| | Phone Number | TUES Jan 2 Scenes 1 to 5 | THURS Jan 4 Scenes 6 & 7 | TUES Jan 9 Scene 8 | SUN Jan 14 Scenes 1 to 8 | TUES Jan 16 Scenes 9 & 10 | SUN Jan 21 Scenes 9 to 11 |
|----------|--------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Angela | | | | | | | |
| Sally | | | | | | | |
| Lesley | | | | | | | |
| Phillipa | | | | | | | |
| Barbara | | | | | | | |
| Linda | | | | | | | |
| Sheila | | | | | | | |
| Drew | | | | X | | | |
| Jean | | | | | | | |
| Jim | | | | X | | | |
| Danda | | | | | | | |
| Wendy | | | X | X | | X | X |
| Corinna | | | | | | | |
| Alec | | X | | X | | | |
| Phil | | X | X | X | X | | |
| Topsy | | X | X | X | X | X | X |

X indicates not required at this rehearsal
Alternatively you can insert an X to indicate those who are called for the rehearsal

TOOLS & TEMPLATES #8



STAGE MANAGEMENT THEATRE KIT

| ITEM | Rehearsal Period | Tech Week | Performances | Comments |
|--------------------------------------------|------------------|-----------|--------------|----------|
| Stopwatch | | | | |
| Tape measure | | | | |
| Pencils, pencil sharpener, erasers | | | | |
| Coloured ink pens (red, blue) | | | | |
| Large black marker | | | | |
| Extra pencils (for director and cast) | | | | |
| Scissors | | | | |
| Painter's tape for taping stage | | | | |
| Stapler, staples, staple remover | | | | |
| Scotch tape | | | | |
| Highlighter pens | | | | |
| Sticky notes of all sizes | | | | |
| Flashlight(s) with blue gel or tinted lens | | | | |
| 3-hole punch | | | | |
| Paper clips | | | | |
| Pushpins | | | | |



STAGE MANAGEMENT THEATRE KIT

| ITEM | Rehearsal Period | Tech Week | Performances | Comments |
|-------------------------------|------------------|-----------|--------------|----------|
| Masking tape | | | | |
| Kleenex | | | | |
| Paper towels | | | | |
| Antiseptic towelettes | | | | |
| Safety pins | | | | |
| Hair tie backs, bobby pins | | | | |
| Nail file | | | | |
| Band-aids | | | | |
| Tweezers | | | | |
| Antihistamine | | | | |
| Pain killers: anacin, aspirin | | | | |

TOOLS & TEMPLATES #9

SAMPLE BLOCKING NOTES

| 6 | WAITING IN THE WINGS | Act I |
|---|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| | MAY. Why wasn't I told? Who is it? | |
| | BONITA. Oh, dear, that cat's out of the bag, now, with a vengeance. I suppose we'd better say. | |
| | MAY. What are you all talking about? Why all this mystery? | |
| | BONITA. It's Lotta Bainbridge. | |
| | MAY (<i>stiffening</i>) Lotta Bainbridge. | |
| | BONITA. Yes. | |
| | MAY (<i>ominously</i>) Lotta Bainbridge—coming here? | |
| | BONITA (<i>hurriedly</i>) We all thought—knowing that you and she are not exactly the best of friends—that it would be better not to say anything about it. | |
| | MAY. How long have you known? | |
| | MAUD. Perry told us last Sunday. | |
| | MAY (<i>accusingly</i>) You mean you were all prepared to let me meet her face to face without even warning me? (<i>She packs her embroidery away in the bag.</i>) | |
| | BONITA. But Dora, her dresser, who's been with her for years, is leaving her to get married, and the maisonnette she had just off the Fulham Road is being pulled down to make way for office buildings . . . | |
| | MAY. (I am not in the least interested in where she lives and what is being pulled down. (<i>She picks up her bag, rises and crosses to the stairs</i>) I only know that I find your combined conspiracy of silence difficult to forgive. | |
| | (<i>CORA puts the cards on the desk.</i>) | |
| | MAUD (<i>putting her hand on May's arm</i>) It was only that we didn't want to upset you. | |
| | MAY. Do you seriously imagine that it would have upset me less to find her here in this house without being prepared? | |
| | (<i>CORA moves down R.</i>) | |
| | BONITA. Don't be angry with us, May. After all, it was a long long time ago, wasn't it? The quarrel, I mean . . . | |
| | (<i>MAUD moves to the piano</i>) | |
| | MAY. There was no quarrel, my dear Bonita. You have been misinformed. (<i>She goes to the foot of the stairs</i>) | |
| | BONITA (<i>weakly</i>) Well, whatever it was then . . . | |
| | MAY. I have not spoken to Lotta Bainbridge for thirty years and I have no intention of doing so now. (<i>She goes up the stairs to the landing</i>) | |
| | (<i>ESTELLE rises</i>) | |
| | MAUD (<i>moving to the foot of the stairs</i>) Oh, May dear—don't be like that—it's all over and done with. | |
| | MAY (<i>grandly</i>) One of you had better explain the situation to her when she arrives. Don't be afraid she won't understand. She'll understand perfectly. | |

Al goes x to US of card table

- Cora sits at the desk

- Bo x beh sofa to Maud

Bo sits on sofa

Bo x moves sofa to SR end

Bo sits on sofa

Al x to US

turn to face O

Bo sits on sofa

Maud x L May

Al x to fireplace

x to US of sofa

then x US,

from US at foot of stairs

at foot of stairs

TOOLS & TEMPLATES #10



INSERT YOUR PRODUCTION NAME
REHEARSAL REPORT

Date: _____ Stage Manager: _____

| | |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| PROPERTIES: | SET/SCENERY: |
| COSTUMES: | FITTINGS: |
| SOUND: | LIGHTS: |
| SCHEDULE: | THEATRE/BUILDING: |
| REHEARSAL NOTES: | MISCELLANEOUS: |

TOOLS & TEMPLATES #11

SAMPLE SM PRODUCTION BULLETIN #1

From: "Sylvia Lindstrom" [REDACTED]
To: "Maria Noel" [REDACTED]; "Alan MacKenzie" [REDACTED]; "Bill Adams"
[REDACTED]; "Catherine Rose" [REDACTED]; "Danda
Humphreys" [REDACTED]; "David MacPherson" [REDACTED];
"Drew Waveryn" [REDACTED]; "Karrie Wolfe" [REDACTED]; "Lisa
Leighton" [REDACTED]; "Michael Utgaard" [REDACTED]; "Roger Carr"
[REDACTED]; "Roger Carr" [REDACTED]; "Thelma Midori" [REDACTED];
"Toshik Bukowiecki" [REDACTED]; "Wendy Magahay" [REDACTED]
Cc: "David Rand" <langhamcourt@shaw.ca>
Sent: Monday, October 01, 2007 12:42 PM
Attach: Scotland Road Contact Sheet.doc; Scotland Road Rehearsal Schedule.doc
Subject: Updated Rehearsal Sked & Contact List

Avast there ye Roadies!

Here be your shiny new schedule. Keep it safe from prying eyes as it contains your secret code which gives you entry into the Hall of Treasure.

BRODIE STRIKE:

Beginning at 10 a.m. on Sunday, October 14th the set for Miss Jean Brodie will be dismantled. If you are able to help out, your presence would be greatly appreciated (otherwise we will have to press gang some "volunteers").

Note: our rehearsal that day is from 3:30 to 6 p.m.

NEXT PRODUCTION MEETING:

is on Sunday, October 14th at 2 p.m. in the Theatre.
Only Production Team is required to attend.

MEET & GREET:

Please also note that our Meet & Greet is on Tuesday, October 23rd. Please bring grub and grog for sharing with ye scurvy mates. We will also be needing to see John, Halbrech, Winnifred and Kittle in costume for our publicity photos so if you could arrive between 5 and 5:30 to get gussied up for the camera that would be great. Please let me know if you can come in early and when you expect to be there.

CONTACT LIST

Here be your very own secret list of all of the Jack and Jill Tars who have signed onto the *Scotland Road*. Please check your own entry carefully and report any errors to your stage manager immediately. If you are the sort of person who doesn't check e-mails very often, please let me know and I will try to contact you by telephone should the need arise.

Sylvester the Summoner
SM

TOOLS & TEMPLATES #11

SAMPLE SM PRODUCTION BULLETIN #2

From: "Sylvia Lindstrom"
To:

Sent: Sunday, November 04, 2007 7:56 PM
Attach: Scotland Road Contact Sheet.doc; Scotland Road Rehearsal Schedule.doc
Subject: Another Scotland Road update

Hello Roadies,

We had our first Run of the play today and it went extraordinarily well. The actors as usual were superb. And all of our Kaspar and Danes were there (four of them in total) -- they are well on their way to full character development as strong silent types and off book to boot!

PS: A big thanks to Maria for overseeing the backstage crew and being there to troubleshoot. I am especially grateful to her for being willing to climb the really really tall ladder to attach the scrim every night.

Costumes are pretty well complete (Lisa was last seen waxing eloquently over fabric with rich jewel tones for costumes for the above mentioned Kaspar and Dane). And rumour has it that our illustrious director will get his hands dirty (and a chance to show us all how actors can connect with an audience without uttering a single word) while donning one of those fabulous Kaspar/Dane uniforms.

Our producers were in attendance today (as they have been for most of our rehearsals - they have been the most attentive producers I have ever worked with). Thelma got drafted to do stage crew duties on stage left (opening and closing the show). Toshik was in with the program and he has it well on its way to completion. If you have any acknowledgements to include, it might not be too late so please let him know as soon as possible - like immediately.

REHEARSAL SCHEDULE:

I am attaching an updated rehearsal schedule. It is basically the same as previous versions with the following change:

Thursday, November 8th: will be a Run

This will give actors and stage crew a chance to get familiar with working the entire show from start to finish so we are all ready for our tech weekend.

CONTACT LIST:

An updated Contact list is attached. Please review your own info and if there are errors please let me know so I can make the necessary corrections.

Best Regards,
Sylvester the Sharp-Eyed Scrutinizer

TOOLS & TEMPLATES #11

SAMPLE SM PRODUCTION BULLETIN #3

Sent: Monday, November 12, 2007 2:08 PM
Attach: Scotland Road Contact Sheet.doc; Scotland Road Rehearsal Schedule-Nov 12.doc
Subject: Waga Waga News and Other Updates

Hello Roadies,

PLEASE IGNORE THE E-MAIL I JUST SENT. THIS IS THE ONE WITH ATTACHMENTS.

Well this has been a super week. We had our first Run on Thursday. On Friday evening we had fun setting light cues with the able assistance of Colin on the board and Joy and Helen as our stage walkers (with Maria and Ann-marie providing back-up during breaks). On Saturday, the Sound (Al) and Light/Projection folks (David and Karrie) spent the morning setting cues and in the afternoon Stage Crew arrived and practised the set changes.

Yesterday's Tech Day went absolutely smoothly. Everyone was totally focused on the job at hand, working out the details and getting it right with all the parts put together into one glorious package. Thank you everyone for your patience and commitment.

The potluck was fabulous with an assortment of yummy food and the company was lots of fun. It was one of the easiest and most enjoyable tech days that I have experienced.

Now on to what's to come. I am attaching an updated Schedule and also a Contact Sheet. The Rehearsal Schedule now has a column listing the Stage and Booth Crew who are scheduled each night. Please take a look to make sure that it is correct. If there are changes, please let me know. Thanks.

Please note some changes and additions:

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 12

is still a Dress starting at 7 p.m. Please be at the theatre by 6:00. Cast will be in full costume and make-up. Crew will need to be set by 6:30 if at all possible as I would like to run this as if we have audience in at 6:30.

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 13

is a Tech Run starting at 7 p.m. Costumes are optional. Please be at the theatre by 6:30. Crew should be set by 6:50.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 14

Just a reminder that Shaw Cable will be in at 6:30 to film the opening sequence. Wendy, David, Julius, Peter, Lisa, Maria, Al, Karrie are called for 6 p.m. to be ready to go. And please also start to use the backstage door (off the parking lot) to come into the theatre. Passcode is 1501.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 15

For those with eagle eyes who notice that there is a question mark next to the scheduled Stage Crew, not to

worry, there will be both a Kaspar and a Dane that night. We're just trying to find someone who doesn't mind a bit of extra exposure.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 16

After the show is over and audience has left the theatre, we will have the archival photos taken. If you have friends coming to the show that night, please let them know that you will be unavailable until we have finished. We usually start with a Cast and Crew shot so that Crew can leave early if they wish.

Best regards,
Sylvia
SM

TOOLS & TEMPLATES #12



USE OF THEATRE DURING REHEARSALS ON THE MAINSTAGE Stage Management Guidelines

Opening up:

- If first in building, disable alarm
- Key in SM backdoor code if cast/crew will be entering through stage door
 - Attach code enabled sign
 - Cast and crew will use their own backdoor code if entering through stage door

Locking up:

- Before locking up, check to see if the production using the Rehearsal Hall is still in the theatre and co-ordinate close down and lock-up responsibilities with their SM.
- Last SM in the building will ensure all doors and windows are properly closed and all lights are off (SM using rehearsal hall should take care of heat and light in the rehearsal space)
- Remove code enabled sign from back door if previous SM did not already do this and key in SM backdoor code
- Set alarm

Heat:

- Upstairs
 - No heating ducts onstage
 - House is preset for audience
 - Bar and lounge have separate controls

TOOLS & TEMPLATES #13



REHEARSALS ON THE MAINSTAGE

Information Sheet for Cast & Crew

There are two productions in residence. Please be aware there is a play rehearsing in the Rehearsal Hall.

Procedures for entering and leaving the theatre

- During rehearsals, enter and leave through the main lobby door
- After Dress Rehearsal, enter through the Stage Door off the parking lot.
 - If the door keypad has been enabled, there will be a sign on the door
 - Enter the code and open the door
 - *Insert code information here*
 - If the code doesn't work, try it again; if it still doesn't work, it probably means the SM hasn't arrived or has forgotten to enable the code. Knock or enter through the main lobby door.

Parking

The theatre is located in a residential-zoned area. We are an anomaly and must work extra hard at being a "good neighbor". That means being quiet in the evenings when we are leaving the theatre. It also means being careful where we park. Parking is reserved on the side of the building for the cast and crew of the current show and the one in rehearsal. Additional parking is available on certain streets – signs permitting. Be careful not to block the residents' driveways.

Parking in the front of the theatre is reserved for vehicles displaying a handicapped permit. An access ramp is available as a barrier-free access route to the theatre. The front of the theatre parking is also reserved for fire department vehicles. The theatre assumes no liability for damage to vehicles parked on theatre premises or elsewhere.

There have been quite a few thefts from parked vehicles – do not leave valuables in your vehicle.

Attendance

It is absolutely essential that you arrive early enough to be ready to start on time

- When you arrive, sign-in on the Attendance Sheet

If you are going to be late or can't make a rehearsal, please contact the SM or Director.

If you are aware of dates you will not be available during the rehearsal period, please let the SM or Director know.

Call times for Tech Week and Performances

- *Insert your message here*

Breaks

- use lounge/bar area until Dress Rehearsal
- after that use the Green Room

Contact lists

- Check the contact list to be sure we have recorded your information correctly
- Give your corrections and updates to _____

Technical support

Let the SM or ASM know, if:

- you have any safety issues
- your prop is not working
- you need something added to or altered on your costume
- you have any other concerns related to the production

Communications

- Rehearsal schedules, Contact Lists, Scene breakdowns, etc. will be posted on the Bulletin board at the bottom of the stairs to the costume loft
- Updates will be sent via e-mail on a regular basis
- Emergency or short-notice changes to rehearsals – you will be phoned
 - please make sure we have the correct contact information for you

TOOLS & TEMPLATES #14

SAMPLE PRESET & SCENE CHANGE SCHEDULE

PERSONALS:

John and Halbrech should be wearing watches

John needs to have items pre-placed in his jacket:

- Envelope of “cash”
- Newspaper article
- Notepad and pen

PRESHOW

Scrim in

Iceberg in closed position

Door panels at SR and SL open against stage walls

Deck chair in DS position (DS of iceberg)

- footrest attached to front but not extended

Check offstage projector cable – in coiled position

Video camera on wall USC is turned ON -- CREW

Light haze onstage just prior to house in – FOG MACHINE

7:55 Ship horn

John gets into place in deck chair

Halbrech gets into place inside iceberg

8:00 Preshow speech

Sound of ship followed by crash into iceberg - SCRIM OUT

Morse code and iceberg cracking sound – ICEBERG OPENS

ACT ONE

SCENE ONE - END OF SCENE:

John: When does she come in?

Halbrech: Now.

Scene transition:

Sound Q – edgy music (#24)

Projection on USL – Titanic

Kaspar and Dane move deckchair to US position

- footrest on but not extended

Scene lites

SCENE SEVEN - SCENE IS VERY VERY SHORT!!!

Halbrech: If it happens again –

John: It won't.

Halbrech: We're giving her the day off. After which you have twenty-four hours.

Scene transition:

Halbrech exits DSR

Sound Q: Doorslam with echo

Projection CS? – people and kid on deck

Sound Q: edgy music (#24)

John exits DSR

Kaspar/Dane bring on footrest and set in extended position

Halbrech enters from DSR and sits on deckchair

Scene lites

John enters from DSR

SCENE TEN - END OF SCENE:

Winifred: Astor. ... Astor ... SCREAMS ... Ice.

BLACKOUT

Sound Q: Phillip Glass – about 15 seconds

Actors exit

Intermission lights and music

INTERMISSION

CREW:

- turn camera on wall US back ON
- plug in power for projector

KASPAR & DANE:

- strike suitcase, briefcase
- ice cubes that are DS of riser and under cart etc. – put in ice bucket DSR

ACT TWO

SCENE NINE - END OF SCENE:

Halbrech: Keep her locked up. We'll be back in a few hours. ... There are others.

Scene transition:

Halbrech exits DSR

Sound Q: Foghorn

Projection USC – Captain Smith

Kaspar/Dane move deck chair to DS position

Kaspar/Dane attach footrest in non-extended position

CREW – turn off video camera on wall USC

Scene lites

SCENE TEN

John is seated on deck chair

Winifred enters from US “bedroom” with hair down

FOG MACHINE: FOG to start on page 45 – see reference to ship sound Q

END OF SCENE:

Yes, Yes, I do. I see it. It's huge! A huge, white mountain of ice! Getting closer! Closer! I can touch it! I can feel it! It's here! It's here! Hold my hand! Hold my hand! We'll go up, we'll go up, we'll go all the way up Scotland Road. ...

Crew at DSR and DSL open DS doorframes

Kaspar/Dane move iceberg to closed position

John: When does it come?

Winifred: Now.

Sound Q: sound of iceberg, Morse code SOS

Sound Q: Heart monitor going into flatline

POSTSHOW

Re-attach scrim

Turn off fog machine – check fluid levels

BOOTH:

leave power on until projector has been properly shut down – needs time to cool down

TOOLS & TEMPLATES #15



INSERT YOUR PRODUCTION NAME
PERFORMANCE ATTENDANCE SHEET

Updated on *INSERT DATE*

| | Phone Number | WED Nov 14 | THURS Nov 15 | FRI Nov 16 | SAT Nov 17 |
|-----------|--------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------|---------------|
| David | | | | | |
| Wendy | | | | | |
| Catherine | | | | | |
| Danda | | | | | |
| Maria | | | | | |
| Michael | | X | X | X | |
| Julius | | | X | X | |
| Barry | | X | | X | X |
| Peter | | | | | X |
| Roger | | X | X | | X |
| Lisa | | | X | X | X |
| Helen | | X | | X | |
| Thelma | | X | X | | X |
| Al | | | | | X |
| Chad | | X | X | X | |
| David B | | | | | X |
| Colin | | | X | X | |

Karrie for post show photos

X indicates not scheduled for this performance
 Alternatively you can insert an X to indicate those who are called for the rehearsal

TOOLS & TEMPLATES #16



STAGE CREW GUIDELINES & INFORMATION SHEET

Stage crew members include:

- **Props assistants** -- responsible for having all props for the rehearsal ready prior to rehearsal/performance (or at the relevant point in the play). Some responsibilities include:
 - props that need to be made or brought for each rehearsal/performance, such as beverages or food to be consumed onstage
 - props that need to be reset for the next rehearsal/performance, e.g., inserting blanks into a starting gun, loading a staple gun that gets used onstage, etc.
 - placing props onstage in the appropriate positions at appropriate times
 - when necessary, having a prop ready to hand to or retrieve from an actor backstage
 - checking wear and tear of props; fixing or replacing as necessary
- **Stage crew/scene change crew** -- responsible for shifting scenery and performing any technical jobs backstage as assigned. Responsibilities could include:
 - Shifting panels, flats, large set pieces
 - Adjusting drapes
 - Opening and closing the main curtain
 - Placing and removing (striking) furniture and props during scene changes
 - Operating special effects equipment, e.g., fog machines, dry ice boxes
 - Assisting actors backstage
- **Dressers** are responsible for costumes during each performance. Usually not needed until Tech Week but sometimes will be required if there are technical problems that need to be worked out in advance.
 - To provide practice time for cast with quick costume changes
 - To make alterations to a costume if the quick change cannot occur in the required time

EXPECTATIONS:

- clothing requirements – wear dark clothing (preferably black) even if not going onstage during scene changes (unless required to be in costume) and shoes that are quiet
- bring own flashlight (needs to be dimmed)
- arrive at scheduled call times and pre-show tasks
- be prepared to perform assigned tasks (pre-show, during the show and post-show) as efficiently as possible
- be aware of safety issues and learn how to operate fire-fighting equipment

TOOLS & TEMPLATES #17

SAMPLE PROMPT BOOK CUES

SCENE 2 WAITING IN THE WINGS 83

MAUD. Oh, yes—I remember that. *(She marches down r and sings)*

"OH, MR KAISER"

Oh, Mr Kaiser,
See your legal adviser,
You've bitten off much more than you can chew.

(She marches to the piano, sits and plays)

For when Mr Tommy Atkins comes a-marching to Berlin,
You'll be gibbering like a monkey in the Zoo.
Have a banana!

(BONITA joins in the singing)

BONITA }
MAUD } *(together)*

Oh, Mr Kaiser,
When you're older and wiser
You'll learn some things you never learnt at school.
When we've wound up the watch on your dear old Rhine,
You're going to look a Potsdam fool.

(ESTELLE crosses to the tub chair and sits)

MAY. Who is this Topsy? I've never heard of her.
PERRY. Topsy Baskerville. She was in musical comedy and revue mostly.

MAY. Poor thing. So exhausting.

(CORA lays out the backgammon board on the card table)

PERRY. She's a sweet old girl. You'll love her.
LOTTA. I'm sure we shall, Perry dear. I'm sure we shall. *(She rises)* I expect that's exactly what you said a year ago when I arrived.

BONITA. Yes, I expect we did. Fancy, a whole year ago. It doesn't seem possible, does it?

LOTTA *(crossing to May)* I remember I was in deep despair —
(MAY holds Lotta's hand)

—lonely and hopeless and feeling as though I were going to prison. *(She crosses to the fireplace)* And now, after a year in prison, I feel suddenly free. *(Isn't that curious?)*

(The front door slams. The remaining lines are spoken almost simultaneously through the song)

MISS ARCHIE *(off)* Come along, this way, Miss Baskerville.

(CORA moves to the foot of the stairs.)
MISS ARCHIE enters from the hall and stands r. MAUD starts to play softly and sing "Oh, Mr Kaiser"

84 WAITING IN THE WINGS Act III

TOPSY BASKERVILLE enters from the hall, looks around timidly, then recognizes her song)

TOPSY *(after a pause)* Why, that's my song. *(She moves slowly rc)*
BONITA. Hullo, Topsy—it's me—Bonita.

TOPSY turns, recognizes Bonita, runs to her and embraces MAUD and BONITA continue to sing "Oh, Mr Kaiser"; Estelle and then Perry. PERRY introduces Topsy to May and the CURTAIN falls

SQ Y - Hotel
Oh Mr K
Estelle, Cora + Almira
dance.
Standby SQ 2
+ Standby to swellup
~~at end~~ + fade φ
+ Standby SQ AA
+ Post show Music
may x US to sd of card table

SQ 2 GO Oh Mr K
As Topsy + Bonita
x tog for hug
Swellup GO

Standby LX 46
As all x US tow To
46 GO - Rφ STOPWATCH OFF

SQ 2 Fade φ GO
SQ AA GO - Waiting in the wings
LX 47 GO - Bow lites
Standby LX 48 + House Up
When Actors off **48 GO / House Up 60**

SQ AA will play φ
then Post show Music

TOOLS & TEMPLATES #18



USE OF THEATRE DURING PERFORMANCES

Stage Management Guidelines

PRIOR TO SHOW – OPENING UP:

- If first in building, disable alarm
- Key in SM backdoor code and attach code enabled sign
- Cast and crew will use their own backdoor code

Heat:

- Downstairs: set and leave at 15 degrees if desired
- Upstairs:
 - House is preset for audience
 - Bar and lounge have separate controls
 - Booth has separate controls

AFTER THE SHOW – CLOSING UP

The Booth

- Ensure all windows are shut
- Ensure that house lights and fluorescents are turned off
- Turn heat off
- Switch off booth lites and power switches (4 switches near booth door)
- Lock door

Locking the Theatre

If someone else will be locking up:

Check that all stage work lites are off including running lites

Check downstairs – make sure that all lights are off and the heat is turned down

Leave through downstairs entry door

Remove sign and enter SM lock-out code (_____)

If SM is locking up:

Check windows and doors in the theatre to make sure they are shut properly

Turn all stage work lites off

Check downstairs – all lites off, heat down, kettles unplugged

Remove sign from the stage door

Turn off all lights in the main floor of the theatre: workshop, lounge and washrooms

Turn off lights in lobby

Set alarm in lobby; leave through front lobby door and lockup

Enter SM lock-out code at stage door (_____)

TOOLS & TEMPLATES #19



INSERT YOUR PRODUCTION NAME

**Production Information Sheet
For Front of House and Bar Management**

NAME OF PLAY was written by *PLAYWRIGHT NAME* and is set in *TIME PERIOD* (e.g., *early 1990's*). The curtain is *open* when we let the audience in but there is a scrim across the front of the stage.

At 7:45, the sound of ship engines will begin to be heard. At 7:55, there will be an announcement to alert the audience that the captain will be speaking to them in 5 minutes. Please encourage patrons to be in their seats at 8 p.m.

At 8 p.m. the audience should be seated. The pre-show speech is *on tape* (or is delivered by an actor onstage or is delivered by the House Manager). The opening sound and music cues will follow immediately so it is important that latecomers **NOT** be seated until after the first scene begins. **Please wait until the opening music and sound effects are finished (lasts about 4 minutes) before seating latecomers.**

ACT ONE is approximately *LENGTH OF ACT ONE*.

- There are *NUMBER* scenes in Act One with brief transitions between scenes.
- The final words of Act One are:
"Astor ... Astor ..." **SCREAMING "ICE!"**

Following this we will take the stage to a blackout to allow the actors to get offstage. After they are offstage we will bring the House Lights up. Please do not open the doors until the house lights are brought up.

Intermission is 15 to 20 minutes depending upon the size of the audience. *The stage will remain open during the Intermission.*

ACT TWO is approximately *LENGTH OF ACT TWO*.

- There are *NUMBER* scenes in Act Two.
 - At the end of the show there will be applause and the actors will take their bows. Please do not open the doors until the house lights are brought up.

TOOLS & TEMPLATES #20



SM PRE SHOW CHECKLIST

Check in with Box Office:

- ask about size of house
- find out who is the House Manager and who is Bar Manager

Go Downstairs:

- punch in SM code (_____); put sign on door
- turn lites & heat on; check monitor volume

Check the Stage:

- turn on work lites and check wings

Open the Booth:

- turn the power on – all 4 switches
- make sure windows are closed

Check with Lighting Board Op:

- LX Lamp check; Projector check to be done before house in

Check with Sound Board Op:

- Sound check to be done before house in

Check with ASM:

- Set and props preset ready?

Introduce yourself to the Bar & House Managers

- **House Manager:**
 - discuss who will give signal to let house in
 - review Info Sheet – stress opening and seating of latecomers
 - discuss Preshow Speech
 - live or taped and who delivers it
 - if being delivered by House Manager, provide info re spot
 - discuss intermission and getting audience seated again
- **Bar Manager:** when will they close up?

- 7:15 Give Cast & Crew the 15 minutes warning til house in
Check-in list – is everyone here?
- 7:25 Let cast/crew know house will be open in 5 minutes
Check that all stage worklites are off
Make sure that the Booth lite and house fluorescents are off
- 7:30 Let Cast & Crew know that the audience is being let in
- 7:45 Give Cast and Crew the 15 minutes warning until curtain
- 7:55 Give Cast and Crew the 5 minutes warning until curtain
- 7:57 Give Cast their standby for start of show
Check with ASM that actors who start the show are in place
- 8:00 Check that the lites above the lobby doors are off before taking the house
to 1/2

TOOLS & TEMPLATES #21



SM INTERMISSION CHECKLIST

Thank those on headset (Board Ops and ASM)
Confirm the time and when you expect to be back on headset
Announce that you are signing off

MAKE APPROPRIATE NOTES:
(running time of first act, etc.)

GREENROOM :
Check with Cast & Crew
 Give them their 10 Minute Call
Check with ASM & Props:
 Props & Stage set?

Check with House Manager

RETURN TO BOOTH:
Give Cast & Crew their 15 minute call (via paging system)
Ring bells from Booth to warn audience to return to seats
Check that Board Ops are in place

A FEW MINUTES LATER (when house is starting to move back in):
Give PLACES for Beginners
Confirm with ASM when actors in place

WHEN HOUSE IS IN AND HOUSE DOORS SHUT

STANDBY HOUSE TO ½ and all other opening cues

STOPWATCH ON

TOOLS & TEMPLATES #22



SM POST SHOW CHECKLIST

LITE BOARD OP:

Check that all technical duties have been completed:

- This might include hazers, fans, projectors

ASM:

Check that all technical duties have been completed:

- This might include fog machines, scrim settings, drapes, curtains, reset for the next night, etc.

CLOSE UP BOOTH

Leave booth power on until projector has been properly shut down as it needs time to cool down

Windows shut

House lites off

Heat off

Booth lites and power switches off

Lock door

Check with Bar Manager, etc. re locking up theatre

If someone else will be locking up:

Check stage work lites are off including running lites

Check downstairs – all lites off, heat down, kettles unplugged

Leave through downstairs entry door

Remove sign

Punch in SM lock-out code (_____)

If SM is locking up:

Check windows and doors

Check stage work lites are off including running lites

Check downstairs – all lites off, heat down, kettles unplugged

Remove sign

Set alarm in lobby

Leave through front lobby door and lockup

Punch in SM lock-out code at downstairs entry door (_____)

TOOLS & TEMPLATES #23



INSERT YOUR PRODUCTION NAME
PERFORMANCE REPORT

Date: _____ Stage Manager: _____

| | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>ACT ONE</p> <p>Up: _____</p> <p>Down: _____</p> <p>Running Time: _____</p> | <p>INTERMISSION</p> <p>Up: _____</p> <p>Down: _____</p> <p>Time: _____</p> |
| <p>ACT TWO</p> <p>Up: _____</p> <p>Down: _____</p> <p>Running Time: _____</p> | <p>Total Running Time: _____</p> <p>Total Elapsed Time: _____</p> <p>Comments:</p> |
| <p>FOH / BAR</p> | <p>THEATRE/BUILDING:</p> |
| <p>PERFORMANCE NOTES</p> | <p>TECHNICAL NOTES</p> |