



Glenbrook Players Inc. Standard Operating Procedure

Stage Manager

Rationale

That the duties and responsibilities of this most critical position are comprehensively defined so that the Stage Manager (SM) is fully aware of this position and its authority

Outline

The SM's position includes administrative, technical and artistic control over the whole production.

Description

The SM typically provides practical and organizational support to the director, actors, designers, stage crew and technicians throughout the production process. They are also the director's representative during performances, making sure that the production runs smoothly. Their responsibilities can be broken down into three primary categories:

- Handling administrative duties related to production.
- Assisting the director during rehearsals
- Being responsible for all backstage activity once Tech Rehearsals start and then throughout the performance period.

Ideally the SM is chosen before the first rehearsal. He/she should be present at EACH rehearsal ensuring they run as smoothly as possible, filling in where needed and endeavoring to ensure that the cast bring any problems they have to the attention of the Director.

Administrative Duties

- Assist Director, if necessary, in arranging copies of script for all cast and crew before rehearsals and produce a list of cast and crew contact details
- Ensure a **PROMPT COPY** of the script is ready before the first rehearsal. This will consist of the script interleaved with clean pages on which all the technical details of the play are detailed. It details all actors' movements (the blocking) and is used as a reference if there are any concerns or disputes. For this reason, it must be up-to-date, detailed and accurate. It lists a complete schedule of items to be set at the beginning of each scene, items to be struck, actors' entrances, sound effects, lighting changes, curtain calls etc. In effect the prompt copy will contain all the information necessary for a group of strangers to be able to reproduce the show exactly. At the front of the prompt copy will be the contact list of cast and crew.

During Rehearsals

- The SM is part of the Emergency Control Team Backstage. He/she is the Chief Warden in the case of an emergency (see Emergency Plan SOPs). **Before rehearsals start on each show** the SM must check the location of emergency exits and fire-fighting equipment and that it has been inspected within the last 12 months.
- The SM is also the Area Warden for the area behind the proscenium arch and in an emergency must control and if necessary, evacuate all personnel on stage, backstage and in the dressing rooms and backstage toilets
- The SM is responsible for ensuring all technical equipment is handled with care and that each technician is aware of the STRICT regulation that any lighting, sound and/or computer equipment **MUST ALWAYS BE KEPT CLEAR of LIQUIDS**. This applies to ALL rehearsals and shows.
- If there is no assistant Director, the SM should sit beside the Director to act in that role at rehearsals.
- The SM, at the Director's request, will coordinate a line run or run a rehearsal in the Director's absence.
- The SM will be required to read in for anyone the Director wishes and checks the technical side of rehearsals to enable the Director to concentrate on the artistic areas.
- When scripts are down, the SM may need to prompt for a few rehearsals until the actors are more confident with their lines.

Technical and Dress Rehearsal

- The tech and dress rehearsals are scheduled on the two Sundays prior to the first performance weekend. These are full day rehearsals. The SM, Director and other technical crew arrive around 8am to set up all technical equipment and set the stage.
The SM shall
 - be responsible for setting the off-stage area as they deem necessary and arranging props, sets and costumes in the appropriate place according to the PROMPT COPY of the script.
 - brief all backstage crew on their role to ensure the smooth running of the play.
 - ensure 'walky-talkies' are fully charged, are in good working order and stored carefully at the end of each rehearsal.
 - ensure there is water, an urn, tea, coffee, milk, sugar, cups. and some biscuits in the dressing room.
 - be responsible for "warm-up" of actors before each rehearsal.
 - for the **Tech rehearsal** the SM, in consultation with the Director, briefs the actors on the schedule of each scene, ensures if "top and tail" of scenes is required that actors are in place at the correct time and that Technical staff are given the time and resources required to fully implement their areas of responsibility.
 - for the **dress rehearsal** (typically two runs through) the SM is in control and will direct the first run in the morning and the second run after lunch (around 1pm). This second run is treated as a performance and may have a small audience of GP members.

- **Fire Drill** - The SM is required to manage and run the production fire drill during the Tech Rehearsal. During the drill, the SM will co-ordinate cast and crew backstage.
- **Safety** – The SM is responsible for
 - ensuring all cables are safely installed –
 - Above head height securely attached and not hanging to impede any access for personnel or equipment
 - By walls securely attached and not hanging or leaving loops
 - At floor level securely taped down
 - Ensuring all protruding items on stage are appropriately covered/padded.
 - Ensuring appropriate blue lights are installed for safe movement of actors/crew in blackouts.
 - Ensuring there are no unstable/insecure items onstage or backstage.
 - Ensuring the stage and backstage areas are kept clean and tidy.
- At the close of Dress Rehearsal ensure all cast and crew are aware they will be expected to take part in the “Bump-out” after the final performance. This may be on the evening of the final performance or on the following morning.

The Performance Period

The SM is responsible for ensuring the theatre is open and closed properly during the performance period. There is a detailed procedure outlining how to unlock and lock the theatre space for both rehearsals and performances. This procedure will be provided to the Stage Manager separately.

The SM will ensure actors, backstage and technical crew are aware of the Call Time (minimum 1 hour for actors before performance time or more, depending on make-up and costume needs). Tech and backstage crew arrive early as necessary to set up.

Pre -performances

The SM will

- liaise with FOH (Front-of-House) Manager to check that all emergency exits can be opened from the inside and are free of obstructions both inside and out.
- prepare backstage area and backstage crew according to PROMPT COPY of script.
- ensure 'walky-talkies' are fully charged, in good working order and stored carefully at the end of each show.
- Ensure the lighting desk is brought from the store and installed at the back of the auditorium. Confirm all power points work.
- Ensure there is water, an urn, tea, coffee, milk, sugar, cups. and some biscuits in the dressing room.
- Be responsible for “warm-up” of actors on the stage before stage is “live.”
- With assistance from other members of the company set the stage for the opening scene.
- Provide notice to cast for a 15-minute, 10-minute, 5-minute call and call for beginners.

During Performances

- Ensure actors are in place for entrances and queue them if required.
- Ensure stage crew are in position ready to change scenery, props and furniture between scenes and cue them if required
- Ensure all props are where they should be and remind actors to be responsible for personal props.
- Ensure the noise level backstage is kept to a minimum.

If there is an intermission provide notice to cast for a 15-minute, 10-minute, 5-minute call and call for beginners.

After the performance

- Ensure that backstage and off stage is tidy and prepared for the next performance before leaving. (in a big show extra help may be required)
- With assistance from other members of the company make sure any elements of the set that need to be struck in-between performances are safely dismantled and stored away. (in a big show extra help may be required).
- Ensure lighting crew have assistance to strike the lighting bars as necessary between performances.
- Ensure actors, technical and backstage crew are aware of the call time for the next performance.

After the final performance ensure all cast and crew are aware of the call time for “Bump out.”

After all cast and crew are vacated from the theatre ensure the theatre is locked and alarmed properly.

The procedure for locking and alarming the theatre will be provided to the SM separately.

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