

MAD Drama One Act Director Checklist for Rehearsal Space

Entering the Rehearsal Space

- ☐ Defer to any teacher, administrator or adult who is using the space.
- ☐ If other non-drama students are using the space, politely inquire as to the status of the room's availability.
- ☐ Remove any trash, start with the room clean.
- ☐ Document any existing damage to any equipment.

Rehearsal Space Usage

- ☐ Thinking and behavior that emphasizes safety at all times.
- ☐ Professional demeanor that emphasizes polite respect for each other.
- ☐ Crude or offensive language is not acceptable in this environment.
- ☐ No food, candy or gum is permitted – not even as props.
- ☐ No drinks are permitted.
- ☐ Water in a clear container is permitted; water or any other liquid in an opaque container is not permitted.
- ☐ Avoid having non-cast or non-crew members attend your rehearsals. If they do, you are responsible for their behavior including food, drink, demeanor, equipment damage and so on.
- ☐ Do not stand on chairs unless **pre-approved** to do so for a required scene.
- ☐ Do not throw chairs or move them violently, ever.
- ☐ Do not use the concept of "scene work" as an excuse to hit, kick, throw or otherwise abuse any object or equipment that is original to the rehearsal space.
- ☐ Do not use or play with any equipment such as pianos, electronics, musical instruments, thermostats, televisions, etc.

Exiting the Rehearsal Space

- ☐ All chairs returned to correct locations based on room requirements.
- ☐ All tables returned to correct locations based on room requirements.
- ☐ All music stands returned to correct locations based on room requirements.
- ☐ All equipment that may have been moved returned to its original position.
- ☐ Remove any and all costumes, props or personal items.
- ☐ No paper or trash left in the room – even if it was present upon entering; the space should be returned to a completely set up and completely clean condition without any exception whatsoever.
- ☐ Lights turned off.
- ☐ Doors closed and locked.
- ☐ Sign out on Mr. Henderson's office door.
- ☐ Report any new, accidental damage to any portion of the room or its contents to Mr. Henderson.

Participation restrictions

Failure to adhere to this checklist will produce the following actions in the following order.

0. First and only warning.
1. Loss of all thespian points for cast/crew/director.
2. Loss of usage of any Madison rehearsal space.
3. Loss of performance venue (your play is cancelled, sad face).

Directing Notes from Mr. Henderson

Suggested Milestones:

- ☐ **BEGINNING:** Calendarize EVERYTHING FROM DAY 0 and share with EVERYONE associated with your production. Get all contact information for your cast/crew. Establish a Facebook group, include Mr. Henderson in the group.
- ☐ **BEGINNING:** Cast/crew script read through/analysis/discussion
- ☐ **BLOCKING:** First blocking rehearsal (temporary set)
- ☐ **BLOCKING:** Second blocking rehearsal (temporary set/props/rehearsal costumes)
- ☐ **BLOCKING:** Monitored blocking rehearsal
- ☐ **BLOCKING:** Revise the blocking, eliminate all awkward, illogical, or unmotivated movement
- ☐ **CHARACTERIZATION::** Direct your actors; discuss with them given circumstances, analysis, objective/tactics; begin a series of rehearsals where you are moving the scenes in the direction you know they need to be; do not "perform" for the actors or "perform" their roles
- ☐ **MEMORIZATION:** drop book (as you begin to take notes, keep stop/start "active" directing to a minimum)
- ☐ **MEMORIZATION:** no line calls (notes from you at the end), (final props/costumes)
- ☐ **MEMORIZATION:** directed characterization rehearsals (notes only)
- ☐ **CHARACTERIZATION:** bringing it all together (notes from you at the end)
- ☐ **FINAL PROPS / FINAL COSTUMES / FINAL SOUND & LIGHT CUES**
- ☐ **FIRST TECHNICAL REHEARSAL** (notes, focused on tech -- all tech completed)
- ☐ **SECOND TECHNICAL REHEARSAL** (tech notes)
- ☐ **PACING REHEARSAL** (notes)
- ☐ **FINAL DRESS** (notes)
- ☐ (Performance)

General Process

TIME

Use time well. Theatre is a **TIME** art. The clock, therefore, is one of your most important tools. It is also your greatest enemy. Nothing damages your potential more than skipping rehearsals or not engaging **fully** when you are rehearsing. When you start rehearsals, don't wander off into conversations for the first 15 minutes. **START AND GO THE FULL TIME ALLOTTED** -- socialize **AFTER** you are done.

Too much time spent on things like improvisation rehearsals will kill you -- use only if you have an **EXCESS** of TIME -- likely?

Have your actors commit to concentrating on performance-level rehearsals **every time**. Don't let them sleep walk through a rehearsal. **NEVER** "just lazily walk through the scene." You are destroying your own valuable time.

CHARACTERIZATION

Work on **CHARACTERIZATION** on every rehearsal, even if it's just a blocking rehearsal. Have your actors use the time to develop characters and ideas. Tell them to come up with something new every time you rehearse. **NEVER** wait for costumes or props or lights or sound to appear

before you FULLY COMMIT. This game of "Waiting for Godot" is a device poor actors use to deceive themselves.

If you wish, provide tools to your actors such as "Character Analysis" sheets. Make them use them. They will understand and appreciate this as part of the process of making them successful.

START AND REHEARSE LIKE A PROFESSIONAL

Begin your rehearsals immediately with 3 to 5 minutes of vocal and physical warm-ups. Warm ups will prepare you physically, vocally but more importantly, psychologically. Don't use your normal rehearsal time as a "warm up." Each rehearsal counts enormously and warm ups signal the transition from everyday life to REHEARSAL. Ask your actors to lead warm ups for a change of pace.

Work on not stopping your actors while they are running as scene as soon as possible. Save notes for the end. Make sure that they WRITE DOWN all of your notes and blocking. NEVER let them just try to remember what you have seen that you want to correct.

When you "drop book," reassure your actors they can call for lines ("LINE, PLEASE"). Allow them some paraphrasing "wiggle room" at the beginning but tighten up quickly. Tell them which lines they are muddling during notes. Ask them to look at the lines in question and fix them.

Don't spend a lot of time discussing things before or after rehearsal. REHEARSE -- DON'T TALK ABOUT IT, DO IT. Keep discussions and notes brief and to the point. If you spend more than a quarter of your time talking about rehearsing, you are talking too much *about* rehearsing and not rehearsing enough.

PLAN AHEAD FOR THE NEXT REHEARSAL AND BE CLEAR

Conclude by summarizing your progress (briefly). Be specific about what comes next and when. FIRMLY establish the NEXT rehearsal, TIME, PLACE, DURATION, PERSONNEL. **Clean up the space you have used, shut off lights and SIGN OUT.**

Break a Leg

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