

IU Theatre, Drama and Contemporary Dance

Production – General Principals of Operation

The following information is for all those involved in productions in the Department of Theatre, Drama and Contemporary Dance. The descriptions and details below outline the established precedents and best practices from Design and Technology. It also establishes some expectations of the work done.

Paper Tech

Scheduled meeting between the Director, Designers and Stage Management to define and detail the technical events required for the production. Stage Management uses this meeting to detail their calling script and determine the proper placement of the cues they will be calling throughout the production.

- Meeting should be scheduled with Stage Management in the Week leading up to Tech and Dress rehearsals.
 - It is helpful if stage management is given cue sheets prior to this meeting in order to review them and see what questions or potential issues they may have based on their knowledge of the production through rehearsals.
- It is ideal that Designers and Directors have a fairly good grasp on where they need events/cues to be placed. It is understood that changes and additions will happen throughout the Tech and Dress Process, but the more information the Stage Manager has ahead of time, the greater chance of success they will have.

This is one of the more vital teaching tools for young stage managers and an important meeting for graduate designers to have. To discuss as much of the technical events of the production before leading the team through Tech and Dress will help them attain greater success.

The specific needs of the production may change the personnel who should attend this meeting – for example, if a production has a lot of fly cues, it might also be valuable for the Fly Chief or ASM responsible for the flies present at the meeting. In some circumstances, the Director may not need to be present, nor request to be present for this meeting.

Managing Technical Rehearsals

It is generally understood the Stage Manager is the driving force for all technical rehearsals until such time as all technical elements of the show have been worked to their and the production team's satisfaction.

The Stage Manager should be the primary voice of the technical rehearsals. Under the advisement and mentorship of the Production Manager, they should lead tech. Our Stage Managers are learning to be the leaders of productions and our designers are learning to communicate the needs of their designs in the production to them.

- The stage manager calls the 'holds' and makes the calls on what needs to be worked and reworked, under the advisement of the Production Team's specific needs and anything the Director may wish to see.
- The design team and Director should allow the Stage Manager to be the voice of tech, relaying necessary information through them.

Professional Standard: Stage Managers are generally seen as the leaders of Tech. Directors will often defer to them throughout the technical process and allow the Stage Manager to make the majority of decisions, under advisement of the Design team, on what work should be done so that they can rehearse all the technical elements of the show.

Friday Evening Tech Rehearsal

For ALL productions (except Slot 4 and Slot 7 which have Techs that start following School Breaks), there is a Friday evening technical rehearsal preceding the 10of12 rehearsal. This rehearsal can be used in any of the following ways. It is important to remember this rehearsal should be used to accomplish technical elements in whatever way the production team determines, and led by the Stage Manager, is the best use of the rehearsal time. *A run of the show should not be expected on this evening's rehearsal.*

- Primarily, it can be the jump start to 10of12. Crew Training will take place prior to the beginning of rehearsal and then a production can choose to start at the top of the show and begin working through the technical elements of the production. The production team will work as far as they can through the production and stop at the end of the evening. 10of12 will pick up the next morning where rehearsal left off.
- If the production team, in conversation with the Director and Stage Management, determine there are complicated transitions or cue sequences that should be rehearsed and fine-tuned prior to 10of12, this rehearsal can be used to accomplish this task. Again, crew will be trained prior to the start of rehearsal and then the production will work through the selected sections of the show until the end of rehearsal.
- Dry Tech – A technical rehearsal without Actor's present. The production team can choose to work through the technical elements of the production without the presence of the Actors. Mainly this

option would be used if the evening is used as a Shift Change Rehearsal where actors are not a part of the change.

- This rehearsal is most often used in our Musical productions where there are a lot of scenic shifts that require training and timing. It is a valuable practice for the Scenic Production crew to have this time to learn their role and work their timing in order to have a smooth transition from scene to scene.

Caveat: *In some cases, Slot 1, because of the shortened rehearsal time, may not be required to have a Friday Evening tech rehearsal. However, this should only be removed if the technical needs of the production can be accomplished over the hours of the 10of12. It should be a decision of the production team under the request of the Director.*

10of12 Rehearsal

A 10of12 Rehearsal is used for the integration of all the technical elements of the production. All actors, crew and, in most cases, production team personnel are present for this.

Statement of Purpose: It is important the designers and stage manager feel completely free to stop the rehearsal and go back, to run transitions multiple times, to stop and resolve issues which may arise, to engage in discussions with their peers and with the director about aesthetic choices. THE PROVISIO BEING the overall pace of the tech needs to have been run through the end of the show by the end of this rehearsal, with all technical elements tried for timing and coordination.

It is also understood this is done in order to refine all technical elements to the greatest degree possible in line with maintaining a high overall standard of production the audience expects.

A typical schedule for a 10of12 would be the following:

- 10am – all called for rehearsal
- 10am – Crew training (if not completed during the Friday evening Rehearsal) and stage prep is done
- 10:30 or 11am – Start rehearsal – time will depend on the amount of time to prep for the day.
- 3pm – 5pm Meal break
- 5pm – Return to rehearsal
- 10pm – end of day and Production meeting.

Because of the time involved in putting the technical elements together and giving crews, designers and stage management the opportunity to rehearse and work through the elements of the show, there should

not be the expectation of a run of the show at any point during the day. However, should all the work be accomplished, a run is possible if all parties agree that is the next step.

It is important to note this is the only time crews have to work through a show and it is vital for them to have the time they need to work out the timing of scene changes, prop moves, presets, etc. For Stage Management as well, it's vital they have this time to work through their calling order and the specific timing of all the called cues.

Dress Rehearsals

Once all Technical elements of the show are rehearsed, the final layer of Costumes is added in. Typically there are 3 dress rehearsals prior to a Preview Performance and Opening Night of the production. Depending on the complexity of any quick changes in the production, it may become necessary to stop and rework them.

Though a nonstop run of the production is likely the ideal, it may not be possible at least on the first night of dress as the wardrobe crew is working through their changes for the first time.

Dress rehearsals are an important time for student run crews, required for their major, to learn wardrobe skills. A hold can be requested by a wardrobe supervisor, designer or, of course, by director, actor or stage manager during a dress rehearsal to rework quick changes or complicated changes. A hold may also be called in the event there is potential danger or damage to a person(s) or costumes/wigs.