

# Theatre Virtual Learning

## Theatre Design & Production & Advanced Theatre Design & Production Stage Management

**April 27**



## Lesson: Stage Management

**Objective/Learning Target: The student will learn the characteristics of a good Stage Manager.**

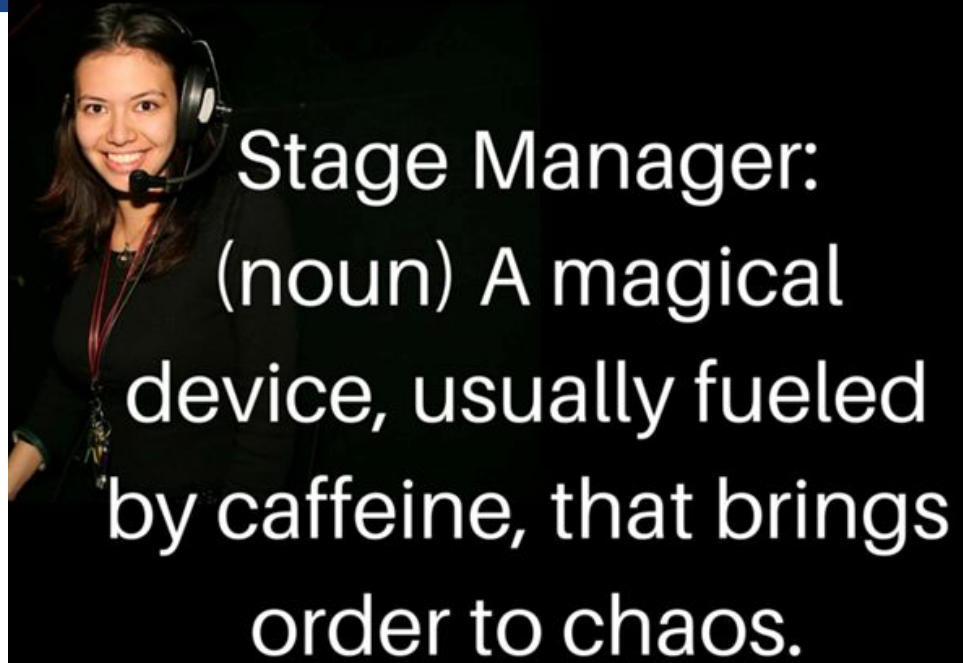
# Stage Management

**Warm Up:**

**What do you think a stage manager should be like?**

**What characteristics should they have?**

**Make a list of your ideas.**



# Stage Management

**T-Chart**

Name: ..... Date: .....



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**Lesson Steps:**  
The following slides will share characteristics of a good stage manager. As you are reading through the slides, keep a t-chart of the qualities and rate yourself on if you currently have those qualities



# Characteristics of a Good Stage Manager

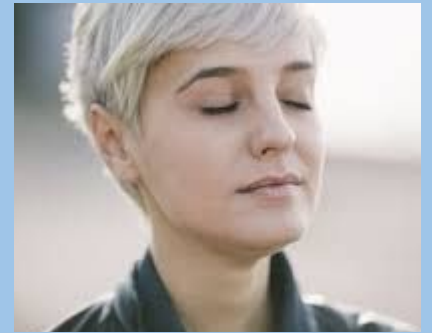
## Assumes responsibility



- Make the production run smoothly on stage and backstage during both rehearsals and in performance.
- Must stay on task and keep everything going no matter what chaos may occur.
- You are the caregiver of the production. Keep the morale up so all can do their best. Cultivate an enjoyable work atmosphere.
- Make sure the time schedule is followed, so actors get appropriate breaks.

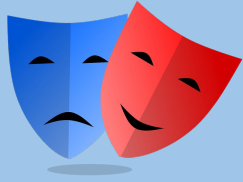


# Characteristics of a Good Stage Manager



## Keeps their cool

- You work with excitable, self-centered, temperamental, volatile, sensitive, nervous, explosive people. Stage managers cannot get emotionally involved in their arguments, controversies or displays of temper.
- Even if one cast member is consistently a problem, the stage manager should not lose their cool or raise their voice. You must replay in calm, steady, controlled tones.
- Do not get swept up in panic, even if you make an error. Errors tend to compound. Focus on getting the rest done correctly.

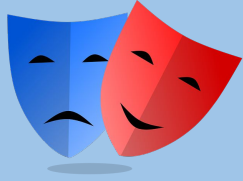


# Characteristics of a Good Stage Manager



## Multi-tasker

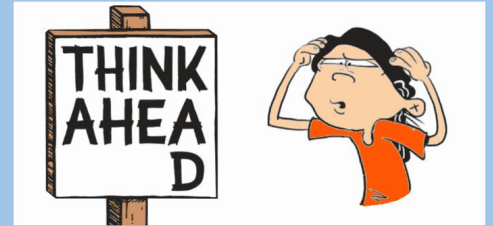
- You must oversee every aspect of the production from the beginning, including planning productions, managing the cast and crew, running rehearsals, supporting actors, coordinating all cues, and calling the show.
- It is imperative to be able to multi-task when coordinating all elements of production.



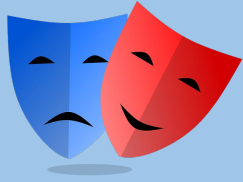
# Characteristics of a Good Stage Manager

## Thinks ahead

- Anticipate anything that may come their way
- Consider everything that is supposed to happen later that day...later that week...later that month...Does everyone know about it?
- Is everything ready?
- Make to do lists, duty rosters, the prompt script and checklists.





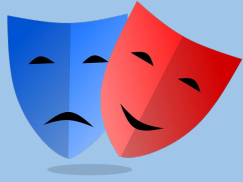


# Characteristics of a Good Stage Manager

## Problem solver



- Even the best anticipation of issues cannot cover all problems that will arise. A stage manager must be able to problem solve quickly.
- You must be able to see what is missing in a scene and make it perfect.
- You must pay attention to details whether it be a color tone in the lights or a missing prop, or a scarf missing from a character.
- If something is off, you must be able to think on your feet and not crack under pressure.



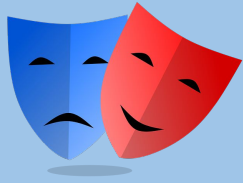
# Characteristics of a Good Stage Manager



Keeps their mouths shut and their eyes and ears open.

*LOOSE LIPS  
SINK  
SHIPS!*

- If there is a choice between shouting across stage for a subordinate to change a prop and crossing yourself to give quiet instructions, do the latter. Everyone will appreciate this.
- Do not waste time promoting yourself. Efficient work is hard to hide. They will see you DO it.
- Stay out of the gossip. You can be friends but maintain the professional distance. Never badmouth the director, cast, or crew member.



# Characteristics of a Good Stage Manager

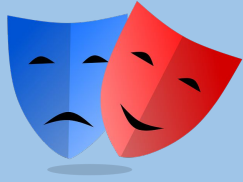
## Considerate

- Put the comfort of cast members before yours. Is there drinking water available for the cast backstage with plenty of disposable cups?
- Would it be helpful to bring in a few snacks?
- Give hand-written notes to the cast of appreciation or congratulations. Include everyone in gratitude giving, including volunteers, not just cast and crew.
- Are you considerate with respect to the creativity of others?
- Can you offer constructive criticism effectively without stamping out creative instinct?

### CARING

You are **CARING** when you:

- are **considerate, kind & respectful** in all your actions.
- show **concern** for the **well-being of others**.
- are **sensitive** to **people's feelings**.
- think** about **how your actions will affect others**.
- are **not deliberately mean or hurtful**.
- lend a **helping hand** to those around you.
- say nice things** and **share compliments** with others.
- forgive** others.

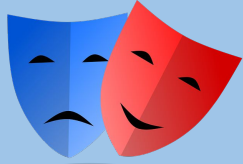


# Characteristics of a Good Stage Manager



## Sense of humor

- Making a show should be a happy experience for everyone. However, delays, deadlines, \$ issues, personality conflicts, and other factors make the process tough.
- Do not contribute to the issues. Personal problems are left at home.
- Come to the theatre with a resolve to stay happy. Sometimes a cheerful word can get the whole company over a rough spot.
- Good stage managers DO NOT have personality conflicts with anyone. Holding grudges or showing hostility toward anyone cannot be a part of your behavior. It NEVER helps a production.



## Patient

# Characteristics of a Good Stage Manager



- So many people are involved in putting together a production. You must be able to work with a variety of people.
- You not only oversee the technical staff, such as lighting and sound engineers, but you work very closely with directors, actors and stage hands.
- People will look to you to see how to behave and what is acceptable, so avoid profanity, even with closer friends in the company.
- During times of stress and difficulty, even a simple smile or encouraging word can make a big difference.

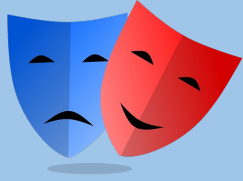


# Characteristics of a Good Stage Manager



## Organized, efficient, & classy

- You must coordinate all elements of a production from the beginning so you avoid any last minute panics and errors.
- There is no other way to do the job effectively.
- Not only act professionally, but also dress it. You do not need a suit, but dress appropriately and look well-groomed.

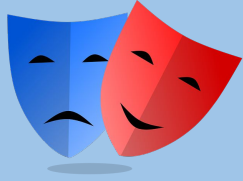


# Characteristics of a Good Stage Manager



## Passion for the Art

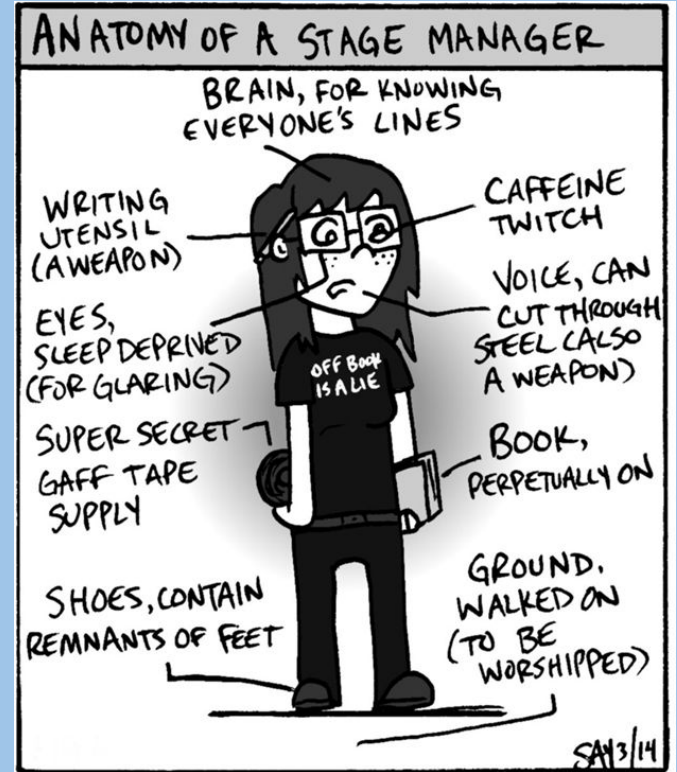
- You do theatre because you love it, but even if you do not love the show, have passion for the art of stage management.
- Be enthusiastic and love the job even if things are not going so well with the show.
- Your passion can be contagious for the rest of the company.



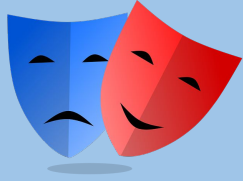
# Characteristics of a Good Stage Manager

## Consistency

- Consistency in methods of calling cues is imperative. Technicians need to know what to expect and how to respond.
- Consistency in expectations puts everyone at ease.





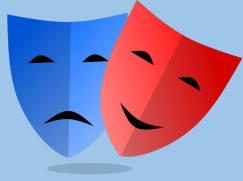


# Characteristics of a Good Stage Manager

## Integrity

- Do the right thing and do what you are say you are going to do.
- Make sure you make notes for yourself of everything you tell people you will take care of. Make sure it gets done.
- Always make decisions based on what is best for the production. Keep your emotions out of it.





# Characteristics of a Good Stage Manager

## Punctual and dependable

- Show your professionalism.
- If you cannot be depended upon, you cannot be a stage manager.
- You are the first to arrive and the last to leave.
- You must show that you will always be there to make the production the best it can be.

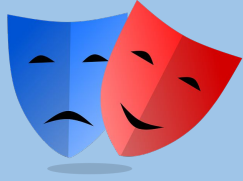
**Word of the Month**

de·pend·a·ble

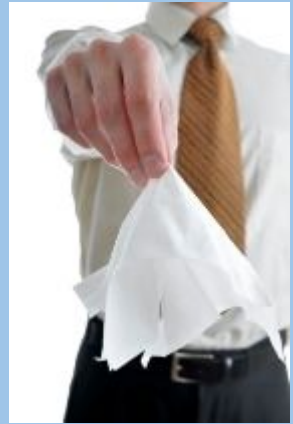
*adj.* 1. Worthy of trust; reliable

2. steadfast; responsible; faithful

3. capable of being counted on



# Characteristics of a Good Stage Manager



## Advice for the day:

- If the leading lady stalks out screaming and crying, hand her a Kleenex to show her you care, but don't tell her or the director who was right or wrong in their dispute. It is none of your business. They will resolve their problems without your help.



## Practice: Applying a Concept

Read the following scenario and decide what you think the stage manager should do:



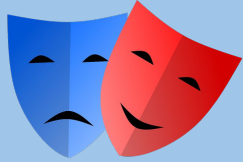


## The situation

During a performance, a telephone bell did not sound. The actors started to ad lib thinking that the cue was just late. The stage manager in the booth realized it was not late, but it was a mechanical issue. There was no way for the stage manager to get the bell to ring. There was also no way to tell the cast on stage that the bell would not ring. The cast ad libbed until one actor picked up the phone, saying, “I thought I heard it ring.”

What should the stage manager have done?





Answer: Nothing at that time. Keep going with the show.

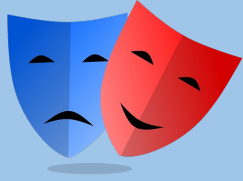
Unfortunately, the stage manager in this situation panicked, left the booth and ran backstage to fix the bell, even though it was not going to be used for the rest of the night.

Because of leaving the booth, the next two sound cues were left out, so the error was compounded.

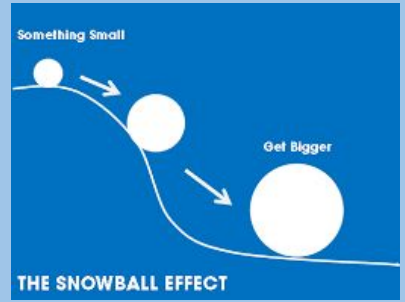
It is uncomfortable to watch a cast ad lib around a mechanical failure, but that is what happens when things are not prepared.

What should have happened BEFORE the issue arose:

1. The stage manager should have tested the bell or made certain it was tested in the precurtain routine.
2. He should make sure the bell wire was not going to get unplugged backstage with cast and crew moving around.
3. A backup emergency bell could have been prepared



# The problem compounds



During a following performance, the bell failed again. However, another bell was heard. A cast member brought in an emergency bell to ring off stage in case the original one failed again. (Apparently, the cast member realized a back up bell was necessary)

If a cast member has to make sure things are working backstage, the stage manager is not doing his job.

It is the stage manager's job to make sure everything runs smoothly and is under control. This gives the cast the confidence they need. It affects the overall quality of the production.