

**STEPHENS COLLEGE  
THA 227 STAGE MANAGEMENT I**

**Lecture #7: Auditions- budgeting- and keeping order**

HANDOUTS: *Sample Audition Form / Sample Audition Fact Sheet / Character Descriptions / Audition Selections*

- I. Auditions:
  - A. The SM's role during auditions, as is often the case, is to serve as a facilitator – to keep things flowing smoothly.
  - B. Notifications:
    1. before the auditions, you will have notified:
      - a. Equity
      - b. the trade papers (paid ads)
  - C. Before the auditions, the audition space should be checked for:
    1. privacy: you will need a separate room in which the actors can wait before the audition.
    2. cleanliness.
    3. restroom facilities
    4. furniture: you'll need a table for your own use, as well as one or more for the director, choreographer, and music director. You will also need chairs for the above as well as for yourself and the actors and as props to use during the auditions.
    5. piano, if necessary. is it in tune?
    6. adequate lighting
    7. comfort - temperature control

8. access to telephone.
- E. Supplies to bring (for all of the above staff plus yourself):
1. legal pads and clipboards
  2. pencils (don't forget the sharpener!)
  3. water/soft drinks/coffee (nice if you can make this available to actors, too)
  4. polaroid camera - professional actors will always have a head shot. if you're doing an amateur show, you (or the director) might want polaroids of actors.
  5. stapler
  6. photocopier. If the audition hall has none and you can't rent one, find out where the nearest OPEN copy shop is.
  7. forms and printouts:
    - a. if the audition is "from the book", you'll need photocopies of the script – or, at least, those scenes which the director wants to hear. These scenes might be in either of two formats:
      - i. a photocopy or printout of the entire scene, or
      - ii. "sides" - these are partial scripts, which give only one character's lines, each line being preceded by the cue. Even when the readings (and rehearsals) will be done from sides, it is helpful to have copies of the full script, if possible, so that actors may get a sense of the play.
    - b. blank information forms containing all the information wanted by the director. You will staple the photo to this form (paper clips fall off) SEE HANDOUT
    - c. Equity requires that the performance schedule be posted at auditions and that actors be specifically notified of any performance that starts before noon.

- d. a list of audition scenes and character breakdowns - SEE HANDOUT.
    - i. These should be both posted and handed to the actors – but don't be surprised when they ask you for information that's on the piece of paper you handed them 5 minutes earlier. Remember that – even though it's the 100<sup>th</sup> time you've been asked that question that day, it's the first time that particular actor has asked it; you have nothing to gain and much to lose by snapping at him or her.
    - ii. some Equity contracts allow certain parts to be non-paid. If you are working under such a contract, your character breakdowns should indicate which parts are paid and which are not.
  - e. rehearsal schedule, if available, or a brief description of probable rehearsal times and locations.
8. a cellular phone, if the facility has no phone available for your use. If you must rely on a pay phone, make sure you have an adequate supply of quarters.
- E. During auditions, the SM serves:
- 1. the director
  - 2. the producer (if present)
  - 3. the music director and choreographer
  - 4. THE ACTORS. In many cases, this will be the first time you meet these people. Your life will be easier if those who are eventually cast know from the start that you are organized and generally on top of things.
- F. When the actors arrive:
- 1. hand out audition information forms. when the actors have completed these, accept their resumes and head shots (or take a Polaroid). Make a photocopy of the information sheets for your files (you may need to hire a last-minute cast replacement at some time in the future) and staple the original to the head shot and resume for the director's use. You may also need to make photocopies for the musical director and choreographer.

2. assign each actor an audition number. This number governs the order in which actors will audition and will help you keep things on schedule.
- G. Callbacks: after the directing team has determined which actors they wish to see again, the stage manager contacts these people to inform them of the callback schedule (as it applies to them; it's not the actors' business to know who else is called back and when) and what form the callbacks will take (usually cold readings from the script).
- H. After the play is cast, the stage manager prepares:
1. a master contact sheet with addresses and phone numbers for all production personnel. Actually, the SM should already have such a list and should only need to add the actors to it.
  2. materials for the actors and production staff:
    - i. cast list. the SM's various phone numbers should be on this list, but not those of the actors.
    - ii. a list of company rules
    - iii. a detailed rehearsal schedule
    - iv. guides to hotels, restaurants, points of interest, banks, laundry facilities, etc. for actors arriving from out of town
  3. forms for the actors to fill out and return:
    1. biographical data form - for publicity and program
    2. costume size form, if required by the costume designer - have a tailor's tape ready.
    3. health insurance form
    4. welfare and life insurance forms (if Equity)
    5. W-4 forms