

Rotherfield Players – Production Team

1. Introduction

Each production should be managed by a core production team who report into the Rotherfield Players Committee. Having a core production team should help ease the workload on any of the individuals within it allowing each of them to concentrate on their particular area.

For all productions the team should include:

- Director
- Producer
- Stage Manager

Some shows may also involve a Musical Director and / or a Choreographer. These people should also be included in the production team (and casting committee).

This document is intended to define each of these roles and provide guidelines as to what is involved in each for anyone taking on the roles for the first time.

2. Director

The Director is the artistic driver behind the production so it is imperative that they choose a producer and stage manager that they can work with. This will enable the director to concentrate on 'directing' and not have to get involved in the administration relating to the production.

The following details the director's responsibilities:

- i. Choice of Play / show – this must be a play that the director is enthusiastic about (though remember that this does not necessarily mean it is essential to know the play well prior to selecting it)
- ii. Style of production – there is no one way to direct a play, but take this into account when selecting the play / show.
- iii. Choose a Producer and Stage Manager – remember that if working with a Musical Director it is important if they are also involved in these decisions.
- iv. Produce an availability chart – this is not essential, but proves very useful for planning rehearsals and assessing possibilities to 'double up'.
- v. Draw up a rehearsal schedule – and keep to it. It is useful to get a view on peoples commitments at the casting.
- vi. Casting – This should be done by the production committee as a whole. It is always useful to have others to discuss things with and a casting committee also prevents any suggestions of favouritism (or otherwise). **DO NOT CAST BEFOREHAND IN THE PUB ETC** – people will continue to surprise.
- vii. Blocking – opinions do vary, but particularly with large cast productions it is useful to work out moves on paper prior to rehearsals beginning. (French's acting editions have moves marked in them. Use them (but with caution as they tend to have been designed for much bigger stages)
- viii. Running Rehearsals – **START ON TIME AND FINISH ON TIME**. Remember that people like to have fun but they also like to work hard. Invariably a cast will enjoy a show more if they feel that they are achieving a lot at each rehearsal.
ENCOURAGE, FACILITATE AND ENJOY – DON'T DICTATE
- ix. Backstage crew – this is the Stage Manager's responsibility.

- x. Front of House team – this is the Producer's responsibility.
- xi. Stop or let run – this is always a difficult decision. The size of the cast can be the deciding factor.
- xii. Characterisation – can be interpreted in many ways. It is important that this is worked on with the members of the cast; though the size of the cast may affect the amount of time that can be spent on individual characterisation.
- xiii. Comments to the cast – should be constructive (praise works wonders). Try to discuss when things are not working and need to be improved.
- xiv. Costumes – it is useful for the Director and Producer to work together to find a costume 'mistress' as the costumes will need to reflect the director's vision for the show.
- xv. Performances – the Director's work should finish when the dress rehearsals are complete. It is often destructive to give comments (other than general praise) once the show has moved to performance.

3. Producer

The Producer takes the responsibility for the business element of any production. Acting as a 'sounding board' for the Director has also proved to be a vital element of this role. They will also be in charge of everything that occurs in front of the stage once the show has moved into performance.

The responsibilities are:

- i. Hall Bookings – liaise with the Players' booking secretary to ensure all hall bookings have been made.
- ii. Licence – liaison with the licence holder for the performing rights to ensure that they are available and subsequent dealings with the committee to ensure payments are made for the licence.
- iii. Budget – Produce budget for production. Ensure all performing rights, staging, publicity etc costs are taken into account. This should then be approved by the committee
- iv. Cost Management – approve all spending for the production to ensure that budget is adhered to.
- v. Insurance – any special insurance that may be required for a production – eg Juniors
- vi. Fire Officer – inform East Sussex Fire Officer of the dates and times of the performances in case they want to do a fire check.
- vii. Casting – act as a member of the casting committee for the production
- viii. Costumes – it is useful for the Director and Producer to work together to find a costume 'mistress' as the costumes will need to reflect the director's vision for the show.
- ix. Publicity – Liaison with the publicity representative on the committee.
- x. Production Meetings – organise backstage / production meetings
- xi. Box Office – Ensure that tickets are printed on time and appoint a Box Office Manager who should ensure they are available in all nominated shops and to members of the Rotherfield Players at rehearsals.
- xii. Front of House – Ensure that all front of house roles will be filled for each performance. It is recommended that a Front of House Manager is found to undertake this work.
 - Bar
 - Tea and Coffee
 - Programmes
 - Announcement regarding fire exits
 - Collection of money at the end of each performance

- Chairs to be put out for every performance
 - Ensure the hall is clean at the end of every performance
- xiii. Backstage crew – this is the Stage Manager's responsibility.
- xiv. Running rehearsals – These are the responsibility of the Director. Though the Producer may be asked to deputise for any rehearsals that the Director is unable to attend.
- xv. Proofing – Tickets, Poster and Programmes

4. Stage Manager

The Stage Manager is in charge of the stage and backstage during the performance period for the show. They are responsible for finding the backstage crew and the safety of both the backstage crew and actors on the stage.

Specifically this involves:

- i. Find a backstage crew: The Stage Manager does not have to do any specific individual job. Their role is to co-ordinate everything that their team is doing.
 - Lighting
 - Set Designer / builders
 - Sound
 - Prompt
 - Continuity (only really essential for big cast plays)
 - Stage Props
 - Personal Props
 - Scene shifters
 - Curtain
- ii. Set Design – ensure that the set design is discussed with the Director and meets their needs and vision.
- iii. Set-up / Strike set – ensure that an adequate team is found for set-building on the Sunday prior to show week and 'get out' of the hall on the Sunday following show week.
- iv. Equipment / Resources – ensure that all equipment and resources are available to build the set in the most effective manner possible (including transport).
- v. Budget – work with the Producer to define all costs relating to staging the show are included in the budget. Work to ensure that spending is kept within budget.
- vi. Curtain up – liaise with Producer and Front of House Manager to ensure that all performances start on time.
- vii. Front of House team – this is the Producer's responsibility
- viii. Running rehearsals – These are the responsibility of the Director. Though the Stage Manager may be asked to deputise for any rehearsals that the Director is unable to attend.
- ix. Casting – act as a member of the casting committee for the production