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**Boston University Stage Troupe
TD Guide
Created Summer 2009
By Josh Friedensohn**

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TA Contact Info

Put this in your phone NOW!

Josh Friedensohn
Cell: 914-588-4722
BBM Pin: 31C5B5EF
Email: nyfritz@gmail.com
AIM: NYFritz

Job of the Technical Director

The Technical Director is on equal footing with the Director and Producer and reports to the Technical Advisor and the rest of the Executive Board. The job of the TD is to help the Director put his vision up on the stage to the best of the TD's ability, using the resources of Stage Troupe. The TD must give special consideration to the safety and budgetary constraints of putting up the show. The TD is the contact person for the crew's questions to the Director and the Director's questions for the crew. It is important that the TD communicate well with the Director through the production process.

You may be assigned an Assistant Technical Director or possibly even more than one. Make sure you keep your assistant(s) in the loop and work *with* them. Pass on as much knowledge as you can and don't just use your assistant(s) to do the jobs you don't want to do. Keep "Learning by Doing" in mind!

In Case of Emergency or Injury

CALL BUPD (617-353-2121) IMMEDIATELY! DO NOT CALL 911!

Relationship with the E-Board

The Stage Troupe Executive Board is a great resource. The TD works closely with the TA in particular, but should be encouraged to approach anyone on the board for help or advice. The TD must report to the weekly E-Board meetings, usually on Sundays at 6pm in IT, to update the E-Board on the progress of his show and any problems/questions.

Relationship with the Director

The Technical Director is on equal footing with the Director and Producer and reports to the Technical Advisor and the rest of the executive board. The job of the TD is to help the Director put his vision up on the stage to the best of the TD's ability, using the resources of Stage Troupe. The TD must give special consideration to the safety and budgetary constraints of putting up the show. The Technical Director is the contact person for the crew's questions, for the Director and the Director's questions for the crew. It is important that the TD communicate well with the Director through the production process.

Relationship with the Crew

Tech Meetings

Production meetings should begin early in the semester to establish what the Director would like to do, what the various Department Heads would like to do, and how that translates into what is possible. A meeting at the beginning of the semester and short meetings later for responsibility updates are important for keeping a crew on task. The TDs of all the shows should coordinate meeting places/times as to not overlap. It is important for the TD to make it clear what is expected of each member of the crew, and by what date each responsibility needs to be completed. The first meeting is a good time to think about the show's need for run crew, and who is available.

Communication

The Technical Director's main responsibility, especially once the show has moved into the theater, is to keep his crew organized and on task. The TD is encouraged to stay in touch with his crew via email or any other means necessary, making the important information easily located (try using **bold** in your emails). The first step to this is to fill in the blanks on your contact sheet (you will get this from the TA) and send it out to the crew.

Conflict Resolution

The TD is responsible for dealing with conflicts within the crew and conflicts between the crew and other members of the production, including the Director and Producer. If the TD has trouble solving a conflict, or has a conflict himself, he may turn to the TA and the rest of the Executive Board for help.

Adding Members to the Crew

Members may be added to the crew at the discretion of the TD, with the approval of the TA. Make sure you keep an up to date contact list of your crew. You will need this for the show's program and for the TA.

Keys

The TA will give keys to the TD as well as the Sound Designer and Lighting Designer. Having keys means it is your responsibility to ensure that doors get locked when you or your crew leaves. Be careful with your keys and **do not give them away**. The keys are used as follows:

- 5F1 1:** 949B Commonwealth Ave (The Space)
- BBT-01:** Freight Elevator Theater Access
- BBT-07:** Theater House (From Lobby and Green Room)
- BBT-08:** Sound and Lights Booth
- BBT-09:** Theater Exterior and Corridor
- BBT-12:** Workshop

Purchasing

Before Purchasing

The Technical Director should keep tabs on where the budget is being spent. Although it is not required, the TD may choose to work closely with the Master Carpenter, Set Designer and Set Decorator in choosing what to purchase and where to purchase from for set materials. Before purchasing anything, the TD and/or Department Heads should inspect what Stage Troupe has in stock at the Space or in the Student Theater. No major changes should be made to existing set pieces without consulting the TA first.

The TD should keep in mind that other expenses, such as screws, fireproofing, gaff tape, spike tape and paint must be included in his show's budget.

Ordering/Purchasing from Vendors

The Producer will handle most of the purchasing details, but it is important that the TD know how the process works so he can help his crew. After coming up with a list of needed materials, the next step is to find a vendor that has them. Check the SAO Vendor Book (<http://www.bu.edu/sao/studentgroup/vendorbook/index.html>) for vendors that accept Purchase Orders. This is the best way to purchase materials. P.O.s take a week to process at the Student Activities Business Office (SABO), once the Producer has put in the request. Quickie P.O.s are available, which take only one day to process, but should only be used in emergencies. Each show is only allowed two Quickies. Once you have picked up the P.O. from SABO, you can go to the vendor and use it. BU P.O.s provide tax exemption and can be used for up to 10% more than the indicated value, if necessary. Keep in mind, that 10% still comes out of your budget. Return the pink copy and an itemized receipt to the Producer.

Reimbursements and Check Requests

Reimbursements are also a possibility if a vendor does not accept Purchase Orders. All reimbursements must be cleared with the Producer and Treasurer **before** any money is spent. If they are not cleared **there will be no reimbursement**. Check Requests are another possibility, and must be processed through SABO via the Producer/Treasurer.

Rearranging the Budget

The TD works closely with the Producer regarding the budget. The TD may suggest that money be moved around in certain departments, but it is ultimately the Producer's decision. The TD may request that any requests for Purchase Orders, Reimbursements, etc go through him in addition to the Producer, but it is not required. The TD should stay aware of how the money is being spent, in case the need arises to use the budget in an emergency. These matters should be discussed at production meetings.

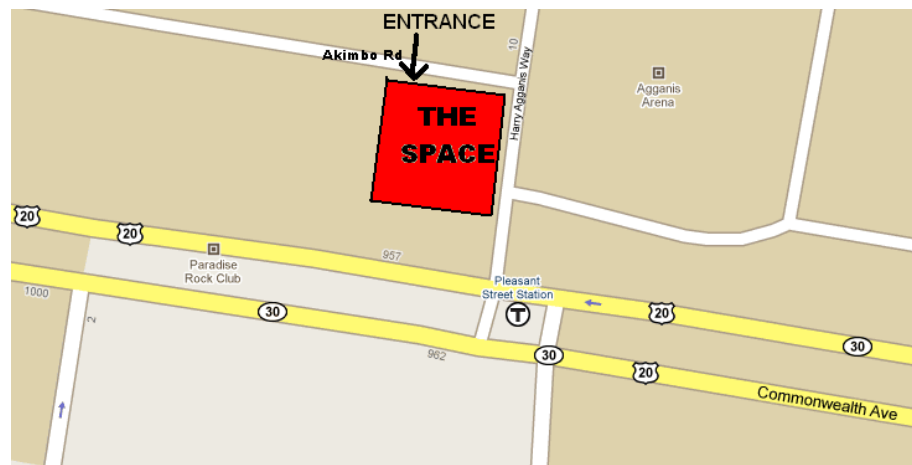
Getting to Home Depot

The address of Home Depot is 615 Arsenal Street, Watertown. There are a few ways to get there. The first is obvious: drive, cab or bike (it's actually not a bad bike ride from Allston). You can also take the bus: 47 bus from the BU Bridge, transfer to the 70/70A in Central Square, take that to the Watertown Mall.

Dealing with Home Depot

Home Depot is especially challenging when it comes to using Purchase Orders. They often take awhile to process because most of the employees don't know how to input them into the system. The following steps will greatly speed up the process:

1. Walk around and write down the 6-digit SKU numbers of each item, the name, the quantity and the price. Remember, there is a \$65 flat charge for delivery, but we are tax exempt (ID number on the PO) and can go up to 10% over the total PO value if necessary.
2. When you're done, present your list, with the PO to the Contractor's Desk (not Customer Service). Tell them you are from the Boston University Student Activities Office and you would like to set up a delivery (unless you have other means of transportation). If the Contractor's Desk is closed (usually at 6pm), you can go to Customer Service, but it will probably be more difficult. Two people we know in particular that can handle P.O.s are Dave from the Contractor's Desk and Hanlon from Customer Service.
3. Be prepared for trouble processing the PO, but they should have written information about us in a file at the Contractor's Desk. If they need a name on the account, try first name J, last name P (still leftover from Johanna Pacyga, TA 05-06).
4. Fill out the forms for the delivery and give your number as the contact number, with the TA's number as a backup. They will call a half hour before delivering. It may be helpful to draw a map in the directions section on how to get to the alley for the Space. The address is officially 949B Commonwealth Ave, at the corner of Harry Agganis Way and Akimbo Rd.
5. When the order is delivered, make sure to check the materials against your list, just in case anything is missing.



Training

Safety and TD Workshops

Every Technical Director is required to complete the Safety and TD Workshops, administered by the TA at the beginning of each semester, before he or his crew is allowed to start working in the Space.

Power Tool Training

The TD must also be trained on the Table Saw and any other tool deemed necessary by the TA before he or any of his crew is allowed to work in the Space. If you don't know how to use a tool, **don't use it**. Contact the TA for help.

The Space

Safety Rules

- Never work alone in the Space.
- No smoking or any type of open flame is allowed in the Space.
- Fire Aisles must be maintained at all times. Regulation fire aisles are four feet wide.
- Safety goggles are always required when working with power tools.
- **Under no circumstances** should anyone use power tools while on any substances including drugs, alcohol or medications. Same goes for lack of sleep.
- Leave a path to the utility room in the back of the paint room and the closet in the furniture room.
- Make sure the Space is locked upon leaving. You should be the first one to arrive and the last one to leave.
- If anyone gets hurt, **call BUPD (617-353-2121)**, don't call 911. It saves us a lot of paperwork and BUPD will likely show up faster anyway.
- **Call the TA if you have any questions or problems!**

Usage Rules

- Sign in and out of the log book located in the costume/props room.
- The TD, or in some cases the ATD, must be present at all times when the crew is working in the Space.
- Before scheduling build sessions, check the schedule for the Boston Playwright's Theater (located above the Space), which is available from the TA. The use of all power tools must stop 30 minutes before any of their performances, but painting and other quiet activities are still OK.
- Be sure to clean up, sweep, take out the garbage, seal all the paint and wash all the paint brushes before leaving the Space. Put the paint back in the Flammables cabinet.
- When taking out the garbage, it must be taken to the West Campus Dining dumpster. It is the dumpster at the end of the alley on the right, over the cement wall. We have an agreement with BU Dining Services to let us throw our stuff out there, but nowhere else. **DO NOT** throw it out in any other dumpster.

Fireproofing

In addition to the other fire codes specific to the Space and the Student Theater, the Technical Director must be well versed in general fire codes. Every set piece, set dressing, and prop must be fireproofed. Wood can be coated with at least one layer of paint fireproofed with **Inspecta Shield Fire Retardant**, in the ratio of one cup of fireproofing to one gallon of paint. All exposed wood on stage must be fireproofed. Exposed wood is defined as any wood that fire can get to.

The only local vendor that sells Inspecta Shield is Backstage Hardware. Any fabric used in a set must be soaked in Inspecta Shield and a swatch of the fireproofed fabric (at least 12" x 12", but slightly larger is recommended) must be sent to the Fire Department for approval, at least 2 weeks before the show moves into the theater. This does not include costumes or fabric props touched by the actors. Talk to the TA before fireproofing any fabric.

The TD is required to label and document all fireproofed set pieces in the fireproofing binder. The fireproofing binder should be Readily Available at any point during tech week or performances, should the Fire Marshall request it. We typically keep it in the sound and lights booth in the Student Theater.

Student Theater at Agganis Arena

Rules

- Fire aisles, doorways and pathways must remain unobstructed. Regulation fire aisles are four feet wide.
- No smoking or any type of open flame is allowed in the theater.
- Saws or anything that creates dust should be used minimally and only in the Workshop. If a large amount of cutting must be done, do it in the Space or outside and clean up after yourself.
- Exit signs must remain unobstructed at all times.
- Do not screw into or paint over any part of the wall. You may screw into the stage deck, with drywall screws only (no lag bolts!), provided that you remove them at the end of your show.
- Store all flammable liquids and paints in the Flammables cabinet in the Workshop. In general, do not store too much paint in the theater, leave it in the Space.
- Report any damage to the TA immediately. It is far better to report damage than to let B&G find it on their own.
- The TD or Director must sign in and out of the log book in the Producer's Booth.
- It is the TD/Director's responsibility to ensure that all the doors in the theater are locked upon leaving and that all the pathways remain unobstructed.

Tech Week

Overview

Tech week is the week leading up to the show, when the show is rehearsing and setting up in the performance space. The TD should meet with at least the Director, Stage Manager, Master Carpenter and Lighting Designer to plan the schedule for Tech Week. Tech week usually includes the following events:

- Move-in
- Set Construction
- Lighting Hang and Focus
- Sound Setup and Sound Check
- Paper Tech (Script-Thru)
- Dry Tech (Cue-to-Cue, no actors)
- Wet Tech (Cue-to-Cue, with actors - “Actors are wet!”)
- Dress Rehearsals
- Final Dress Rehearsal
- Director’s and Tech Notes
- Performances
- Strike

The Stage Manager ultimately runs the rehearsals for the week, but he can work with the TD and Director to determine call times for cast and crew. More information on Tech Week scheduling can be found by consulting the TA or here: <http://theatre.harvard.edu/jobs/ld/tech.html>.

Move-in

The TD is in charge of moving the set, props, costumes, make-up, lights, sound equipment, etc. for his show into the performing space. At minimum, he should enlist the help of the entire crew, and may also ask the cast and other Heads of Production to help as well. Extra measures may need to be taken for performance spaces outside our usual theater, such as renting a truck or hiring B&G Trucking. U-Haul and Budget usually provide a good deal (although you must be 21 to rent a Budget truck). Zipcars/Ziptrucks are also an option, but you need an account. Home Depot also rents trucks and vans. Of all those options, Home Depot and Budget are the only ones that take POs. **Do not drive a truck that you are not comfortable with. Safety first.**

Strike

At the conclusion of a show’s run, the Technical Director will organize and run Strike. Strike duties include deconstructing the set, taking down the lights and returning all Stage Troupe properties to the proper places. The TD should make a list detailing the Strike assignments of the cast and crew in advance and post it in visible locations. All members of the cast, crew and production staff **must participate** in Strike and may not leave until

they are dismissed by the TD. If there is nothing left to do, clean. Remember, the garbage must also be taken to the dumpster during Strike. This should be communicated ahead of time and a list of people who did not attend Strike or left early should be given to the TA.

Painting the Stage

In addition to normal Strike duties, the stage may need to be painted. If the stage was painted for the production or extensively damaged, leaving scuffs and scratches, it will have to be painted before the show will be considered closed. Usually, this has to occur before the day following Strike, in case another show or student group is using the theater. The Student Theater floor must be painted with All-Floor Black paint. Ask the TA for more information.

Useful Contact Information (☺ = Accepts Purchase Orders)

Boston University Police Dept (BUPD)

(in case of any emergency or injury)

32 Harry Agganis Way

Boston, MA 02215

617-353-2121

Treasurer Contact Info

Kate Bischoff

203-910-2875

E-Mail: betak36@yahoo.com

Student Activities Office

Boston University

1 University Road

Boston, Massachusetts 02215

Phone: 617-353-3635

Fax: 617-353-5257

E-mail: sao@bu.edu

URL: www.bu.edu/sao

Home Depot ☺

615 Arsenal Street

Watertown, MA 02471

617-926-0299

Contacts: Dave at the Contractor's Desk, Hanlon at the Customer Service Desk (they know how to deal with us)

Economy True Value Hardware ☺

1012 Beacon St

Brookline, MA 02446

617-277-8811

Backstage Hardware & Theater Supply ☺

*(only place to get fireproofing, gaff/spike tape, glow tape, etc -- they have **EVERYTHING**)*

21 Drydock Ave # 1

Boston, MA 02210

Phone: 617-330-1422

Fax: 617-330-6997

E-Mail: sales@backstagehardware.com

Blick Art Supplies

(sells gaff tape and other art supplies)

Landmark Center

401 Park Drive, Boston, MA 02215

(617) 247-3322

Guitar Center ☺

1255 Boylston St

Boston, MA 02215

Phone: 617-247-1389

Fax: 617-247-1989

Contact: Greg Simon in Audio (gsimon@gcpro.com)

Tsai Performance Center

685 Commonwealth Ave

Boston, MA 02215

Contacts: <http://www.bu.edu/tsai/us/staff/>

U-Haul Truck Rental

(GET INSURANCE!)

240 N Beacon St

Brighton, MA 02135

617-782-0355

Budget Rent-a-Car ☺

95 Brighton Ave

Allston, MA 02134

617-497-3608

Winmill Fabrics ☺

111 Chauncy St

Boston, MA 02111

617-542-1815

Tech Tips

1. **Stick to your guns.** If you have a bad feeling about something, there's usually a reason for it. Try to come up with a logical reason why. At the same time, don't dismiss every idea you hear that is different. Keep an open mind and try to think rationally.
2. **Be prepared.** Whether it is running a meeting, organizing a build session or reporting to the E-Board, always plan ahead. You will be calmer, more confident and you won't forget anything. It's very easy to spot who has put thought into what they are doing and who is making it up on the spot. Even if it's just jotting down a list 30 mins ahead of time, it will save you a lot of problems later on. Sometimes writing things down in your phone as you think of them helps as well. Come up with a system that works for you.
3. **Communicate.** The worst thing that can happen on the show is that people don't communicate. Keep the flow going with your Director(s), crew members and the E-Board. That way, no one is surprised by anything and you can get more than one perspective on things.
4. **Don't sweat the small stuff.** There are going to be lots of speed bumps throughout at production and it's important not to let them stress you out. The more stressed you are, the harder it is to work. It also reflects poorly of yourself to your crew.

stage troupe Executive Board

