

Guidelines for Deep River Players Productions



Updated: 2007 January 15

Proposals

Proposals for productions will be accepted from anyone willing to put on a production in Deep River area at any time during the year. A Production Proposal Form shall be completed and submitted to the Players Executive. A blank proposal form is attached to these guidelines.

Reporting and Approvals

The Producer, or a designate shall provide reports on the production's status (including financial) at regular intervals to the Executive – the minimum being at the regular meetings of the Executive.

The Executive shall approve the following items at the following times:

- Proposal, including preliminary budget (prior to any other production activity);
- Show Treasurer (prior to any financial transactions);
- Final budget (prior to any significant expenditures);
- Any additional line items in the budget;
- A new show budget, if the total expenditures are expected to exceed the expenditures in the approved budget by 10% or greater;
- Major publicity items such as poster, newspaper ads (prior to publication);
- Final financial report (after close-out, preferably no more than 2 months after the last performance)

Resources

The Executive is available for consultation/assistance with preparing a proposal, budget and planning a production.

Samples of previous budgets are available, in the Lessons Learned binder in the clubhouse, for assistance when preparing preliminary and final budgets.

The Lessons Learned binder, in the clubhouse, also provides information that may prove helpful in planning a production on areas such as venues, ticket sales, rehearsals, auditions, technical and financial issues. It is the responsibility of the producer to ensure that department heads are given an opportunity to read any applicable lessons learned.

The Production Crew Roles and Responsibilities binder, in the clubhouse, provides handouts on roles and responsibilities for each member of the production crew, as well as information on technical issues such as lighting, sound, costumes etc.

Cash Flow

A Show Treasurer shall be chosen for each production. The Show Treasurer shall not be the same person as the Director or Producer but the Players' Treasurer can act as the Show Treasurer if desired.

Each show shall use a special "show account" separate from the Players' general account. A sum of seed money may be transferred to this account from the general account at the start of a

production's activity. All transactions into or out of the show account will be handled by the Show Treasurer.

Periodically during lead-up to the production the Show Treasurer shall tally all expenses according to the category, and circulate to department heads. If any line item is in danger of exceeding (or has exceeded) its budget, the Show Treasurer should notify the Producer, who should then follow up. Attached is a "Sample Budget Sheet" that can be used or modified for this purpose.

No significant expenditures shall be made before the final budget is approved by the Executive and casting is complete.

If the total expenditures are expected to exceed the expenditures in the approved budget by 10% or greater, then a new budget shall be submitted to the Executive for approval.

The final budget must include separate line items for both the cast party and production gifts.

The Executive reserves the right to refuse to pay for any new expenditure item that was not included in the budget previously approved by the Executive.

Auditions

Auditions shall be announced at least 2 weeks prior to all Deep River Players members and to the general public through the use of an NRT article, display ad, or classified ad. A mass e-mailing of the audition notice to Players members is also encouraged. The mandate of the Deep River Players is to provide an opportunity for local people to participate in amateur theatre; therefore, auditions are not normally advertised outside the immediate Deep River and Laurentian Hills area.

Auditions can be held individually, in small groups or as a play reading but they must be judged fairly. Every attempt must be made to avoid pre-casting. In other words, directors shall not solicit actors with specific roles in mind. Auditions shall not be accepted from members of the audition panel.

The audition panel shall consist of 3 to 10 members, including the Director and at least one member of the Executive. The Executive shall retain the right to question the casting decision with the Director to ensure that casting has been done in a fair manner that respects the talents and strengths of everyone auditioning.

Production Team

The production team (i.e. various department heads) shall be chosen by the Producer or Director as early as possible in the production schedule. Descriptions of the duties for each member of the production team are detailed in the Production Crew Roles and Responsibilities binder. If difficulty is encountered filling production team positions the Players' Executive will provide assistance with the recruiting process.

The production team shall hold regular meetings, including at least once before rehearsals start, at least once per month during the rehearsal period and once following the last performance.

Major budget-related decisions should be made by the production team not by individual members of the team.

The appointment of Show Treasurer shall be approved by the Executive prior to any financial transactions.

Neither the Producer nor Director shall assume the role of Show Treasurer.

The positions of Producer and Director should not be taken on by the same individual.

Rehearsals

The production team shall agree upon the time and frequency of rehearsals. Consideration shall be made to the needs of the performers (e.g. school, work, exams, commitments to other clubs, etc.), and to minimizing the cost of venue rental (e.g. using Childs auditorium as much as possible during "free" custodian time on weekday evenings).

It is recommended that 8 hours of rehearsal time be scheduled for every 10 minutes of performance (e.g. A two-hour production requires 96 hours of rehearsal). For musicals, singing and dancing may require additional rehearsal time.

Actors shall be required to commit to attending all necessary rehearsals as a condition of both auditioning and accepting a part. Attendance at rehearsals shall be recorded and a policy for disciplinary action for delinquency shall be announced at the first rehearsal.

Performances

Performances shall be scheduled to avoid conflicts with large or important events in the community. The venue and number of performances shall be chosen to encourage 75% full houses. Some exceptions will be necessary, such as productions that require the facilities at Childs Auditorium but may only be expected to fill half the house. If a half full house is expected it is recommended that only the seats in the front half of the theatre be sold.

Ticket Sales

Tickets shall be priced to encourage attendance while still maintaining an estimated profit of at least \$1,500, based upon 75% of the expected audience.

Ticket pricing shall also take into account the ticket price of other community activities with similar demographics that are occurring around the same time, as well as the historical cost of tickets to A minimum ticket price of \$15 is recommended, with no special pricing for children, students or seniors. This does not include any incentives to encourage opening night attendance.

Ticket pricing must be ultimately approved by the Executive, as part of the show budget.

Ticket sales shall be closely monitored by the ticket sales manager, including:

- picking up money from the sales outlet on a frequent basis (preferably daily),
- delivering money to the treasurer (preferably weekly), and
- reporting on the status of sales to the production team.

Only the ticket sales manager or an approved designate shall pick up money or otherwise liaise with the sales outlet.

Sponsorships

If advertisements and/or sponsorships are purchased to help offset the cost of a production all monies should be collected prior to printing the programs.

Publicity

All publicity for productions shall include the Players' logo (available in a format suitable for publishing from the Executive), website URL, and the name of our corporate sponsor (typically the phrase used is "Presented by Dickens Insurance Agency Ltd."). Posters, tickets, brochures, and programs shall also include the corporate sponsor's logo. Newspaper display ads shall only use the text, and not the logo, of the corporate sponsor.

All major publicity items (posters, newspaper display ads) shall be approved by the Executive prior to publication, to ensure consistency with the Players' image and policies.

Cast and Crew

Cast and crew members shall always be treated with respect. This includes:

- Informing all auditioning actors of casting decisions within one week of auditions.
- Keeping cast and crew informed of the rehearsal and performance schedule as far in advance as possible, and minimizing the changes to the schedule once it is announced.
- Providing a cast party following the last show. The cost of this party can be part of the show budget.
- Accommodating reasonable requests for absence from rehearsals, such as unavoidable conflicts with work, other community or personal activities (and attempting, as much as possible, to avoid conflicts with significant community or cultural events in the rehearsal schedule).
- If gifts are provided for crew members, their cost can be part of the show budget.
- If any promotional items (T-shirts, mugs, photos, etc) are sold, they shall be sold at cost to the cast and crew. A profit can be made on promotional items if sold to the general public.
- It is the policy of the Deep River Players that hair cutting or beard and mustache shaving is the decision of the actor. The production team can request that hair be cut, but not require it.

In return, cast and crew members are expected to treat the production and the Deep River Players with respect. This includes:

- Honouring the commitment to attend all necessary rehearsals, and giving as much advance notice as possible when an absence is necessary due to an unavoidable community or personal conflict.
- Keeping informed of rehearsal schedules and other important information.
- Being responsible for the good condition and prompt return of costumes assigned to them.
- Acting responsibly backstage during rehearsals and performances, being respectful of other actors and crew, and following the instructions of those in charge of that area.
- Not cutting their hair, after casting has occurred, without consent from the Director or hair department head.

Close-Out

The following actions take place following a show:

- The set shall be struck within one week of the last performance.
- All materials borrowed shall be returned in good order.
- Costumes shall be washed and properly stored following the last performance.
- Venues used shall be left in good condition to ensure continued use of that venue for future productions.
- Players' property shall be returned to Players' storage areas following the production.
- Thank-you cards shall be written by each department head and sent to their helpers and assistants. The producer shall provide thank-you cards, envelopes and stamps if requested by department heads.
- The production team shall hold a close-out meeting where Lessons Learned shall be

recorded. Blank Lessons Learned Forms can be found in the Lessons Learned binder. Completed forms shall be filed in the appropriate section in the binder. The close-out meeting is also an opportunity to ensure that thank-you cards are sent to all helpers.

- The Show Treasurer shall produce a final financial report, and hand the show account books over to the Club Treasurer within a reasonable period of the last performance (e.g. one or two months). This shall include a comparison of budgeted and actual revenue and expenses broken down by major category (e.g. copyrights/royalties, sets, props, costumes, make-up, lighting, sound, special effects, rent, publicity, programs, front-of-house, etc.). A copy of the final financial report shall be filed in the appropriate section of the Lessons Learned binder. After the deadline for the show account's closing, all remaining transactions relevant to the show will fall under the general Players account. Every attempt will be made to avoid transactions after the deadline however. The final financial report shall be presented to the executive by the Show Treasurer and shall be included in the DRP Treasurer's report at the AGM.
- At least one copy of the script and a copy of the video or DVD of the performance (if available) shall be stored in the Players' clubhouse following the production.



Production Proposal Form

Name of Production: _____

Director: _____

Proposed Production Date: _____

Proposed Production Venue: _____

Please attach a summary of the production.

Please attach a list of characters including age and gender required for the performers.

Please list any problems anticipated (location, accents, set, crew etc.):

Please provide a brief description of the set

Preliminary budget (Only a rough estimate is required)

Copyrights _____

Sets/Props _____

Costumes/Make-Up/Hair _____

Lighting/Sound/Special Effects _____

Rent _____

Advertising (printing, ads, etc.) _____

Programs _____

Other Production Costs (Party, gifts, programs...) _____

Total Expenses _____

Expecting Revenue (Only a rough estimate is required)

Suggested Ticket Price _____

Estimated attendance per performance _____

Number of performances _____

Sponsorship _____

Total Revenue _____

Sample Final Budget Sheet



Show name

Expenses

	Budget	To date	To date	To date	Total
scripts	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
royalty	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
rental	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Set materials	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Properties	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Lighting	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Sound	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Costumes	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Make-up	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
hair	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
newspaper advertisements	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Posters	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Tickets	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Programs	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Photography	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Administration/misc	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
gifts	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
front of house	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
party/refreshments	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
cast food	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
drycleaning	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
other	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
TOTAL:	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$

Income

	Budget	To date	To date	To date	Total
Ticket sales	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Sponsorship/program ads	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
refreshment sales	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
other	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
TOTAL:	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$