HOUSE MANAGER DUTIES (Pote Show)

The most important thing that you do as HM is serve our patrons. Thank you for taking care of our audience!

2 – 4 weeks before performance:
___1. Contact ushers and other FOH staff members to confirm assignments, times, and meetings before opening. (You are in charge of making sure that we have enough ushers for each performance.)
___2. Have walk-around meeting with Box Office Manager, Assistant Box Office Manager, and Audience Services UGA. (This usually takes place the Monday before the show opens.)
___3. Coordinate box office daily closing procedures with BOM, ABOM, and AS UGA.
___4. Acquire HM keys from Rick.
___5. Attend pre-work call meeting on March 22 from 4:30 – 5:30 p.m.
___6. Attend pre-tech meeting on April 5 from 4:30 – 5:30 p.m.

Week of performance:
___Sunday: Send email to all ushers about dress code, assignments, and Thursday night usher meeting. Make sure that each usher responds to confirm that they received the email and notifies you of any conflicts they might have. (More details in Usher Email section.)
___Wednesday: Contact cleaning crew to confirm that the theatre is on their weekend to-do list. (More details in Usher Email section.)
___Thursday: Train your ushers before the final dress rehearsal. Then, conduct the usher meeting at 6 p.m. and proceed as if it were a show night.
___Performance nights: Conduct usher meeting at 6 p.m. Lead usher team to set up the lobby, including displays, and tape off any held seats in the house.

HM Performance Checklist

Before Show:
___Dress professionally, but not in the black and white usher uniform.
___Arrive by 5:45 p.m. for a 7:30 p.m. performance and 11:15 a.m. for a 1 p.m. performance.
___Unlock lobby doors: top, bottom, east, and west.
___Check lobby clocks to make sure they are correct.
___Hold usher meeting at 6 p.m.
___Make sure you have enough programs and distribute them and baskets to ushers.
___Tidy the lobby: pick up trash, make sure lobby photos and tags are straightened, and make sure benches and trash cans are in the appropriate places.
___Tidy the house: straighten chairs, check for trash and programs, etc.
___Get headset to Stage Manager ASAP and make sure that he/she is clear on cues for FOH and the late seating procedure.
**Make sure doors open and close on time!**

**House Open:**
___ Check in with Stage Manager every 10 minutes.
___ While the audience is being seated, continue to check in at each entrance to make sure that all is running smoothly. If there is congestion at one particular door, you can help guide patrons to their seats. Ushers should be helping patrons find their assigned seats in Pote.
___ Check in with SM as curtain time approaches to make sure that there are no problems on his/her side that would cause reason to hold the curtain. Flash the lobby lights 5 minutes before curtain.
___ Check with BOM about remaining tickets and the possibility of holding the curtain. *The curtain should never be held more than 4 minutes after the published curtain time except in extreme circumstances. More importantly, the doors should not close until the show is ready to start.*
___ Check bathrooms for straggling patrons.
___ Once you are ready to close the doors and drapes, let your ushers know and then give SM the clear. Ushers should not turn off the stair lights but may dim them if fit.

**During Show:**
___ Collect ticket stubs from ushers and deliver them to BOM.
___ Seat late comers unless otherwise notified. Make sure to discuss late seating procedure at the walk-around.
___ At the intermission, open doors and drapes.
___ Flash lobby lights 5 minute before intermission ends. Check in with SM. Tell your ushers to shut the doors and drapes. Give the clear to SM in the same fashion as at the top of the show.
___ Keep FOH Crew quiet in the conference room. Sound travels.

**Post Show:**
___ Open doors and drapes.
___ Ushers must stay by their doors until the audience clears. Then, doors must be shut again.
___ Tidy up the house. Your ushers will help you pick up trash, programs, and lost and found items.
___ Once the audience has left, lock up all four lobby doors. All FOH crew members must check in with you before leaving the building.
___ Return headsets to chargers in box office.
USHER MEETING CHECKLIST

Run through this list around 6 p.m. for a 7:30 p.m. show and around 11:30 a.m. for a 1 p.m. show.

___ Review assignments.
___ Review specific duties:

Ushers:
___ Assign to doors.
___ Tear off little end of ticket and keep in basket.
___ Guide patrons to their seats.
___ Open and close doors at beginning, intermission, and end of show.
___ Remind patrons to turn off electronic devices.
___ Review seating system.

Body guards:
___ Keep people from walking on sets by escorting patrons around set pieces.
___ Guide patrons to their seats.
___ Distribute programs.

Everyone/Floaters:
___ Help BOM or HM.
___ Assist patrons with questions or concerns in the lobby.
___ ADA Seating
___ Other odd jobs
___ Discuss signals or how you will communicate doors open, close, and time left until those events.
___ Remind ushers to watch for congestion and to help patrons find their seats if this occurs.
___ Remind ushers of late seating procedures.
___ Ushers should help you do pre and post-show duties such as, taping off seats or seating, reserving chairs, sweep of theatre for trash, reset any seating, set up lobby, any cleaning, etc.

* Note: Ushers are to stay until the end of the performance unless you as House Manager think they have a legitimate reason for leaving early. This is left to your discretion, but remember, less ushers means more work for you at the end of the night. Also, make note of ushers who left early and their reason and give this list to Jennifer or a member of the audience services staff.*
House Manager,

Here is your list of ushers:

- Aja Porter (Designer)
- Madison Densmore (Designer)
- Shelby Burgus (Designer)
- Caitlin Featherstone-Priester (Head Usher)
- Sara Hill (Head Usher)

We will recruit at least 4 more ushers for you.

You can assign them to whatever jobs you feel is wise. You will need
  - 2 ushers at each of the two top doors (one to take tickets, one to usher patrons to seats)
  - 1 usher at each of the two bottom doors
  - 1 will-call attendant
  - 2 body guards
  - 1 to make sure the theatre is cleaned.

Give this information to who you delegate to make sure the theatre is cleaned:
“Making Sure the Theatre Is Cleaned: The person assigned to this job is in charge of calling the cleaning crew the week a show is to open to make sure they are scheduled to clean the theatre thoroughly the night before the opening. The number to contact is 515-729-1415. This person must also check the theatre during the day of a performance to make sure that it is clean.”

Make sure to impress upon your ushers the importance of Front of House. We want ushers to think for themselves and to take ownership of their roles. The ideal ushers consider the condition of the theatre from the perspective of a new patron and thinks to themselves “How do I make this work?” instead of “Nobody told me to do that.” Ushers are never idle. Following is a list of specific tasks for Front of House. You and your ushers should think about all of these, but assign each usher a few specific tasks to be responsible for. You are welcome to add to this list and delegate from your own duties. You should not feel rushed to complete numerous tasks but should have time to oversee the quality of work your fellow ushers are doing and to troubleshoot problems.

- Are the proper lights on and off?
- Is the lobby furniture arranged neatly?
- Is there any trash in the lobby (including stairs and hallways)?
- Are the bathrooms clean? No trash on the floor? Sinks dry? Take out the trash if it gets ¾ full.
- Is there dust on any surface? Look at lobby displays, water fountain, high and low, etc.* (There are cleaning supplies in the box office cabinet under the window, or you can use paper towels and water.)
- How is the house? Walk through each row looking for trash, programs, and lost and found, and aligning the seats.*
- Are all the necessary lobby signs up, neat, and in the right places? (check upstairs, main level, and downstairs)*
- Walk through the building and check that everything looks “right”.
- Is there any trash in the parking lot?
- Before signaling for the doors to close, are there any patrons in the bathroom?
- Distribute baskets and programs to the other ushers.
- Flick the lights 5 minutes before the show starts and 5 minutes before intermission ends.
- Help out with ADA seating.

*Tasks with an asterisk must be complete by 6:45 (or 1:15 for a matinee).

On Thursday, April 11, you will need to train your crew. The final dress rehearsal will run just like the show, so you need to complete training by 6 p.m. so you can begin practicing a typical show night. I would like to observe your training session.

Be sure to discuss the following topics with your ushers during training and usher meetings:
- General duties and assignments
- Specific duties and assignments
- How to tear a ticket
- Seating map (and door numbers) and taking patrons to their seats
- Customer service – “Think like a patron”; “The customer is always right”, etc.
- Ownership mentality – “How do I make this work?”; “No sitting or standing still”, etc.

Early in the night, check everyone’s attire. In your email and during your Thursday training, let your ushers know that everyone needs to look nice, but not too nice. (This means black slacks and white collared button-up but no suit coat.) Absolutely no short skirts or dresses! If the dress code is violated, it is at your discretion to send an usher home to change. If the usher has an issue with this, I will back you up.

Be sure to remind your ushers that they can work on homework in the conference room during the show and that they must change into uniform once in the theatre. We cannot wear our uniforms out of the theatre.

Below is the email you will send to your ushers. You may revise it slightly if you like. Please copy me at tsboxoffice@simpson.edu on the email when you send it to your ushers.
Hello ushers!

You will be the first people our patrons will see upon entering the theater building and will possibly make the most lasting impression. We have always been complimented on our front of house crew by patrons and the KCACTF respondent; we want to keep this reputation going. Please treat this responsibility accordingly.

Please make sure that your nights are free for the final dress rehearsal and performances on April 11 – 13 from 5:45 – 10:00 p.m. and April 14 from 11:15 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. It is essential that you are completely free during these times, and if there is a conflict let me know as soon as possible. Punctuality is important to keep the evening running smoothly.

Secondly, what to wear: You will wear black shoes, black pants or skirt, and a nice white shirt, preferably button up. These are all to be the very nicest ones you own that have no decorations. Suit jackets are not necessary. Absolutely no short skirts or dresses!

Lastly, we will have a meeting to go over your specific duties before each performance. We will meet for training on Thursday, April 11, at ____.

Please respond to this email letting me know that you 1) received it and 2) have no conflicts.

Thanks so much!
Your Friendly House Manager,