Production Meetings

One of the first jobs of a Stage Manager is to determine a time when the Director, Designers, and Assistant Stage Managers are available for production meetings. The stage manager is responsible for facilitating the meeting—“The stage manager must gently try to keep everyone focused on the agenda and avoid endless stories and bad jokes that sometimes flow if people are avoiding facing the problems that exist” (Kelly 49). Prior to each meeting the Stage Manager should talk with the director and send out an agenda.

The following is an example of a portion of a Production Meeting Agenda:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACCOMPlice Production Meeting</th>
<th>FRIDAY, MARCH 5</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AGENDA</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I. INTRODUCTIONS AND OPENING</td>
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<tr>
<td>REMARKS:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rupert Holmes and Art</td>
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<td>Wolff</td>
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<td>II. THE SET</td>
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<tr>
<td>1. Progress report and any</td>
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<tr>
<td>questions on construction</td>
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<td>Roy Sears</td>
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<td>2. The Trap/All effects</td>
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<tr>
<td>rigging and requirements</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Foot bath/look, style, and</td>
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<tr>
<td>effects coordination with</td>
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<tr>
<td>lights, trap operator for</td>
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<tr>
<td>electrocution effects 1,</td>
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<tr>
<td>2, and 3 including sound</td>
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<td>4. The Wheel/Operation and</td>
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<tr>
<td>use: How controlled on</td>
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<tr>
<td>off the stage; actor and</td>
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<td>operator coordination,</td>
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<td>etc.</td>
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<td>5. Fireplace/Practical?</td>
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<td>Revolve/How does it</td>
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<tr>
<td>operate? Can an actor</td>
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<tr>
<td>just push, is it crew</td>
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<td>operated?</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. The Chair/Discuss fully</td>
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<tr>
<td>its use, operation, and</td>
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<td>safety; any provision for</td>
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<tr>
<td>him getting stuck up there?</td>
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<td>7. Discuss AEA involvement</td>
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<td>and report to them in</td>
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<tr>
<td>advance on all effects,</td>
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<td>flying, smoke, and</td>
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<td>knives, etc.</td>
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<td>8. Discuss all rain and</td>
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<td>coordination with</td>
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<tr>
<td>costumes, etc. Will rain</td>
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<tr>
<td>effect give enough sound</td>
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<td>or must it be enhanced?</td>
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<td>9. Rundown on load-in and</td>
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<tr>
<td>coordination with the</td>
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<td>Luncheon, etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>III. SPECIAL EFFECTS</td>
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<tr>
<td>1. General progress and</td>
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<td>concept update/Greg</td>
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<tr>
<td>Meash</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Discuss each major effect</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Foot bath, Umbrella fry,</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>and &quot;The Big Show&quot;) and</td>
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<tr>
<td>their relationship to all</td>
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<tr>
<td>other departments—sets,</td>
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<tr>
<td>props, costumes, sound,</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>and lights</td>
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<td>3. Other effects: All blood</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>problems and knives</td>
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<tr>
<td>coordinated with props,</td>
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<tr>
<td>costumes, etc. Include</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;Jacob's Ladder&quot; lamp</td>
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<tr>
<td>effect</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

This is a good example of an agenda for the following reasons:

- It has the name of the play and the date of the meeting.
- It has general overview topics for the meeting (Introductions, the set, etc.).
- Under the general overview topics, there are specific sub-topics that will be discussed at the meeting.

Agendas are important for any meeting because they both remind people about the meeting and allow people to be fully prepared to present on the topics at hand, which in turn makes the meeting run more efficiently.
Production Meeting Notes

At every production meeting, the stage manager or assistant stage manager should keep detailed notes of what happened at the meeting. These notes are important because they keep a record of the decisions made, people can refer back to them to find out what was decided, and, most importantly, people who were not at the meeting can reference them.

Here is a portion of a good example of Production Meeting notes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>University</strong></th>
<th><strong>Production Meeting Report #: 3</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Present: Ethan, Shannon, Ann, Laura, Ana, Shelby, Natalie, Jenny, Rick, Steve</td>
<td><strong>Meeting Date: 9/6/12</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Next Meeting:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Time: 9:00-9:28am</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>9/13/12 at 9am</strong></td>
<td><strong>Space: Conference Room</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Notes:</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Ann would like your final designs by next Thursday</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Next Thursday night at 7pm in Barnum we will be having a stumble through</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Press photo on Monday—maybe take them outside in a “collegiate looking” place</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Director Notes:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Start blocking on Monday evening at 7pm in Barnum</td>
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<tr>
<td>Set:</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- The height of the benches are at 2’ now, Ann wants to change that to a 1½’ bench and a 2½’ bench</td>
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<tr>
<td>- For the costume rack Laura thinks that it would be fine at 4’ long</td>
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<tr>
<td>- For the hats and anything else there will be a shelf on the top of the rack</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Props:</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Shannon has the props list with highlighted rehearsal props needed; she’s going to go look in the props closet today</td>
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<tr>
<td>- We’re not lighting the joint so we just need the visual effect of having a joint on</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Ann wants to have the really cheap champagne glasses that the bottom comes off of the stem for “A Leaving Behind”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Costumes:</td>
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<tr>
<td>- The freshman beanie has been moved onto the costume list</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Press photo will be on Monday, Ann would like you to find something for them to wear or maybe point the actors being used in the right direction if they have something in their own closets</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Hair/Makeup:</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Shelby will be asking cast members who needs a make-up kit or replacements for pieces of their make-up kits at rehearsal tonight</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Lighting:</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- We could maybe use a coleman camping light or a flashlight for the Camping scene?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Ethan should have the plot ready by tomorrow!</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Divided the stage into 7 areas, Ann should know some general acting areas once we’re blocking.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Show Ann the 7 areas you were thinking next week to discuss</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sound:</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- None for now, thanks!</td>
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<tr>
<td>Production Assistant:</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- There’s a dehumidifier in the men’s dressing room if we need it</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This is a good example of production meeting notes for the following reasons:

- The name of the play, date of the meeting, start and end times of the meeting, and attendance are all identified.
- The subject topics are laid out clearly.
- Not only does it give information that was presented, but it lays out the specific decisions that were made and important information about those decisions.