

First Day of Rehearsal Talks

Dear CPAG member,

Visiting the first day of rehearsal and facilitating the election of the Equity deputy is an excellent opportunity for membership outreach. Regional Councillor Policy Advisory Groups are urged to avail themselves of such occasions for local member linkage. The planning of first day visits is left to each CPAG. For regular notification of upcoming productions please contact Communications Director Lynn McQueen. The following is a checklist for first day rehearsal visits.

Five days before each visit:

- Contact the stage manager to arrange the visit and confirm date and time. If a visit is not possible on the first day, suggest an alternative date.
- Confirm how much time you have been allotted. A presentation should take no more than 15 minutes, but be prepared to use only 10.
- Confirm that the stage manager is in receipt of the deputy package. If not, contact the contracts administrator at the National Office 416-867-9165 or 1-800-387-1856 and verify that a package is on the way.

Day of the visit:

- Arrive 15 minutes early.
- Check in with the stage manager.
- Bring your own prepared notes including this checklist, your copy of the latest newsletter, the Association's Constitution and By-Laws and Council's Policy Governance Document, and contact information for your CPAG.

Introduction:

- Thank the theatre management and the director for giving you time to speak.
- Introduce yourself.
- Explain the reason for your visit:
 - Put a face to Equity.
 - To provide a brief description of Equity's structure: President, Council, and Councillors in each region and CPAGs.
 - Inform the members of local CPAG initiatives and to provide CPAG contact information.
 - To identify resources available on EQUITYONLINE, the Association's website (<http://www.caea.com>) including recent news, e-search, PDF documents, and the Members Only zone to update each member's individual profile.
 - Encourage members to call Equity's offices when questions arise.

Points to make:

- The agreement under which the production operates is not the "Equity Rule Book" but a shared set of working conditions agreed to by Equity and theatre management. Members are not charged with the responsibility of interpreting the agreement, and cannot grant changes or concessions to these terms. When a theatre identifies a need for a concession, the management should be referred to an Equity Business Representative. No Equity member should proceed or feel pressured to proceed with a concession until notice is received from Equity.

- If an issue arises outside of normal business hours, any member or deputy should contact the National Office and leave a message for Keith Davidson, Director of Business Representative Services to be returned on the next business day. If the situation is urgent and a response is needed immediately, the member should follow the National Office automated receptionist instructions for an emergency call. Access to a Business Representative is available directly by phone or voice-mail 24/7.
- No member or elected representative of Equity may interpret any agreement or waive applicable working terms and conditions. Only the Association, as represented by the Business Representative department may process and/or approve a concession to an agreement or policy.
- Lastly, remind the members in attendance that Equity is an association of working artists, and is as strong as the commitment of its collective membership. Bending or breaking a term of an agreement of policy weakens the power of every other Equity member.

Deputy election:

- The deputy is an important position, and an experienced Equity member (rule of thumb, two years minimum) should fill that role. The deputy should not be the stage manager.
- Allow apprentices to stay for the deputy election.** They cannot vote, but they are permitted to stay and learn from the process.
- Equity Directors under contract for the production should participate in the deputy elections, unless he/she is the artistic director of the theatre. Non-Equity Directors should leave.

Problem solving:

- Every Equity member is encouraged to contact the applicable Equity office with any questions or when a problem arises. In B.C. and Alberta members should call the Western Office at 604-682-6173 (toll-free at 1-877-682-6173). Members working in Saskatchewan and eastward should call the National Office at 416-867-9165 (toll-free at 1-800-387-1856).
- Deputies act as liaisons with the Association (and stage management) when complaints or issues cannot be easily resolved by an individual member. A deputy or stage manager should always contact a Business Representative when a clarification about the terms of an agreement or policy is needed.

Final Advice:

- If you don't know the answer to a question, promise to forward the question to the applicable Equity office for response.

Good luck and please remember to thank the theatre management again on your way out.