UP StreetDance Club Productions:

Stage Manager

For the exclusive use of UP StreetDance Club & The Crew



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Batch 10-A

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# Introduction

Do not read this in one go. You will get bored and skip over some things. Read it in groups or depending on the situation. This is a collection of not only my advice but also my experiences. I’ve never attended a class on being a stage manager. Everything here is from my own experience. I’m not a pro. I am a pure, homegrown UP Street stage manager. And here is my version of how a UP Street SM should be.

[Start with how awesome it is to be a stage manager]

People won't go out to say "wow, what an organized and well managed show." They say "wow, what a great show" or "what great dancing" "choreo" "set design" "music." Ultimately, to the audience, you won't exist, you won't matter and that's exactly the point. You are not there for praise or applause. That's for the dancers, the choreographers, and the coaches.

So whom are you doing it for? You are doing it for the dancers, the choreographers, and the coaches. You’re putting on a great show for them. So they don't have anything to worry about but dance. They put all their troubles and doubts on you and you take them all gladly. That’s why they're in sparkles and you're in black. That's why they're in the spot light and you in the shadows. And giving them the best show they've ever been a part of, is the best thing you can do for them.

As for the audience, you'll know you've done a good job if they never see you or see your mistakes or any evidence of "backstage" It should appear as if this show happened by magic. Something they can't explain. The magic is in the mystery.

# UP Street Production Basics

## Concerts

UP Street generally has 1 concert per sem. Chosen Ground for 1st sem & Street Fuzion for 2nd sem. CG is a dance competition that has evolved from one-on-one battles to teams from all over Metro Manila. Street Fuzion is the main concert of UP Street with many dances, a story and a beautiful message.

Concerts are major productions. It tends to be crammed towards the end. \* Dances are still being blocked or polished few days or one day before. Some scenes are practiced the day itself. Some videos are only finished an hour before. Ideally it shouldn’t be and we should always strive for the ideal. When that doesn’t happen though, it is up to you to still make sure that everything gets translated from the rehearsals to the stage.

## Roles

Stage: Dancers – Club

Dancers - Compet

Dancers - Crew

Dancers - Guests

Backstage:

Personal Assistants

Food

Wings:

SMs

Props

Tech booth:

Tech

Audience & Front of House:

Ushers

Info & Merch Booth

Door Persons

[Illustration of basic theater layout and where these people are stationed]

# How to read

All stage managers generally have the same jobs. There are 3 levels of being a stage manager.

1. Head Stage Manager
2. Second-in-command Stage Manager
3. Assistant Stage Manager

These aren’t the proper terminologies. It’s just what I used to clearly define the unique position of a UP Street Stage Manager.

UP Street generally have two types of productions, major and minor. Street Fuzion is the major production. Chosen Ground and the rest are minor productions.

The manual here will be for a head UP Street stage manager. So during minor productions, you would be head stage manager with 2 assistants SMs. During major productions, there would be a pro coming in to be head stage manager. You would be acting as a Second stage manager, with 2 assistants.

Most info here would refer to a combination of Head and Second stage manager, as you would act as a head for minor productions and second for major productions. I’ll usually indicate if an item refers to a specific level.

# Stage Manager Basics

## Responsibilities

* Head the Stage Manager Team
* Ensure smooth transition from rehearsals to stage
* Assist Ate Gelu & Sir Von
* Coordinate with Theatre Personnel
* Be awesome

## Basic Skills 1: You should be …

Organized

You will work with at least 100 people and you will be in the center of them all-girl. Any question asked of you, you will have to know the answer, and unless you have an eidetic memory you better have good documents.

Punctuality

Filipino time is for audience members. If you are not on time to the second, the show will start 2 hours late. You initiate everything. It all starts with you; everything will snowball for every delay you cause.

Efficient

Don’t just work hard, work smart. You have acads too. There's a lot to be done in a short amount of time, with limited manpower, resources and money.

Calm

If things go wrong, set falls, music stops, dancer injury. It is up to you to be the strong one. Tendency is, everyone will freak. You don't.

Focused

Stay focused during dances. It’s tempting to cheer for your friends, but you have to stay focused cause you might miss cues or a mishap

Flexible

Things change last minute; it's something you have to deal with. It’s not up to you to contest it. It’s up to you to make it work.

## Basic Skills 2: You should not be …

Hardworking

Your time is too valuable to be looking for dancers or transcripting host spiels. Delegate. Find a more efficient way.

Nice

You’re stage manager. You need to command a presence. If you need make a major call you need people to listen to you. You can be bipolar and be nice after.

Eloquent

Time is money. People have lots to do. Get to the point.

## Stage Manager Team

Your SM team is the most important set of people in your life (during this season). Know all their names; get to know them better every opportunity you get, because the entire show relies on how much you trust your people. When something happens and things need to change quickly, there's no time to second-guess their judgment or capability. Mentor them well, show your faith in them, and they will not fail you. Besides, their membership would be on the line, so I'm pretty sure they'll do their best.

Before show day, you will act as Head stage manager with 2 applicants as your assistants. On show day, Ate Gelu will come and take on head, and you will be in charge of relaying everything for a smooth transition. Everything MUST be ready by the time Ate Gelu comes (or else).

### Team Members:

Stage Manager Left (Head)

- Head Stage Manager is normally on Stage Right cause that's the wing that leads to the main dressing room. But strangely, UP Theater is the only theatre where it's in the opposite side

- Handles most entrances and gives cues, music, lights, curtains, voice-overs etc.

Stage Manager Right

- Handles right side entrances

- Since props are usually places in the large area on the right side, SM right handles most props entrances and exits

Assistant Stage Manager Left

- Calls dancers and props men to standby

Assistant Stage Manager Right

- Calls dancers and props men to standby

## Repertoire Making

The repertoire is the most important thing you have. It is your identity. It is your whole being. Guard it with your life!

1. Repertoire Making

A repertoire is a spreadsheet of the sequence of dances and segments of the show.

The format is as follows.

[Concert Name] Repertoire Version 1.0 [Date Made]

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| CUE | TIME | NAME | Entrance | Exit | SOUNDS | LIGHTS | VIDEO | Props/Notes |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

Stage Manager: [Your Name]

CUE – Cue number

TIME – You start out with estimates. As the rehearsals go by, time these to get better estimates.

NAME – Dance name or segment name (i.e., OPEN HOUSE, HOST INTRODUCTION, INTERMISSION)

ENTRANCE – Preset, Entering, Solo [Name] downstage right of dancers and props if there is

EXIT – Exit right, Exit left, Solo [Name] downstage right

SOUNDS – Music name, House Music, Voice Over

LIGHTS – This is either specific cues, solo spotlight at the start or big light boom at the end. If there aren’t any, indicate the feel of the dance like party lights, angry lights, or romantic lights, for the tech crew to have an idea of what lights to put and not just make things up.

VIDEO – Video name. If the video isn’t finished yet, put the name of the video maker as well.

Props/Notes – the props to be used for the dance or set changes. If there’s a props head with a separate props lists, the props section need not be too detailed.

It should be complete but concise. You won’t have time to read a paragraph before every dance. It should be complete enough so at a single glance in between dances you would know exactly what to do next.

1. Repertoire Guarding

Repertoire is reproduced at the last minute. There will be changes til the very end. Keep note of all copies made during rehearsals and collect them all after. If some people want to keep theirs, make sure you take back or make them discard the old copy if there is a new version. All repertoires should be consistent. Hell will break loose if not.

Always put date, version number and your name (so if something is wrong, people know who's fault it is)

People with copies of repertoire-Rehearsal

1. SM (you)

2. ASM (only 1 of them)

3. Tech

4. Sir von

People with copies of repertoire-Show day

1. SM left

2. SM right

3. ASM left

4. ASM right

5. Tech music\*

6. Tech video\*

7. Host\*\*

8. Artistic director

9. Props head\*\*

\* Just one if they’re at the same station

\*\* Simpler version suited to role

## Stage Manager Kit – Rehearsals

Clipboard

Repertoire

Schedule

To do list

Pens

## Stage Manager Kit – Show Day

All black outfit

Pants, belt or adjustable strap to a bag where the headset control can be attached (like the mini amps of rock stars)

Small black hands-off bag (shoulder sling or fanny pack)

Highlighter

Pens

Markers

Small flashlight

Watch with light (hassle cellphone, sayang battery)

Clipboard

Schedule for the day

Repertoire

Extra paper for notes

[Include illustration]

# Working with People

Dancers

Dancers come first. They may answer to you and they will listen to you when you call them. But ultimately you adjust to them. If they need time for a quick change, you adjust to give them the time. If they’re tired and need a break, give them the break.

A dancer is punctual. A dance group is not. People are capable of being on time, but the more people wait for each other, the longer they take.

Dancers and especially high school dancers have short attention spans. Keep your speech at 2 mins max. Long than that, people fall asleep.

Be friendly with the dancers outside runs. They’re still your friends after all. And as much as possible you’d want to gain their trust out of respect, not fear.

Manpower (UP Street)

Memorize everyone's names if possible. They are the ones that do all the grunt work, but do not treat them as such. Be a motivator, set a good example, and treat them with respect. Talk to them before and after each major run or day. Show them how important they are and how to do their job best.

Manpower (Theater personnel)

Get to know all the head's names at least and address them by their names when possible. These people will work with you better if they are treated better. They’re very good at what they do. When things become fast-paced, you’ll need them.

Tech crew (UP Street)

Creatives

Composed of pro video making and music mixing up street mems and some apps, their jobs are as difficult as yours. They will be very stressed finishing all the videos and may not have them ready in time for tech rehearsal. Sometimes they’re done on show day itself. Understand their positions as they are dancing too, but you still have to make this show happen. Make compromises with them to get the work done. Set REALISTIC deadlines. It’s better to make the deadlines together, to the day and hour. “Can everything be ready by Friday, 5 pm?” If it’s agreed on 5 pm, DO NOT BOTHER THEM TIL 5PM. They know the importance of being ready by rehearsals or by show time. Work together.

Show tech

During the show, don’t freak out if the music stops or a video doesn’t play on time. Work calmly with tech to get the issue resolved.

Tech Director

If you are head SM, you will work very closely with tech director. Get to know him well ASAP if you don’t already. If you are ASM you should still get to know him, there are times when head SM may have to leave her post and you would have to take over.

Before the show, you have as much of a say as he does because you’ve worked with the production longer, you know more. Once the show starts however, he takes precedence because his vantage point (back of the audience) sees more. Be very responsive to his questions and calls, and always obey the Tech Director. Always ask first or give warning if you have to deviate. Especially if it’s his vantage point wouldn’t see, like an accident happening backstage, it’s your responsibility to speak up.

Choreographers

Get all the info about the dances from them. It’s important especially if they have special lights or music cues. If they are not finished with their dances, confirm that they have the number of practices ready to finish and polish their dances. If they’re really cutting it close, as possible due to other obligations, work with them to compromise.

Artistic director

Take notes for artistic director

Make notes legible and understandable

Stay beside when director is giving comments

Production Manager

It’s usually UP Street President, your real boss.

Ate Gelu / Head stage manager

If you are not head stage manager, you will work super closely with one. You’re HSM is your mentor or your best friend. Stick to her at all times, relay any new information you learn and absorb everything from her end. You should always share the exact same info, have the same calls on everything. If you are both asked questions, you should have the same answer. You will mostly be in-charge of scheduling and making sure everything is ready on time.

Working with Ate Gelu or a pro SM is a great experience. Learn as much as you can. I learned everything I know from Ate Gelu.

# Milestones

- Upon finding who got the role

Read this manual

Start memorizing everyone’s names and getting to know everyone if you don’t already

- Week before show

Know all the dances and who their choreographers are

Know all the videos and music and who's making each one (if not yet finished)

Preset or entering

Tech rehearsals

Simulate everything to its actuality as much as possible. It should be the tech apps there. It should be the very equipment and the very cables.

- 3 Days before show

Get sir von (or artistic director) to schedule out all 3 days and show day already, which dances need to be blocked, polishing, dress rehearsal everything. Then follow it the best you can as early as possible.

- Day before show

In everything til day before the show, allow the choreographers the time they need to make their dances perfect. It’s street fuzion. People are always cramming. But come show day, it's your time.

Confirm tomorrow’s schedule to the hour

- Day of show

If a choreographer takes the time to describe the lights, make sure it gets done. I wasn't able to get the light of coach yang right for the creation piece. We didn't have to time to rehearse it, but I probably could have found another way or made sure there was time to put in the lights. The timing was off and the effect of "there was light" didn't happen.

Walkie-talkies are the best

Have at least 3

1. Front of house

2. Audience area

3. Backstage

Efficiency is increased tremendously, especially if cell signal is low

Don’t forget to wait a few seconds before speaking

Don’t lose the antenna. They are expensive.

- Before show

Company call 30 minutes before open house. Don’t include front of house people. Include everyone else, apps, guests, etc.

- Showtime

- Punctuality isn't trying to be faster a few hours before curtain up. You have to be on time the whole day of. You have to be on time in the days leading to.

- Personal setup

- Stations final check

Keep the headset mic up or super cover it when talking/shouting to dancers backstage.it gets loud and will disturb the tech people on the other end

Have the next 2 segments or dance segments on standby.

Standard Cue segment

1. Blackout/Video
2. Dancers & props if preset
3. Cue Music
4. Lights fade in

Cues are only strict during major productions and usually head SM does that. In minor productions, which are usually more extemporaneous, cues are a lot simpler and become routine.

ASM are also there to run to the hosts, hand over mics. Or pick up props that fell between dances.

How to pick up a fallen item

1. Plan your route to the item

2. Strategize how to pick it up (I’m serious, it gets dark, pitch black. I ran to get a prop, but I could not see it, I just ran back)

3. Wait for blackout or SM cue

4. Run like the wind to the item

5. Pick up item

6. Run straight across if possible to the other side.

- After the show

Hug your SM team and congratulate everyone

Celebrate

Account for all materials and make sure everything is packed up

- When you get home

Write down about what happened today. Add to the manual how the concert was. Indicate major or minor blunders.

# Rules

* Ultimate pet peeve - dancers peeking in the wings. It’s hard to resist, but once an audience member sees someone peeking the show loses its professionalism immensely. Tell the dancers to leave earlier if they can't get there faster.
* Don’t implement rules you don't follow yourself. If people can't go past a certain point at the wings, you shouldn't either.
* If dancers have to quick change onstage, make them do so with character
* It’s always music then lights

# General Tips

* Dress well - you feel more confident. On a more practical side, looking and dressing well will make it easy for others to work with you because you look trustworthy.
* You have power. Use it.
* Don't make your reminders too long. I learned that the hard way.
* Don’t wait til last minute. If you think you need **help**, admit it and look for help.
* Be punctual, don't start 1 hour late. But useless if there's no one watching.
* Always have a printer backstage

# Concert Stories

**Chosen Ground 6 Battleground Zero**

- The show was in Meralco Theater, far, we left some important props. It was very traffic. The backdrop came 2 hours before show time. Theater personnel, understandably takes their break during this time. But they had to overtime for our mistake.

- Don’t forget to print the repertoire in LANDSCAPE, not portrait. Especially if it's edited in landscape

-Stage looked empty during battles, made dancers go onstage. Implementation was awkward

- Apps weren't enough, lots crammed, dancers had to step in and help

**Street Fuzion 11 Reconnect**

The set design was a monitor and mouse. The mouse was huge with wooden structure and everything. It obviously took the apps a lot of effort to make. It was all black though and couldn't be placed nicely on stage and just looked like a black lump. It was taken out of the show.

The light cord for the set wasn't placed very strategically. After compet piece, someone must have tripped over a cord and the stage left light fixture went out. It stayed off for the remainder of the show.

**Groove Central 2011**

Host script was difficult to understand so classes weren't said in sequence. But it was thankfully only in last part. It was crammed backstage, so difficult to deviate.

Parents were very difficult. Late start. People were getting angry outside. It also started to rain. If it does, let people in immediately. Move the line start in.

**Chosen Ground 7 UPGrade**

Materials were incomplete. The certs for 2nd and 3rd place weren't there. Sir von awkwardly just shook their hands.

Host script was all made last minute all the bits were in different sized paper

UP film had only 1 entrance in and out. It was very difficult.

**Street Fuzion 12 word**

In all-girl compet piece (with full skirts) the music stopped in the first fourth. Player was low batt and died. Needed blackout, house music on, and reset the piece.

Since the songs were connected, we couldn't pause the music to wait for compet to be complete on stage for their contemporary piece. Had to stop music. It took a while to get the music back to the same place.

This could have been prevented. I had it in my notes to remind compet of this fast entrance. But in announcements, I just said a general "everyone should come earlier". So the note wasn't taken properly.

During stage rehearsal on show day, practice the sound effects dance. A set of girls danced barefoot. Ate jam stepped on a pushpin upon entering and yes it hurt. The 2D jeepney set from the earlier first day funk dance had the push pin this fell off from. We're supposed to prevent dancer injury not cause them. This should never happen again

**Chosen Ground 8**

No switcher, no access to projector. Pau and abbey had to climb up on a scaffold and physically cover and uncover the projector in-between dances. With only tech cueing through a walking talkie. It was very difficult.

Judges table wasn't ready when judges were announced DURING THE SHOW. Everyone forgot about it.

One group's music stopped 2/3rd of the way. They had to repeat. Another group's mix was strange; some parts too loud some parts too soft. Sound guy had to keep on the volume too decrease if it got too loud or increase if it got too soft.

It was in a parking lot, stage got sandy. Had to call a janitor to mop the stage twice during the show.

**Street Fuzion 13 puso**

Set up.

- The heartbeat line couldn't appear on either side of the screen so it was just connected and placed on top

- The heartbeat line was supposed to glow when black light was on. But the paint used was flat and didn't shine. This was an hour before the show. We had to call all the apps and DANCERS even to help out in wrapping each and every wooden panel with scratch bond paper, which would work fine in the end.

During open house, some of the MAD kids went on stage because they weren’t being attended to by their PA. PA was late and did not feel the sense of urgency of the position.

Sir xernan indak piece. An auto alert came out in the laptop used, and the music stopped 1 min before the end. The punch line was ruined

Had to repeat dance. But we had to redo the set change from act 3 to act 4

Act 4, we took too long. We were seen on stage. And a cloth panel fell slightly because it wasn’t installed properly

In intermission mtv piece. The plastic cup of water used for the one direction segment was left on stage. It didn't cause damage but it could have.

**Groove central Broadway**

Poles to too long to be removed for second show. It took 40 seconds. Curtains went up and the feet of the airforce boys were seen.

Didn’t have an assistant manager (they kept leaving the station) so classes weren't called for the final bow in the first show. And not everyone was their when coach vimi called the class.

**Crew Dance**

One Crew waltz dance, Ate Love didn’t make it because she was still changing.