

Theatre People: Director

A Theatre Director is responsible for the complete concept of the production. Many people contribute the creation of the production, and the director is the head visionary which everything goes through to create a united piece of theatre. It is the director's responsibility to deliver and interpret the show's artistic elements by opening night. They must do this in a manner that is not only artful but financially responsible to the Producer. A director is typically hired by a theatre for a particular show on a contract basis.

Tasks and activities in a typical day

A director's day varies depending on what stage they are at in their work. Activities include:

- Pre-rehearsal Preparation: interpreting the script, doing research, having conversations with set, costume, lighting, sound, and projection designers, casting, and rehearsal scheduling
- Attending production meetings and having informal meetings to maintain communication with artistic teams and stage management throughout the process.
- Guiding the rehearsal process: leading read-throughs of the script; breaking down scenes to develop characterization; blocking the play (deciding on the movement and actions) in a way that takes set design and audience sightlines into account
- Collaborating with actors in rehearsal: exploring blocking; drawing out character motivations and relationships; determining the final pacing of the play that matches their artistic vision
- Discussing cue placement and timing with lighting and sound designers
- Overseeing technical rehearsals and full runs of the show to see what adjustments are needed before opening, and communicating those in a thoughtful way
- Participating in press interviews, radio/television spots etc.
- Attending shows to take notes on how the actors may improve for the next performance.

10 skills that a Director uses:

- Creativity
- Negotiation
- Collaboration
- Empathy
- Time Management
- Organization
- Team Building
- Passion
- Communication
- Willingness to take artistic risks

Building Abilities

There are probably lots of things you are already doing, and things you can start to do, that will serve you in a directing career. Some of these are:

- Watch plays: as much as you can and wherever you can. Think critically about how they are staged.
- Read plays, and understand how stories are told visually.
- Study actors by watching their work and by reading books about them and how they work.
- Read about history and biographies of people.
- Observe people and how they behave, with a goal of understanding the human condition.
- Get comfortable presenting your ideas to a group.
- Learn about other theatre jobs. The director has to "speak the language" of sets, costumes, lighting, sound, movement, music, and more!