

Guide: Company Management



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GETTING YOURSELF STARTED

Congratulations! You are a Company Manager!

Use this document as a guide to understand the scope of the position, the different tasks that are included in your work as Company Manager, and get a brief introduction into how to do the various tasks. This document has plenty of “how-to” steps, as well as links to templates (and/or examples from past productions) to help you get ready. You can also use this as an overview of the timeline, as your role shifts over the course of the production process; the following “headings” go pretty chronologically through the production process.

Give this a read, and then set up a meeting with Katie Meade to go more in depth into what this all means.

Task Tracking

I recommend you make yourself a guide/checklist for the various steps of the process, so you can keep track of everything, and also help make sure amongst your Company Management Team that you are all working together, sharing responsibilities, and tracking your work.

- COMPANY MANAGEMENT DATA BASE
 - [Here is a TEMPLATE for a Task Tracker](#)

Starting with 23/24 ES 5&6, the Team experimented with just one tracker per show – with one tab being for casting, one for CM tasks, and one for collection of documents from company members. Of course, every show might have specific unique needs (if it’s a musical, if it’s Family Weekend, etc.) so you will need to add/delete tasks as necessary. This helped centralize everything by show.

THE TEAM

Company Management Teams are composed of one lead Company Manager and occasionally one Associate. When there is more than one person on the company management team, the lead company manager is responsible for sharing the workload with the assistant, taking turns on various tasks, collaborating on different elements of the work, and proofreading and being a second pair of eyes.

The Task Tracker is a great way to delegate the tasks amongst the members of the team or just to keep track of the items at hand.

Before sending things publicly, always be sure to proofread your work and send it to Katie Meade for final looks.

DISTRO

Another tab in the Company Management database is the Distro Tab. This is a list of everyone who is working on the show and their email! This is made for the purpose of having everyone's contact information in one spot so that you can copy and paste all of the information into an email.

1. You can find the crew and cast emails on the contact form in the stage management folder or production supervision folder of the show's google folder. You can then take the emails from this document and make your distro list.

CASTING

Casting Process

- The casting policy for Emerson Stage has been amended for the 2026-2027 season.
 - The new policy states that students are no longer able to reject casting offers when the cast list goes out. Instead a student's last chance to turn down a role is when they are offered a callback for that role. If the student is not interested in that role, they should turn down the callbacks offer.
 - After the casting meeting, the Emerson Stage email sends out the cast list only to those cast in the show, director, SM, and Company Management. Students cast must confirm they have received the email. The Company Manager should track that every actor has confirmed and follow up after a day with those who may have missed the email.
- If an actor has a question about a possible conflict, that should be sent to all parties on the casting offer emails (Director, SM, Eric Paris, Katie Meade) for them to approve/deny
 - If conflicts are approved during this process, they should be noted on the casting offer tracker
- At the end of this process, we should have a complete cast list, with any new notes and conflicts, and we are ready to move forward. The Emerson Stage email will send out official copies of the cast list to the full department.

Contracts

As of Fall 2026, we are revisiting actor contracts. Emerson Stage is working on a simple rehearsal standards document that Company Management will be expected to distribute before first rehearsal.

REHEARSAL PREP

Create Rehearsal Visit & On-Call Schedule

Work with your team to determine your regular rotation at rehearsals. If possible, it's great for the whole team to be there at the first rehearsal. Other than that, one of you per show per week is a great model, until you get to Tech and Performances; at that point, it should be at every tech (and twice on 8-out-of-10s) and every performance.

Prepare other Paperwork

This is also the time to begin creating the bio/headshot collection form, distributing tasks throughout the CM Task Tracker, and collecting and compiling any information you may need from the CM team and anyone else!

Send Intro Welcome Email to Company

The week before the first rehearsal, it is good practice to send an email to the production, design, tech, acting, and stage management company introducing yourself and outlining the items that will be due the first week of rehearsal, including: headshots and bios. This should come after the SM welcome email.

Script/Score Distribution - ONLY MUSICALS

For musicals where there are rented materials such as the score or script, it is the Company Managers' responsibility to track the distribution, maintenance, and return of all the materials.

The first step is to contact Katie Meade to ensure the arrival of the books and make sure that they are in the emstage office, 6th floor of Tufte. This way we know the books are on campus and are ready to be distributed.

The next step is to contact the stage manager and discuss with them how they would like to distribute the books, as well as how they would like to keep track of the books in order to collect them at the end of the process.

This is the Company Manager's job to make sure that the books get distributed and collected during the process, but the stage manager is the one dealing with the actual procedures of this step.

It is recommended to remind the actors/stage manager throughout the entirety of the process that all scripts need to be returned. It is likely that they will forget and we don't want to lose any.

Please return all material loaned to Katie Mead in the 6th Floor office of Tufte.

FIRST REHEARSAL CHECKLIST: Talking Points

At first rehearsal, you will be given an opportunity to formally introduce yourself to the cast and anyone else in attendance and outline the following items:

1. Introduce yourself and explain your role as company manager/company management team
 - a. Support
 - b. Checking in weekly
2. Bio (and headshots) information and deadlines (generally one week after first rehearsal)
3. General comp policy and comp availability information
4. Marketing
 - a. There will be social media posts to share, folks can do instagram takeovers, and you'll also ask for rehearsal and production process photos to share

If you sent a pre-rehearsal email, this introduction reminds and summarizes that email.

- If you did not end up sending a "week before" welcome email, then you can send it now. In that case, the introductory speech at the first rehearsal will be the first sharing of information, and the email is the reminder. As long as this information is said out loud, and sent in an email, it is all good to get that information shared with everyone.

FIRST WEEK OF REHEARSALS

After the first rehearsal, we'll send out the forms we need people to submit. We have learned that it is best to just send email links to the people who should respond. That is:

- Just send the bio/headshot google form to people who need to fill it out

Generally, all bios and other forms are due one week after the first rehearsal.

1. Bios & Headshots
 - a. We need Bios from:
 - i. Director (Music Director and Choreographer; Playwright if NewFest)
 - ii. All Actors
 - iii. Designers (lead, including Props Lead, and if there is a Hair & Makeup Designer)
 - iv. Stage Manager and Production Supervisor (just leads, no assistants)
 - v. Dramaturgs
 - vi. Any other specialists, depending on the size of their contribution (fight and/or intimacy directors, movement directors)
 1. If they have "director" in the title as opposed to just "coach"

- b. You will share the bio submission form with STUDENTS and ask them to submit their bios. [Here is a sample bio/headshot form.](#)
 - c. Bios are due one week after first rehearsal. Use the Google form to collect bios for the following students: playwright, cast, lead designers, stage manager, production supervisor, and dramaturg (playwright if Rod Parker)
 - d. You will send an email directly to any FACULTY, STAFF, and/or GUEST ARTISTS who receive a bio in the digital program to ask for a 100-150 word bio from them to be emailed to you. That can be due the same as the students, though the director will probably submit later, with their director's note.
 - e. PLEASE NOTE - when making the headshot and bio forms it will not let you put it in the shared drive. Make it in your own drive and then share it with katie and the marketing Emstage office assistant
2. Director's Notes
- a. You will send an email to the director asking for them to have their director's note (400 word max) for the performance program (print or digital) to you by the Monday the week prior to opening (ie, 10 days before opening).
 - b. This can be combined with an email to the Director about getting their bio for the digital program. Check with AGM about the plan here, as sometimes it might make more sense for it to come from them as opposed to from you.
 - c. For New Play Workshop (and sometimes Rod Parker), we also offer a space for the Playwright to write a note, should they choose to. Check in with the AGM and make a plan together.
3. Inevitably, there will be folks who do not submit their bios by the deadline. You will follow up with these folks to remind them to submit whatever items they are missing.

REHEARSAL PROCESS

Check In At Rehearsals Once Per Week

We recommend attending rehearsals on Thursdays, as it's the end of a long week, and there may be info to share for Friday morning's production meetings. It is best to check in with stage management to arrange to attend rehearsal. There may be times when it is a closed rehearsal for a variety of reasons.

When you visit, make sure to check in with everyone in the room - the cast yes, but also stage management, and if anyone from PSupe or Design/Tech are there, they are part of the company too, and should receive our support.

And, this is a time for reminders and announcements (social media posts, instagram takeovers, please submit your bios, comp tickets are available, etc.).

In addition to checking in with everyone, it is also important to just exist in the room for a bit, and get a feel for how the process is going. Sometimes folks might say things are fine, and they are, but it is CM's job to notice feelings, vibes, or any other concerns. Part of Company Management is company care, and so if there's anything that needs to be done to allow everyone to more joyfully, safely, or authentically do the work, we want to know and help support that. Sometimes that means bringing treats to a rehearsal, sometimes it means providing additional resources for the company care table that the SMs have set up, and sometimes it means altering General Management to any potential issues in the room (exhaustion, unspoken tensions, etc.).

Meetings

- Weekly Check-ins
 - Katie will check in with you weekly over email or ask you to meet with her in her office.
 - These meetings may be more frequent or more in-person whether you are on a Family Weekend Show, TYA show, or something that involves more involvement on Company Management's end.
 - E.G. The company managers for Spelling Bee were very involved in collecting the guest spellers from the audience.
 - It's also a time to check in on the progress of all the tasks and upcoming needs.
- Production Meetings (Friday mornings on Zoom)
 - This is a time when CM can offer reminders/announcements to the group. This is helpful, since most designers and tech staff will NOT be at the weekly rehearsal visits, so it's a time to remind designers to submit their bios, to remind folks to check/proofread the website, announce when comp tickets are available, etc.

Comp Ticket Process

1. Please see the [comp policy](#) linked here for information on when comp tickets will become available and who gets them.
2. It is best to double-check that the [comp list](#) is complete and correct before making the company aware that comp tickets are available to them (generally 4 academic weeks before opening night)
 - a. This list might first be filled out by Emerson Stage Office Assistants and you will double-check that it is correct and is not missing anyone from the groups (let me know if you don't know where to access these lists) as outlined in the comp policy.
3. You should send out an email informing everyone that comp tickets are now available. In that email, you should link the [Comp Policy](#) so that everyone has access and can double check.

4. The Box Office folks will handle the comps from here. If anyone reaches out to you to book their comps, remind them to go directly to the box office (email, phone, or in person).
5. If you receive questions from the company, refer to the comp policy document. If the answer is not there, loop in general management.
 - a. It can be a little gray as to who gets the “one for every night plus a floater,” when folks have a medium-sized leadership role. In general, we try to keep it consistent that those are the people who get bios, and will be in the top purple box of the program, and listed on the program poster.

Social Media

1. At some point mid-process, the Emerson Stage Office Assistant team will create a social media version of our poster. Check in with them about the timeline; they generally make it a couple weeks into the rehearsal process, and then you will share that with the entire company. Encourage them to share it on their social media, and to tag Emerson Stage (and use the moment to remind them to follow EmStage)
2. You may also look for 1-2 people (or pairs) for an Instagram takeover(s). We like to do at least one during the tech/dress process, but also doing one mid-process can be fun, too. Or maybe on a performance day. Folks often do it on their own, but also folks can do it in pairs, which can be fun to work on together. Start recruiting a couple weeks into the process, and be in touch with Katie to get that coordinated.
3. If you have any ideas revolving around social media, feel free to ask Katie Meade if it is something we can do! We are encouraging Company Managers to come up with their own ideas on how to promote the show.

TECH WEEK

In advance of Tech and Performances, please create an “on-call schedule” for every visit that your team will be making. Share this with PSupe, so they know to be on the lookout for you, and so that the PSupe on call connects with the CM on call at the top of each day.

Throughout the tech process, the Company Manager should attend at least two production meetings which will take place at the end of each tech day. Most likely around 10:30pm, but double check with the tech schedule or the stage manager. You should also check in with the cast twice during tech week to make sure things are going well!

- Depending on if the Company Manager is more involved in the process, then you would want to attend tech more regularly and stay throughout the entirety of tech.

At some point at the beginning of tech, make sure to email everyone on the show, asking them to check the website program to ensure their name is spelled correctly and that they are credited accurately.

PHOTOGRAPHER

You will be responsible for coordinating with the photographer to make sure that we get production photos taken during tech. This generally happens during our Final Dress Performance, but if there are scheduling issues that the photographer can come during one of our shows.

Email the photographer about 2 weeks prior to tech to coordinate a time that the photographer can come. Connect with Katie about contact information for the Photographer.

You will make sure to sign them in on ivisitor and know where to go. Meet them at the front of whatever building you show is in to help them get to the theater.

PERFORMANCES

In preparation for performances, you will need to prepare lobby signage for:

1. Content & Sensory Advisories
 - a. Check with Katie to confirm what those are about 10 days before opening
 - b. [Template](#)
2. Understudy announcements
 - a. In the event of an understudy going on, you will need to [post signage in the lobby](#), as well as update the website.
 - b. Check with Katie about Office assistants who will update the website in the event of an understudy going on.
3. Talkback signage
 - a. If there is going to be a talkback, create a sign for that as well. [EXAMPLE](#).
4. Late Seating & Reserved Signs
 - a. If there is a particular place the creative team wants to reserve, we may want to put some late seating signs out to designate that. [Here is a TEMPLATE](#).
 - b. We may also need to reserve seats for special guests. Sometimes it's for the director, sometimes it's for college VIPs, sometimes it's the Dramaturg so they can easily jump up to announce the talkback.
 - c. There should be laminated versions of both in the CM mailbox, which can be used over and over again.
5. Check in with the Front of House Team
 - a. The Front of House Team (FOH is responsible for all seating and audience needs. If there is any audience interaction or actors entering from the house please alert the ushers working the show.

- b. Make sure that the FOH team is passing out the physical programs that are provided by Emstage!
 - i. This is your job to make sure that they get these programs. They will be given to you by Katie Mead.

One representative from the company management team should be present at every performance at least through intermission. This is part of the on-call schedule as well, as someone from the CM team is responsible for checking in with everyone about any needs or concerns before each performance. At the shows, you will:

- Check in with PSupe and SMs about any other needs or concerns
- You will also have a radio, to communicate with PSupe, SMs, and FOH as needed, especially if you are all in different places (eg, SM in the booth, CM in the green room, PSupe in the lobby, etc.) in case of any needed communication.

When you leave (10 minutes after the last act starts in a play with at least one intermission, or 15 minutes after the show begins for a no-intermission production), check "out" with PSupe and return your radio.

Strike

Check with Katie during performance week to determine if there will be anything that the CM team will be responsible for during strike. Most often, the CM duties revolve around the lobby:

- Taking down and throwing out lobby signage, which you put up (around talkbacks, advisories, etc.)
- Collecting and returning the seating signage (reserved and/or late seating)
- Bringing the program posters and easels back to Tufte 6th floor
- Photographing, taking down, and bringing any Dramaturgy display elements back to Tufte 6th floor
 - Start a conversation with the AGM and Dramaturg as to their plan - if they will be at strike and/or closing, if there's anything they want to save or have photographed, etc.
 - If the Dramaturg will be at strike or closing, they should take the lead and you can help them. If they are unable to strike their materials, you should take that on with the rest of your lobby strike.
 - Make sure if they use any easels, pens/pencil cups, etc. that those get back to 601 office

MISCELLANEOUS/SHOW-SPECIFIC TASKS

There are some tasks that you will only need to complete on specific productions. That includes specific tasks for musicals, the TYA show, anything happening on Family Weekend, NewFest Short Works, and likely some other one-off cases. There are also certain tasks that are done on an as-needed basis.

Musicals: Musicians/The Band

For Musicals, you'll be very involved with the Musicians. A [comprehensive guide to Musicians is linked HERE](#), to coordinate across departments. Be in touch with Katie and the Music Director (either John or Sariva) well in advance to start planning for these Sitzprobe and Band Management.

As the primary liaison with outside guests, and with contracting and management as part of the Company Management job, and with you being the primary liaison for the production, much of the work around the band falls to you. You support and manage the band in the following ways:

- Schedule
 - You will also coordinate with SMs and PSupes about times and venues for the band rehearsals, especially when it comes to the Sitzprobe and timings of dress rehearsals
- Email communication
 - You will send an intro email, with notes about schedule, contracts, etc. to the band prior to rehearsals
 - You will communicate with them about how to get into the buildings, getting them into iVisitor, making sure someone helps them in at the Freight elevator, etc.
- Band Rehearsals Management
 - You are responsible for setting up and striking band rehearsals. PSupes should also help in this endeavor; based on mutual schedules, 2 CMs and 1 PSupe are hopefully available for each set up and strike.
 - You will have contracts, etc. ready
 - We may choose to get Dunkin'/snacks for them. Ask Katie.
 - You will also be a point of support throughout Tech, checking in with the MD and band, and connecting with PSupe if there are any questions in either direction
- Strike & Collection of Scores
 - Be there at strike to help strike the pit, and collect scores.
 - Communicate with Katie about score return.

TYA Shows/Theatre for Intergenerational Audiences

For the TYA Shows, you should keep an eye on when the Student Matinees are. These are generally the first two performances, during weekdays at 10 AM. Your role is not too different than on other shows, but you will need to be present and on-call for these shows. Since there are extra people around, and things are a bit more complicated, it's best if you can be there for the entire show, not just for the pre-show. Schools will be arriving, and leaving, and just having a couple more of us around can help facilitate any needs. Additional tasks may include:

- Labeling and taping off sections of the theater by school (with the Katie at 8:30 AM and/or the evening before)
- Walking students in from the school bus into the theatre venue
- Checking in with the Education Directors about lobby setup
- Being another adult helping guide students and chaperone/teachers to bathrooms
- Communicating with Katie and/or PSupes and SMs about any wild events that come up (a kid gets sick, a school bus is running late, who knows what else).

Family Weekend

For the Family Weekend Shows, there are often extra elements, including:

- Backstage tours on Saturday between the performances
 - Talk about this early! And make sure Family Weekend promotes the tours
- Catering dinner for all involved on the two-show Saturday
 - These are often 4 PM and 8 PM, leaving less time for folks to get dinner between
 - *Imogen Says Nothing* will be 2 PM and 7 PM, but that extra hour is needed given it is a longer play.
 - Order this early, so we can do it through Dining Services.
 - If not, coordinate with Katie about ordering catering from Panera, or Chipotle, etc.
- Family Weekend is sometimes a musical, and sometimes a TYA show, compounding the specific needs of the production.
- Past CM teams have expressed that Family Weekend would be a good time for a CM Team Instagram Takeover. If you want to do that, be in touch to set it up!

Communicate with GM and AGM about any preparations needed for these events.

NewFest Short Works

For NewFest Short Works, Company Management has some slightly different responsibilities. Check the [How To Guide to NewFest Short Works](#) for full details on that process.

- Ticketing
 - For NFSW, you will also be responsible for Ticketing and Front of House Duties. Consider this part of being on-call for these shows
 - For these, we ask that two folks from the CM team are at each performance.
 - For these performances you should arrive 1 hour before curtain
 - Make sure to discuss the process with Katie a couple of weeks in advance
 - This is a good time to assign who will be at each performance
 - And a time to make sure Katie has spoken with the box office about getting tickets printed
 - The first thing you do will be to check in with actors, SMs, PSupes, etc.
 - Then go to the 6th floor, where you will pick up the printed tickets and signage, and set up in the lobby - near the box office.
 - You will grab the bundle of tickets for that performance
 - You will grab a table sign with a QR code
 - There should be a folding table there
 - This will be very similar to student theater productions
 - You will need to bring a laptop
 - Once the two of you have set up in the lobby, one of you stays there, and the other goes back upstairs to be the usher/house manager.
 - As folks arrive, check them in on the google form ticketing link and hand them tickets
 - If folks have a different number than planned, make sure to update their # of tickets needed, since that has a formula to let you know how many tickets are left at the top.
 - If they didn't register, that's ok too, just make sure to add them to the bottom and give them paper tickets.
 - The Semel is big, but with so many folks involved in these shows, it can fill up quickly.
 - If the number has filled up and folks who haven't registered arrive, they can be on a standby/waiting list, depending on if folks who *did* register don't come, or have fewer than they registered.
 - Keep an eye on the tally, as well as the number of paper tickets left.
 - With one of you in the lobby, the other CM person can be an Usher/House Manager in the Semel, supporting the PSupe

- Depending on who the PSupe is, and what else is going on at the time, they may also be a House Manager/Usher, or not.
 - Spring 2023 had a student PSupe team, so one was House Manager, and the other was a board op.
 - Spring 2024 had just one PSupe who was the staff Asst. PM, and was also on duty for Rod Parker tech, so after they checked in at top of day with Stage Management, went up to the Greene. They had a radio for issues that came up, but were not present in the Semel.
- As House Management, the best thing to do is just be in the Semel lobby, welcoming people off the elevators, directing them into the theatre, pointing out the QR code, pointing out the bathrooms, etc.
- 15-20 minutes after the performance begins show, you can close up the lobby/ticketing set up from the basement, bring those items back to the EmStage office, and go check in with House team, seeing if anything has come up that you need to be aware of
- As long as nothing is needed, you are both free to leave 30 minutes into the performance.

Catering/Meals

Sometimes show processes will require us to support the cast, crew, and other company members by getting food. Each process is a little different, but it might include:

- Early meal plans (see notes on Pre-Rehearsal)
- Purchasing Meal Vouchers
- Getting the Dining Hall to cater a meal
- Ordering and purchasing to-go meals from Chipotle, Panera, or other restaurants

These will all require coordination with Katie to determine the need, and then how to go about ordering the food, how it gets billed/paid for. Then, the CM team may be responsible for picking up and delivering the food (if from an outside restaurant).

POST-SHOW

Script & Score Collection

For all shows that require we return materials, it is up to the Company Managers to collect the scripts (and scores). This is usually just for Musicals, but it's always important to check with the

Katie in advance to ensure which shows will need this. It's helpful to remind Actors (and anyone else who has scripts) this during dress rehearsal, and encourage them to bring them back to the final performance to hand off. You can also create a drop-off box in the Emerson Stage Office for them to bring back the following week. For that, you should create a full list sign-off, with everyone's name who has a script, and a place for them to initial when they return it. This requires some coordination with Stage Management in advance, so we know exactly who has scripts (other than the cast) that need to be returned. Ideally, this won't be an issue, since scripts should come from you, but in the event you leave a few extra in the rehearsal room and they get shared out, SMs should be the ones to track that.

Scores: you will get back from Musicians at closing after the final performance.

You should also check with the Katie about whether or not materials need to be erased (for MTI) or if they can be marked up (Concord Theatricals). See information above in "[Script/Score Distribution](#)."

Posters

After the show closes, there will likely be extra posters. Check with the Office Assistants, but if there are, you will email out to the company distro list, telling them if they want a poster, to come to the 6th floor to pick them up (with a deadline, maybe a week after you send it), and then after that they'll be thrown out.

Production Photos Distribution

Once you receive all the photos from the final dress (which Katie and the Office Assistants team will send to you), you will send out the link to the full company. [See this sample email](#) with the information to include. Most importantly, they will need to credit the Perspective Photographer as the photographer, all the designers whose work is in the photos, and the actors who are seen in the photos. ***The sample linked there has the info from one show, but check in with Katie for the full poster credits, and/or take the credits as have been posted on social media for the opening/closing posts with photos.*

If possible, both the photos and poster email can be one email, but that depends on how fast the photo turnaround is (it might be 2 or 3 weeks later, in which case we may want to offer - and get rid of - the posters sooner).