



# BosTEEN Artist Series: Directing Workshop

STAGING A PLAY in 5 STEPS

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**Do you ever wonder how a script goes from the page to the stage?**

Well, this crash course will empower you to become the director of your own two minute play. Company ONE has broken the directing process down to five simple steps. Use this packet and the theatremakers present to answer questions and get a show from the page to the stage!

## The 5 Steps of a Director!

1. The Script
2. The Vision
3. The Audition
4. The Rehearsals
5. The Show

# STEP 1: THE SCRIPT

## Most of the director's work begins with the script.

The script is your best friend! Many directors read a scripts multiple times before they work with actors on the show!. You don't need all the answers, but you should feel extremely comfortable expressing what you think the "spine" of show is about.

## What is the "spine" of the script?

You may hear theatremakers ask the question "what is the 'spine' of the script?" No, they are not talking about an actual spine, but the emotional and underlying message that connects all the moments of the script together. Just like the spine in a body is a structural support, a script has a "spine" that connects all the parts of the story together.

## Here are some questions to help find the "spine" .

1. How do you feel after reading the story?
2. Do you see any themes repeated while reading the script?
3. How and why do the characters in the script change? What “beats” are they hitting?
4. Try thinking of it as the moral of the story!

## ACTIVITY :

*The spine of the script can usually be expressed in one sentence. See if you and your partner can come up with a sentence that summarizes the spine of your script.*

Find a partner in your group to read the scene over with. After you read it begin discussing with your partner about what you think the message or "spine" of the script is. Use the space below to write a sentence together explaining the "spine" . Try to use one sentence.

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# STEP 2: The Vision

## The Director creates the world!

A director is the visionary. They are a leader and tries their best to communicate their vision to all of their collaborators. Treat your collaborators as partners and use their expertise to help bring your vision to life! The director should be conscious of how the audience perceives the show. A great director makes specific choices and really pays attention to small details. Every single detail is magnified on stage. So know your show like the back of your hand!

## The 5 Sense are back!

Remember back to science class when you were learning how to observe your experiments. Your teacher may have told you, "Use your senses to observe what is occurring in your experiment." As a director, you get to create the world your audience is experiencing.

Try to get their senses working !

What do they **see** when they enter your theatre? What does the set look like? What do the lights shine on?

What do they **feel** like when entering the space? Is it cold in the theatre, or is it warm?

Does the mood suggest that they should be extremely happy and joyous, or does the show appear to be scary?

What sounds are the audience **hearing**? Where are the sounds coming from? What mood do the sounds create?

Can the audience **smell** or **taste** something? You are the director and any sense is possible to heighten in a theatre.

Just be mindful not to overload your audience!

## What Vision Questions should you be asking ?

1. Who is this show about?
2. What are the characters doing in the script? What is happening?
3. When does the show take place? Is it modern or period?
4. Where is the story taking place?
5. Why is it important to tell this story?
6. How do you want to tell this story?

## ACTIVITY

*On your own, try to answer the following questions. Pitch your ideas to your group!*

Who are these characters? What is their relationship? (siblings, coworkers, intimate relationship)

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What are these characters doing?

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When in history is this taking place?

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Where are these characters?

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Why is this story important?

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How will you tell the story?

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In the space below write a description of what an audience experiences when they walk into your theatre. (Use your five senses) Share this with your group! Feel free to draw a sketch of your set if you want!

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# STEP 3: The Audition

## Bring in the actors!

Working with actors can be very fun. During the auditions for a show a director wants to see many actors try out each role. Directors look for actors that bring new ideas, work well with their colleagues, and really bring a character to life. Casting actors is one of the most important decisions the director makes.

## ACTIVITY :

*We have some actors coming into audition for you. Watch carefully to see what they do when they begin and end their audition. Also watch out for how willing they are to try new scenarios.*

*Have a scenario in mind you want to see the actors try out? Write it below and we might try it out! ( ex: Try the text like you have been running a marathon all day. Try the text like you are in a scary movie.)*

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# STEP 4: The Rehearsal

## The fun part!

Now that you have your excellent actors, it is time to work, work, work, work, work, work. The Director uses rehearsals to get the actors and stage crew extremely comfortable with the show. The director is responsible at this point for creating blocking or showing actors where they need to be on stage, and coaching actors on their intentions, tactics they use to get what they want, and provide context for the show.

## ACTIVITY:

*Follow the steps below!*

## How to rehearse:

1. Ask your actors to read the whole script again! Check for their understanding and share the spine you came up with.
2. Allow the actors to warm up. Join them in a Crazy Shake Out!
3. Explain your vision for the show, and the senses you want to trigger in your audience. Allow your actors to ask questions.
4. Begin blocking your scenes. *Try using First, Then ,and Last statements.* (ex. First I want you to begin upstage, then I want you to move stage right to the chair, last I want you to pick up the stage right chair and say your line.)
5. Finish blocking your scene!
6. Once you are done blocking, allow your actors to run the scene over and over again! This allows them to be extremely comfortable with the show! Take notes on what you really liked about their choices.

# STEP 5: The Show

## **Sit back and (try to) relax!**

Now for the hard part! Doing nothing. The director's job is done. During the show it's time to trust that all your hard work and planning has paid off. You have full confidence in your actors and stage crew, and you know they can deliver. You found a way to bring together so many creative voices and stayed true to the playwright's story.

## **ACTIVITY :**

*Just chill! Seriously, just chill! And congrats on staging your own performance!*

**Tell us what you think by checking out the BosTEEN Blog  
([www.c1bosteen.wordpress.com](http://www.c1bosteen.wordpress.com)). You'll probably have some photos  
on there to check out really soon!**

