

## **TECHIE TEN COMMANDMENTS – Karl Wagner**

Behold, my Techie: Here is wisdom. Pay heed to these words, and in the days of thy rehearsing, in the hours of the performing, thou shalt not be caught short. For truly, it is said, pay heed to the errors of others and you shall not have to make them yourself. Likewise, remember ye the errors of the last show, and perhaps they will not repeat.

- I. Give not unto the actor his props before his time, for as surely as the sun does rise in the East and sets in the West, the actor will lose or break them.
- II. When told the placement of props by the Director, write not these things in ink upon thy script, for as surely as the winds blow, so shall the mind of the director change. Do likewise unto the cues for sound and the cues for light. Therefore, cast away from you, my brethren, any writing utensil that is not a pencil.
- III. Speak not in the language of the TECHIE to actors, for they are unenlightened and will not perceive thy meaning. Take pity of the actors, for in their roles they are as children and must be led with gentle kindness. Thus, endeavor always to speak softly and not in anger, even when they are difficult to deal with, and recognize not that you are right.
- IV. Tap not the head of a nail to drive it, but strike it firmly with all thy might and with all thy soul, pivoting upon the angle of thy elbow, not thy wrist.

Join not the head of the drywall screw and the #2 Phillips bit of the power screwdriver at an angle, for surely thou shalt strip the head of the screw and mess up the bit. And above all, get carried away not with the glow-tape, or thy stage will be like unto an airport or a carnival fun house.
- V. Remember always that the Technical Director is never wrong. If it seemeth that they are, then thou shalt wait patiently upon the getting of wisdom: thou hast obviously misunderstood them the first time.
- VI. Leave not the area of the stage during the play to sojourn in the land of the dressing rooms and talk with the actors, for as surely as you do, you will be in danger of missing your cue and there shall be much gnashing of teeth and rending of garments: yours specifically, by the stage manager. Likewise, take not thy cues before nor after their time, but at the proper moment, each in its own time, like unto the musician at his instrument. And cover thy mistakes with style and grace.
- VII. Beware of actors when flying in walls, for they are fascinated by anything they do not understand, and will stand and watch, and be crushed as the petunias underfoot in spring. Likewise, beware of actors during scene changes, for they are not like unto you and are blind in the dark.
- VIII. Pay careful heed to the instructions of the Director as to how they want things done—then do it the way that works. In the nights and days of thy labor, they will see thy wisdom, and to themselves give credit, and all shall rejoice.
- X. Remember the first performance and mind it with diligence, for only afterwards shall you breathe normally. Remember also, the Strike after the last performance and keep it firmly in your mind, for only afterwards shall you party, if thou falleth not asleep first.