

Entertainment

Objectives:

- **Create and control the Dance Marathon entertainment schedule**
 - **Recruit radio stations, DJs, and local talent**
 - **Regulate volume to combat fatigue**
- The Dance Marathon Vision
- It is important that you become a resource on everything related to Dance Marathon. You will consult committee members, student organizations, campus administrators and businesses. Be sure to familiarize yourself with the duties and responsibilities of every committee.
 - You are a spokesperson for DM. Discuss and represent the views of Dance Marathon throughout the campus and community.
 - Make sure that you understand all rules/ guidelines set up by your school, the hospital, and even your community. These will guide you and your members need to understand the importance of following these guidelines.
 - The responsibilities of a director are endless and limitless- you must learn to delegate. Many committees will work together to accomplish their responsibilities. Make sure your committee set-up is comprehensive and that one chair is ultimately responsible for each task.
- Committee Creation
- Chairs responsibilities can be time consuming. The majority of former Dance Marathon council members say the most important task they accomplished was selecting a strong council. After you relay the Marathon vision, the committee members carry this vision to reality.
 - Involve as many people as possible, but make sure to assemble a committee that is dependable and energetic. Search to find individuals that are hard working and able to commit a large amount of time to fundraising for the kids!
 - When faced with a great task, many of us find the urge to turn to our close friends. If you feel that urge when it comes to selecting your Dance Marathon council, try to resist it. The committee should be a diverse group that has the drive and determination to make Dance Marathon a hit. Use objectivity in your selection process. Just because someone is a close friend doesn't mean they are a good selection.
 - Encourage students of all levels to apply.
- Run Committee Meetings
- Once the committee is selected, it is time to bring everyone together. This is a good time to get chairs comfortable with each other. Define expected actions and have them set goals.
 - Make the first meeting fun. Conduct some ice breakers and team building games. These activities can immediately make you aware of committee members'

personalities and how best to work with them throughout the year. Make the meetings motivational with members leaving feeling empowered to help the kids at Riley.

- Teach the chairs everything about Dance Marathon. Every member must know all marathon information inside and out.
- Be the critical eye and ear for your committee. Often chairs have great ideas, but they also have the tendency to get carried away. It is your responsibility to provide members with a reality check and help them design back-up plans.
- Keep the students on track. Everyone has great stories to tell about the weekend, etc, but you are there for a purpose.
- As you move throughout the year, you will be able to gauge how often meetings should be held. Some committees hold weekly meetings, some don't. This is up to you, however as it gets closer to the marathon (no less than three months away) each committee should hold weekly meetings.
- Set your meeting day, time and place in stone. Attendance should be mandatory and it is helpful to send out a reminder one week in advance.
- Be sure to construct a committee timeline and see that the president receives a copy as well as your committee.

➤ Create and Control the Entertainment Schedule

- Once the marathon begins, entertainment is one of the things that can make or break the event. The Director of this committee is in charge of the entertainment schedule. Many people think if they like a certain band or type of music it will be good for Dance Marathon. This is not always the case. Many schools have learned that *VARIETY* is key to success. If it is good dancing music it will probably work.
- For example, Rock 'n' Roll is not the only kind of music that will work with Dance Marathon. In their first year, the Universities of Iowa and Florida had live polka bands. That might seem kind of lame on paper, but they were hits!
- Try to schedule talent that interacts with the dancers. Ohio Wesleyan University has a comedy group called "Babbling Bishops" who performed for two hours during their marathon.
- One of the best ways to find out what kinds of music and talent the dancers want to hear is to have them list their favorites on the dancer registration form. They are your customers and you want to keep the customers happy. The happier they are, the smoother your event will be.

➤ Recruit Radio Stations, DJ's, and Local Talent

- It is up to the entertainment committee to get radio stations, DJs, and local talent to compliment your marathon. Work with the Public Relations committee to create a package that will entice a radio station you want to bring on board. Your Union Programming Board, school/ local news, or friends are good places to get contact names for any of these three.
- Also check the area bars to see what bands will be on their play list the weekend of your marathon. They might be willing to stay an extra evening.

- Choose a radio station that appeals to your campus. Most stations have a person in charge of marketing. That is the person you want to make a pitch to. One of the things you will want to find out is if they are willing to let you use their equipment for bands. If you are not able to, you will have to get the sound system from somewhere else. Another question you will want answered is whether or not the radio station will supply DJs for the event and their own cds.
 - While we are the last people to want to reign in your imagination, we have a warning. The tendency is often to want to get national acts with local ties. We caution you against that. With national size acts, you also have national sized problems. You will have to increase security, which will add to your costs. You will possibly have to arrange and pay for first-class travel and accommodations, and sometimes these people are used to getting special treatment before going on-stage. You will have enough to do without coming up with enough green M&Ms to satisfy a pouting performer. You also want your dancers to be there to support a great cause, not just to hear a certain band.
 - The best kind of entertainment act is one that will keep the dancers energized and will do so for free. You have two selling points: your talent is helping people raise money for hospitalized kids, and this is a captive audience who hires bands and other entertainment for their organizations' needs. Bands should be looked forward to and need to be spaced in intervals through the schedule. Find out well in advance if they want to bring in their own sound system or if they will use the one you provide.
 - A radio station or an independent person who spins your disks, even live entertainment, needs to know the objective of the entertainment committee. Dance Marathon is meant to be upbeat, entertaining and fun for all. A high volume level is one of the biggest factors in dancer fatigue. Since most venues for Dance Marathon don't have the best acoustics, make the volume level comfortable.
- Other talents to bring to your marathon.
- President of your university/ school
 - Cheerleaders, band, dance team, athletics – Some schools have done a pep rally to start out the evening
 - Student group performances—modern dance, ball room, anything different.
- Schedule Timeframe
- If your marathon is in the fall, then the spring is crunch time for you and vice versa. It is a good idea to have all of the acts contacted about three weeks before classes end. Explain that you are a student and that you will be contacting them immediately after classes begin in the fall, but for them to keep that date reserved.
 - When you sign a band, it is a good idea to ask for promotional material to put into a band book. Two weeks before the marathon, distribute these books to different organizations on campus. Since the bands perform for free, one thing you can do is promote them.

➤ Scheduling

- Try not to schedule more than 1 band per every 3-4 hours. For example, Indiana University (36 hours) tries to schedule 12 musical acts and 6-7 non-musical acts. If you schedule too many, students will get bored. Remember, VARIETY.
- For a change of pace, try taking the students out for a walk around campus. During dancer walks, divide the dancers up and work that into a rotation. Fresh air will liven them up.

➤ Marathon Prep

- About two weeks before your Dance Marathon, confirm all scheduled entertainment. Work with morale and plan back up activities in case an act doesn't show. Being prepared is very important to having the event run smoothly.

➤ During the marathon

- Make sure that bands have a place to relax and put all their equipment if they are early. Offer them refreshments and take them on a tour if they would like.

*** Helpful Hints:

- Have you confirmed all talents?
- Is there space available to store equipment before bands play?
- Have you allowed them time to warm-up?
- What music will be played between talents?
- When choosing a stage site, think of space needs and availability.
- Have set-up and clean up crews been established?

*** Remember:

- Always have a back-up plan!
- Delegate! Do not allow yourself to become overwhelmed.
- Act as a DM role model. You represent DM whether you are meeting with a potential sponsor, briefing campus administrators, or sitting in a class. Encourage all committee members to remember they are also role models; everything they do reflect on DM. Have fun but remember to never jeopardize the perception of your organization.

Do it for the kids!