

Operations/ Facilities

Objectives:

- **Plan, secure, maintain and clean the site**
- **Turn the facility into the Dance Marathon site**
- **Schedule and store deliveries from sponsors**
- **Communicate a concrete picture of the Dance Marathon layout so committees can plan accordingly**
- **Secure EMTs and security personnel for the marathon**
- **Familiarize committee with evacuation route and develop a plan during the marathon to provide evacuation instructions to dancers quickly**

➤ 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.

- Plan, arrange, maintain and clean the site
 - The first thing you will want to do is to find a home for Dance Marathon. Make a list of three or four facilities on campus that could accommodate your Marathon. Suggestions are field houses, recreation centers, gyms or a ballroom. The next step is to meet with the person who oversees the facility. Your campus advisor will probably know who this person is or how to find out. Meet with the facilities manager and explain your vision of Dance Marathon and your reason for planning one (it's for the kids!).
 - Once you have the O.K. from the site manager, it is time to paint a mental picture of Dance Marathon and transfer that vision to paper. Be mindful of all the information learned at your meeting with the site manager. What are the regulations for the location? What is expected of events that take place there? The floor plans included at the end of this section will give you ideas for your Marathon. It is very important to take precautions to avoid damaging anything. If you leave the site any worse than when you arrived, count on finding a new home for Dance Marathon.

- Turn the facility into the Dance Marathon site
 - Now that you have your vision of the Dance Marathon floor plan on paper it is

time to make it happen. Begin delegating responsibilities such as set up and clean up. Many schools have found this to be a useful way for many people to get credit in campus organizations for service hours. As the facilities director, you serve as the focal point for what is set up and what isn't at Dance Marathon. Always keep in mind things like fire codes and limitations on what you can and can't use in the facility

- It is not your committee's responsibility to cover all bases when it comes to clean up and security. At Indiana University they have a group of students called mass members that assist with these tasks. Mass Members are students that come for 1-4 hour shifts throughout the marathon. Instead of a white dancer shirt, these students wear a gray t-shirt and usually stand at entrances or monitor the rest rooms. Because these are jobs that are not as glamorous as others, be sure to rotate them often.
 - Work with Dancer Relations to acquire mass members.
- Schedule and store deliveries from sponsors
- As early as you can, secure storage space that is as close to the site as possible. Storage space should be safe, weather-proof and easy to organize. If storage space is accessible to other students, make sure all boxes and supplies are clearly marked. Inventory sheets and weekly inventory sessions may help organization.
- Communicate a concrete picture of the Dance Marathon layout
- Everyone on council needs to be familiar with the floor plan. Once the floor plan has been created (early in the planning process), go over it with everyone on council. Let them know the key regulations. For example, at some sites you cannot use duct tape to hang sponsor or organization banners, you must tie the banners. Pass out copies of the floor plan and key regulations.
- Essential Items
- With setup comes the responsibility of contacting businesses to sponsor the marathon and donate essentials items. What supplies do you and your committee need to turn the site into a true blue Dance Marathon site? Here are some ideas other schools have learned you might need:
 - Hurricane Fencing: This is an orange plastic mesh about four feet high that can be used to separate dancer and spectator areas and define eating, playing and Riley Family areas as needed. You want to separate dancers from spectators. The dancers are the ones who have made the commitment to the kids and raised the money to be there. The music, games, food and fun are for them.
 - Trash and recycle receptacles
 - Electrical needs: You might have to arrange for sound system and refrigeration if either are not available at the site

- Dancer storage: Dancers need a place to store their extra clothing and gym bags. The Marathon site may be equipped with lockers, which would work well. Is the locker room close to the site or will they have to walk a distance? If the dancers have to walk a distance, arrange for escorts to take them to the lockers. It is in your best interest to find dancer storage space close to the site. If lockers are not available, try milk or mail crates, cardboard boxes, or spaces on a floor. Be sure to get permission from local authorities if you use milk or mail crates. Let dancers know how much space they will have to store their belongings so they will not bring more than can fit.
 - Mops and mop buckets: The site will probably have these. If it doesn't, ask Greek houses or residence halls to borrow them. **Make sure you return all borrowed items!**
 - Extension cords: How close is the stage to the power source? The answer to this question will determine how many extension cords you will need and how long they need to be.
 - Cots, linens, and pillows for EMTs. The facility might have these items, but if not, Army cots work great if your campus ROTC can spare them.
 - Van to transport supplies to site
- All sponsors and businesses need to be contacted at least two to three months before the marathon to be sure they will be able to comply with your requests in a timely manner.

➤ Security

- Security is needed to make sure dancers don't leave, but also so outside visitors don't get into the marathon. It is important to have the police department there at all times in case something goes wrong. It is also important to have an ambulance and medical team either at the marathon for its entirety or checking in periodically to treat anyone who is injured or becomes sick.

➤ Cover all the clocks in the building before Dance Marathon begins.

- Standing in the same building for several hours without a change of scenery can cause a person to check the time frequently. For this reason it is highly recommended that you cover all clocks in the facility. Don't wear watches either. Dancers will be able to figure out what time it is at some point during the Marathon, however, if they have a clock to stare at, time will really drag.

➤ Arrange a rest/sleeping schedule for the executive council

- The executive council should not stay awake for the entire event. Stagger the schedules of council members so not everyone, or even the majority of council members, are gone at the same time. You don't want the dancers to know a council member is sleeping. Some people find this hypocritical but there is a very good reason for doing it. Council needs to be awake and maintain a fresh

perspective during all times of the Marathon in case a crisis arises. In addition, after the dancers and families leave the site, it's time for massive cleaning.

- Directors are responsible for arranging sleep times for their chairs.

➤ At the end of Marathon

- Have as much person power as possible! You will need dedicated people that will endure to the end. Emphasize this requirement in committee selection (It will take your imagination to insure that people stay until the facility sparkles). Enlist other committees and their chairs. Clean-up must be efficient. Leaving the building a mess could be fatal to the future of your event.
- Create a schedule for who will be responsible for what cleanup and where to go after their first responsibility is completed.

*** Helpful Hints:

- Do you have a copy of the floor plans and layout of the facilities?
- Remind council about the rules/ regulations for the facility.
- Complete a schedule of all deliveries.
- Are all of the doors secured?

*** 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 reflects on DM. Have fun but remember to never jeopardize the perception of your organization.

Do it for the kids!