

"EVERYTHING YOU
NEED TO KNOW
ABOUT
FLOOR MANAGING" *

*BUT DIDN'T KNOW WHO TO ASK!

COMPILED BY
M. KEHRER
A. SHEKEIDOFF
&
OTHER "ROWDIES"

WITH HELP OF
DOUG SPENNY
WKAR-TV

GRAPHICS
BY
J. JINKINS

The importance of the job of floor managing is often overlooked or forgotten about in the shuffle of getting a production on the air. As floor manager, you are the vital link between the director in the control room and everyone in the studio. You must serve as the studio eyes and ears of the director, as well as relaying all the directors' cues to the talent. Often you must resort to psychology when working with nervous guests, and must be prepared to handle anything from an unzipped zipper to a heart attack.

Because of the importance of this position, and because everyone has a different way of executing it, it is essential to have a standardized set of guidelines to follow. We hope that this guide will not only make your job a little easier, but also help make our productions run as smoothly and professionally as possible.

- Make yourself as familiar with the show you are working on as possible by getting a copy of the script or run-down, and talking to the producers and directors. Mark down on the script any changes or special information you need and keep it with you during the show.

- Make sure all props and graphics are properly placed. Also make sure your cue cards are in order, and not upside down.

- Check your headset ahead of time to make sure you can hear, talk back, and have enough cable to move around.

- Introduce yourself to the talent and demonstrate your cues to them. They can't read your mind. In the heat of the production while they're involved in an interview or interactive question, the last thing they need to be doing is trying to translate your frantic arm flapping. What you mean to relay and what they interpret may be two very different things. Ask the talent if there are any specific cues that he/she may want or be accustomed to.

- Always be firm, but tactful. Keep the studio as quiet as possible at all times. This means you too.

- Find out from the director who will be receiving the first cue and which camera he/she will be addressing so that you can give your cue from that position.

- Alert any special guests or interviewees that you will be moving around giving cues to the host. This will help prevent startling them during the show. When you give the cues, try not to distract the guests.

- Give broad, direct cues, firmly but not frantically, quickly but smoothly. Nervous cueing may generate nervousness and confusion in the talent. The talent must know when you move or gesture, you are conveying a message not just scratching your nose. If you aren't giving a cue or pulling cue cards, get out of sight. If you are giving a cue, always stand in the talent's line of sight--don't make them look for you.

- Make sure that the talent has seen your cue, but don't expect them to acknowledge it. Look for his/her eye contact with your hand or cue card.
- Don't be afraid to give a verbal cue if it is necessary or the director tells you to.
- Don't give verbal cues to start-"standby" or "quiet on the set" should be the last words heard from you until the end of the show.
- Watch your hand and arm shadows when cueing, and be careful not to get in front of a camera, even if it's tally light is not on. The director may be preparing to take a shot on that camera. Always stay out of the way of the cameras and camera operators. Keep your headset cable out of the way, and help them with their cable when you can.
- Always remain calm, alert, and tactful.
- Look alert and interested for the talent's sake, but don't get so involved with the show that you miss a cue or forget your responsibilities. Don't spend all your time watching the monitor. You can see the tape later.
- Anticipate all happenings as much as possible. You should be ready for most cues before the director gives them. But WAIT for the director to give them. You are not the director.
- Always be prepared for change. If, for example, we go to a videotaped segment, remain on headset and pay attention; there's always the possibility the tape will have problems and the director will decide to dump it and return to the studio-you will have to make sure the talent is on standby and ready to start. The same is true if we switch to another studio-they may finish early and you must anticipate this.
- Always remain on the headset, unless the director asks you to do something or go somewhere your cable won't reach.
- Remain calm, even if the director panics. Don't hang the talent. Put yourself in their shoes.
- Don't snap your finger to get the talent's attention. Instead, get in their line of sight. (Sometimes it is necessary for floor managers to be acrobats!)

- Swearing does not promote a professional image to outside guests, visitors, or your co-workers.

STANDARD HAND CUES

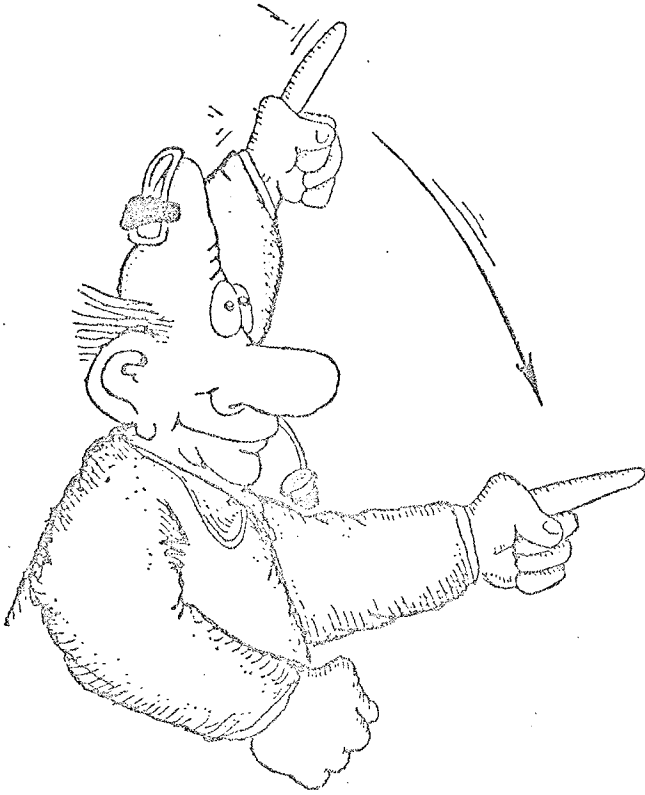
- Standby: Give a verbal "standby!"
Raise one arm straight up in the air, with the arm as close to the opening camera lens as possible. Forefinger should be pointed straight up.
- Action Cue: When you get the cue from the director, immediately drop your arm and point your arm and finger at the talent. Make it a sharp, definite movement. (Make it like you mean it!) Don't get in front of the camera lens when you do it!
- To Speed Up
Action: A clockwise movement of your hand and forearm (in the talent's line of sight). The faster you wind, the more frantic you look; so speed your movement as necessary.
- To Stretch: Place your hands together as if holding a rubber band, and then make a stretching motion with them.
- 30 Seconds: Make an "X" out of your forearms, with your fists clenched. (There are several accepted ways of giving a "30 second cue". We've decided to use this one because of its visibility and because it is the television broadcast standard.)
- 15 Seconds: Make a fist with one hand. Holding your forearm upright, gently (but firmly) shake it at the talent.
- Wrap: Continuing with the same fist, make a clockwise movement with your arm, just as in a speed-up. The faster your movement, the faster the talent should wrap.

Cut: Using either one forefinger or an open hand, make a sharp, cutting motion across your throat.

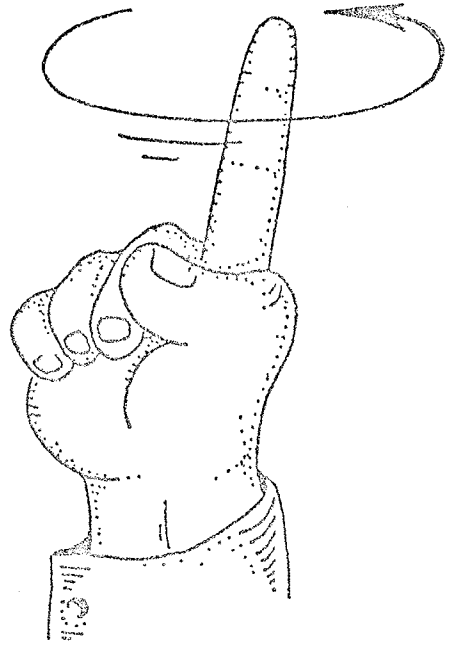
5,4,3,2,1: For these time cues, it is usually easiest to hold up that many fingers. (Good Luck on 6!) The best method, however, is to use black time cards with white numerals, held in the talents line of sight.

Obviously we couldn't write every possible cue you'll ever need in these few pages. Many cues have been invented on the spot, and sometime soon you will probably have to come up with a way to relay some strange message. Always remember that the people you are cueing are not on the headset, and need very exact, charade-like movements to understand you.

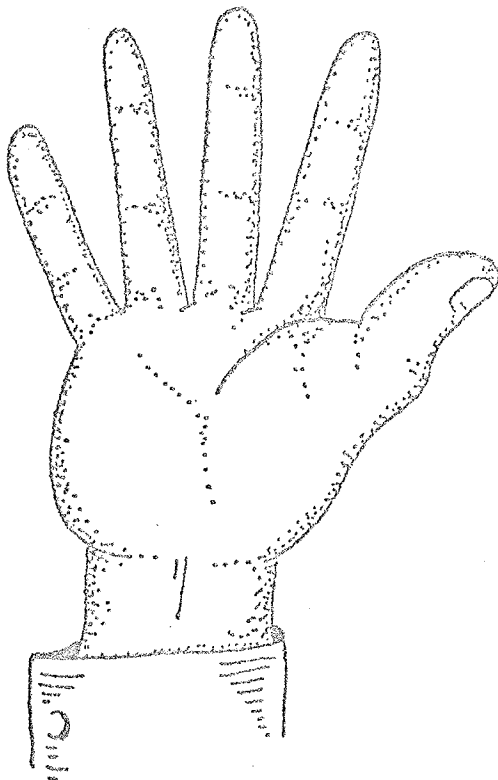
Keep alert, use your creativity and common sense, and don't ever hesitate to ask someone else if you don't know something. Have Fun!



STANDBY! - ACTION



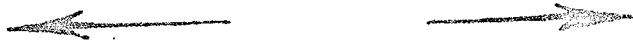
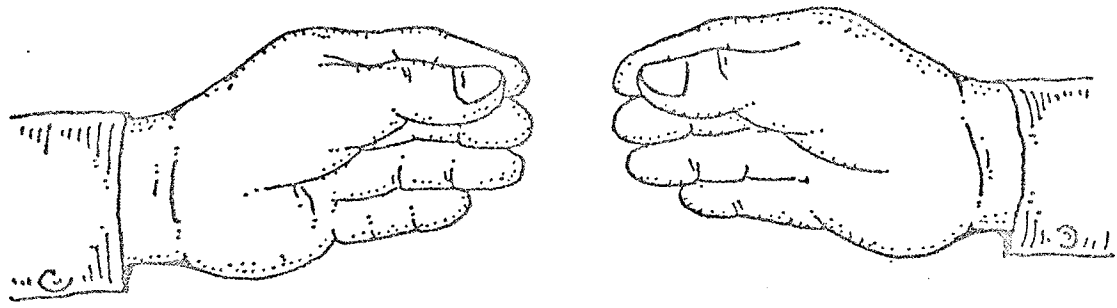
SPEED-IT-UP



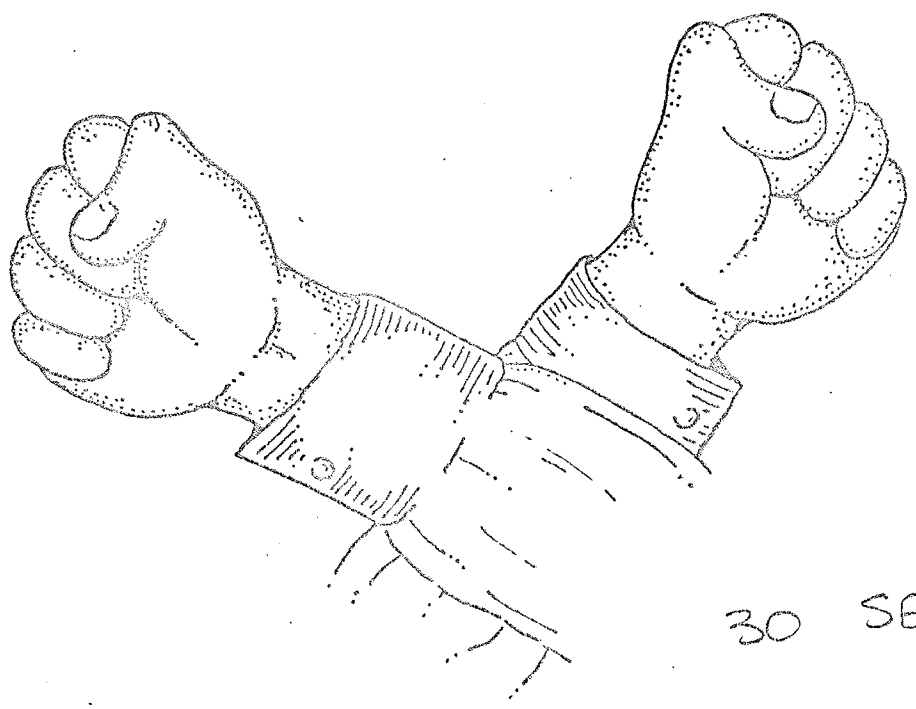
5 MINUTES



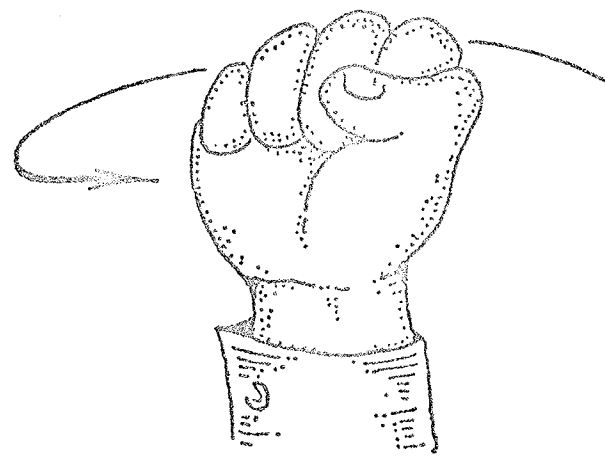
CUT!



STRETCH



30 SECONDS



15 SECONDS
+
WRAP-UP