

TRUST EXERCISE FOR THEATRE COMPANY

AGES: Middle School, High School, College, Adults

DESCRIPTION

This is an excellent exercise to begin working with the members of a new company/production. I've had success with players from ages 8 through adults with both performers and technicians. All members of the production will establish trust in each other to create a rehearsal and work environment that supports the endeavors of the directors and cast members.

FULL LESSON PLAN

Each person chooses a partner. Sit on the floor facing each other with knees crossed - Indian style. Partner's knees should be touching. Extend hands out with one partner's palms on top of the other partner's palms. The director gives three commands: standby, go and stop. Standby is the preparation command. On go, the partners look into each other's eyes and focus while the director times the process. Partners help each other to stay focused and to support each other until the end of the time limit or until the silence is broken usually by someone giggling. The director says "stop" to end the exercise.

When first beginning, the focus time is usually very short, less than 15 seconds before the silence is broken. Continue increasing the time until the company reaches three minutes of focus before the director breaks the silence with "stop." Require everyone to change partners as the time increases. (This is not a staring contest!) This is to establish trust in each other, and it is an excellent tool for creating "a company" where performers and technicians experience focus and support for each other. This also emphasizes the importance of focus in the rehearsal and performance process, staying focused so one does not "break character," and it is an excellent exercise for warm-ups.