Abra-Kid-Abra Operations Manual

WORK SCHEDULE FOR HR/OPS MANAGER

--Daily. Usually in the mid/late afternoon Mon-Thu, you'll be out monitoring an instructor or teaching. In the morn, do scheduling and recruiting first. Then, fit in packing and materials work, and cleaning up (ongoing) in between.

--Annual.
     --Busiest times are 4-6 weeks before the beginning of a term, and the first few weeks of the term. i.e. mid Dec – mid Feb (classes start ~3rd wk in Jan); May – mid June (camp starts beg of June); Aug – mid Oct. (fall classes start ~3rd wk in Sept).
     --2nd and 4th quarter startups are also busy. I.e. Mar – April (classes start at end of Mar/beg April), Oct – mid Nov (classes start beg of Nov).
     --Camp fair time is also somewhat busy. Feb & Mar on camp fair days. The fair is usually 11am-1 or 1:30pm. Arrive onsite for setup by 9:30/9:45. Load out by ~1:30/2pm.
     --Slower times: July. (e.g. wk of July 4). (July is a good vacation time!) Nov, mid-late Dec we have no classes, though we're getting ready for the next term. This is a good time for projects.
     --A key: recruit yearlong so you just need 1-2 at the start of a term rather than 5-7, and this goes a long way toward smoothing out the busy times.

--Monthly. Conduct inventory at the beginning of ea month of items that are in current/upcoming programs, store items, and other items we always keep on hand. Submit to Jeff by 5th of ea month.

--Weekly
     --please empty the trash from all waste baskets every Friday.

HIRING AFTER SCHOOL INSTRUCTORS

--**General comments**
     --<u>Vs. Camp Instructors</u>:   After School Instructor hiring and scheduling is harder than camps, as instructors only work for us 1 hr in the day, and the scheduling can be complex.
     --<u>Different types of instructors</u>:
          --retired: good longevity—if they stay with us. Some have found it's not their cup of tea and quit early on.
          --college students (especially education students): The $, experience, and connections are good fits for them. Often they are not with us long, as their schedule changes each semester, and when they graduate, they are often unavailable if they land a job.
          --teachers: great if can get them. The challenge is whether they get out early enough to drive to class & be there 15 mins beforehand. Some schools end earlier

than others—especially middle schools seem to. Or, find a teacher at the same school we are teaching at.

> --house wives: good if can get them.
>
> --people in between jobs: last resort, as they often leave us when they find a job that gives them more hrs.
>
> --magicians, clowns, entertainer types: good.
>
> --Note: People don't take this job for the $. The money is fine on an hourly basis, but considering that you work 1-4 hrs/wk, you don't get wealthy off this sort of work. Look for people who like working with kids, and like variety arts & teaching presentation skills. People who have this stuff as a passion in their blood. They are good fits. People doing this for the $ won't last.

--Geography: We have classes all over town—e.g. St. Charles, west county, south county, etc. The ideal is to find people either who are willing to go anywhere, or find separate groups to work each area. E.g. 2-3 instructors in St. Charles is good, as many prefer not to drive out there.

--Staffing: It is best to have the same teacher there for every week of the class. Sometimes a sub is needed—fine. In a pinch, you can have someone start a class for the first week or two while you try to hire someone to take it over. Better to not get into this situation.

--Timing: Start working on after school classes in the beginning of July. Francis Howell starts the beginning of August, and others usually mid September.

--Hiring Process
1. Recruit
2. Complete application
3. Phone screen
4. Interview
5. Next steps--Background check(s), specs, paperwork, schedule training and classes.
6. Ongoing: Monitor performance, support, instructor meeting, eligible for raise at end of completed semester.

--at training instructors take home a briefcase, manual, and 1 of each item to practice.

--**Recruiting:**
> **--**Tactics
>
> --Put ad on Craigslist. Refresh it every 2-3 days during the hiring period so it stays visible. Education and ETC are good categories.
>
> --College emails: See if we can email an ad to the teaching students at UMSL (large education dept), and perhaps Lindenwood (Jeff has a friend who works there).
>
> --Referral Program: Pay a referral fee, generally $25. Payable after they've completed their first 6-8 week class. (I.e. they must stay with us that long.)

--Contact old instructors. See if any want to reactivate, or know people who'd like to teach.

    --Performer groups:

        --Clowns of America (Linda Rhode, Sharon Cohen are active in it)

        --other clown groups?

        --Gateway Story Tellers (Sharon Thompson-active)

        --SLU juggling club. Wash U juggling club?   Stl jug club?

        --Puppet Guild (Daniel Romano)

    --Other ideas:

        --Retired teacher organizations. Go to lunches, put notices in newsletter. Offer Jeff doing magic at their mtg in exchange for a plug.

        --Colleges:

            --post flyers

            --post listing at career center

            --contact education dept. Post flyers. See if we can teach magic at a class one day.

    --Strategies

        --Overhire. We always lose a few. Some that we relied on flake out. Some take other jobs and quit, etc. Saying: We are always 1 instructor short.

        --Get a lot of recruiting irons in the fire. A few will work, most won't.

        --Always be recruiting. It is not something done 1-2x/year. Spend some time working on it every month (or week). If we don't need instructors, we can always build pipeline connections—e.g. to education professors, retired teacher groups, etc.

--Application

  --Enter all applicants in Instructor Applicants Google Doc sheet. When hired, enter them in DJEP.

--**Phone screen**:

    --Have own transportation? (necessary)

    --Any criminal history? (must generally have clean record)

    --Experience working with kids? What, how much?

    --What do they do currently? (People looking for full time work—generally will not be with us long. Can leave us high and dry. Last resorts.)

    --Explain that they teach usually for 1 hr. They need to arrive 15 mins beforehand. After class, sometimes they have to wait until the kids are all picked up. (We pay if they wait more than 5-10 mins, which they usually don't.) Often they are driving home in rush hour. They come to our office usually 5 times over a term: 2x for training (which is paid), 1x for an instructor meeting (paid), 1x near the last class to get their store items (they make extra money on the store), and at the end to drop off their case for refreshing. Explain the pay. Are they willing to do all of this?

--**Interview**

    --Interview Qs

--Did they show up on time? Look presentable, well dressed? (No to either—a red flag)

--Have them present & a simple trick—e.g. mighty mentalist. (See if they can catch on quickly, and get a sense of their teaching style and how engaging they are.)

--Have experience teaching groups of kids? (A big plus)

--Tell me about a time when you had kids misbehaving. What was the situation, how did you handle, what was the outcome?

--Explain that they can't just not show up. There are a bunch of kids waiting for them, and it is hard for us to find a sub at the last minute. Agreeing to teach a class is a commitment. (Sure, occasionally things arise…) Are they ok with this?

--<u>General Notes</u>:

--Interviews should be consistent in Qs asked.

--Use behavioral questions where possible. I.e. tell me about a time when _____. What was the situation? What action did you take? What was the result? Premise: past behavior is the best predictor of future behavior. Getting a window into actual behavior re a competency we are looking for is much better than asking their views, or how they would handle a situation. They may be able to spout a good answer, but we want to see if their past behavior is what we're looking for.

--**Hiring Next Steps**

--At the end of the interview, if you know you want to hire them,

--tell them so.

--give them paperwork to complete

--schedule for training (group ideally)

--schedule to shadow a class

--if possible, schedule classes

--the point: have a fast, definitive next step. If they don't hear from you for 1-2 weeks, they are apt to move on.

--Enter specs in DJEP. Includes: days available, pfd-max days/wk, home area, where willing to teach, which programs-willing to teach.

--Enter social security # in employee info google doc. Put their first name & last initial. We keep this info separate from our main database for security reasons.

--Background check thru MO Family Care Safety Registry

--first, call, give instructor's social security #, and see if they are already registered. If so, ask if they are all clear, and have a letter sent to us to keep on file.

--If they are not registered, register them online with own credit card. Print receipt & submit for reimbursement. Or email Jeff to do, making sure info is all in place.

--Do within 2 days of hiring. No one can teach or even shadow a class if they have not been background checked.

--Note in DJEP file.

--Rockwood requires fingerprinting. An advance appointment is required. This should be done 2-4 weeks prior to starting class. Try to minimize the number of instructors who need to be fingerprinted, as it costs ~$50 apiece. (Fingerprinting looks at

someone's record in all states, vs. MO Family Care Safety Registry, which just looks at the MO records.)

--Protecting God's Children. Catholic schools require instructors to have taken this before teaching. See http://archstl.org/ Click Protecting God's Children for list of upcoming workshops. If viable, have them come out to train all our instructors. Instructors earn $7.50/hr ($10 minimum).

--**Training**

--Consists of the following:

--New Instructor orientation class. 1 hr. Generally this immediately preceeds a training class. Primarily it goes over the employee manual, giving quizzes at end to be sure key info has come across.

--2 skill training classes. 2 hrs each. The first teaches the tricks. The 2nd has the instructors demonstrate the tricks and we go over any questions they have.

--On the job training. A new instructor should shadow an experienced instructor for 1 to several classes (until they feel comfortable). E.g. if a new instructor is doing a Tue class, she might shadow on a Mon. If both classes start the same week, she has the luxury of seeing the material taught one day and teaching it the next (for one or several weeks, until she is comfortable going it alone).

--Note: Returning instructors generally do not need the orientation class. If they are comfortable with the tricks after 1 class (e.g. if they are experience with magic or circus), they may not need to attend the 2nd class. Shadowing is just for new instructors.

--Schedule training classes a couple weeks in advance, ideally. Plan your training schedule. Often, we offer the same class 2x—e.g. 1x during the workday and 1x at night. If an instructor cannot make either, we can teach them individually, but let's minimize this as it is more time efficient to teach a group. The 2nd class is the following week.

--Schedule instructors to teach the instructor classes.   Teachers often include fulltime staff and sometimes our long time instructors (e.g. Irv). Jeff often teaches the first new magic class, with fulltimers attending. Then if they are comfortable, they can teach subsequent ones.

--After 1st skill class, the instructor takes home a brief case with 1 of each prop so they can practice. So these props need to be readied prior to training.

--At the end of the 2nd class, ideally they take their suitcase with them so they don't have to make another trip to the office.

--**Scheduling**

--Update specs on all instructors each term.

--classes they are willing to teach (circus?). Classes trained in

--what geographical areas are they willing to teach in? Home area?

--days of the week available? Time available?

--Preferred & maximum # of days/week willing to teach.

--Note bkgrnd checks they've had: MO Safety Care Registry; Fingerprinting; Protecting God's Children (2 hr Training required by Catholic schools)

--Layout schools that we have. Look at % likelihood of them going. Determine # of instructors needed which days, where, teaching what. Look at the total # you think you'll need. Look a the # needed in each part of town, and the # for each type of class. How is our capacity for all of this? Where it's short, we'll need to hire.

--First schedule ones who are more limited. Then schedule ones who are more willing to go anywhere and teach anything.

--Ideally, don't schedule new instructors for more than 1-2 classes/week until they have proven themselves. If you give the 3-4 and they quit, or prove bad, you have a lot to fill. Take it slow with the newbies.

--Ongoing

--Monitoring performance. Observe each instructor teaching in the classroom 1x per semester. If there are issues, more frequently. Use coaching form (in employee manual). Ask how they felt things went. Ask them some positives. Then chime in with your additions. Then ask where there is room for improvement. Try to identify 1-2 areas with them, and a plan of action. Document your review in writing.

--Supporting them.

--Contact them after their first class to see how things went, and periodically to touch base.

--Find out their preferred communication and use it. E.g. phone, email, text, facebook,…

--Build connections with the instructors and an spirit de corps. This can be a challenge because once they pick up their case, we often don't see them until they are done for the term.

--Plan and facilitate an instructor meeting at least once per term (fall semester, spring semester, & 2-3 in summer for camp staff).   Generally on a weekday eve. Give a couple weeks notice. Send out at least 2 reminders. Have people rsvp. Emphasize discussion, involvement, learning from each other, not lecturing.

These meetings give our instructors 1. A chance to feel more part of our organization 2. A forum to give us and other instructors feedback about unique situations they run into in class and creative ways to teach our magic tricks. All instructors will not be available to attend, but it is good to get the largest group possible. Using a scheduling program such as Doodle can be huge help.

--Recommend to Jeff at the end of each term (fall, spring, summer) raises on a per instructor basis.

--Plan well in advance

--Training session dates and instructors
--Instructor mtg dates

--**Substitutes**

--Often you'll get requests to provide a substitute. It's probably easiest to have someone in the office fill these, unless you can maintain a list of instructors willing to last

minute sub. Figure that 1-2 days/week on average, and occasionally 3-4, you may have to sub.

       --Keep classes you teach to 0 or 1/week, enabling you to focus on substituting if needed, and monitoring.

--Instructor Pay

       --Current ASP pay is as follows:

              --Overall, instructor can earn $25+ per class. With store & multi class bonus, it can approach $30.

              --Base rate: $20-22/1 hour class. ($20 is starting rate for all.)

              --$5/class can be earned as a compliance bonus as follows:

                     --$2. Complete classes. Includes being there last class.

                     --$1. Substitutes—requires < 1 sub per 8 hrs of class.

                     --$1. Make precall at least 2 days prior to first class. (Must at least leave a message.)

                     --$1. Turn in paperwork. Evals, attendance roster, newsletter forms.

       --Late. If an instructor has not checked into the office at least 10 minutes prior to the start of class: $10 penalty. 2nd time within a semester is subject to termination.

       --Raises: Eligible for $1 raise per completed semester, up to maximum base of $22. Must have hit all compliance bonuses in all classes, not had problems, and gotten good classroom reports.

       --If >1 hr of teaching, 2nd contiguous hr is paid at $15/hr.

       --Training pay: $7.50/hr. $10 minimum. Same rate for attending instructor mtgs.

       --Travel pay: $.35/mi for each mile over 20 miles 1 way, per google maps or mapquest. E.g. if a school is 25 miles from their home, they get 5 mi extra x 2 (roundtrip) x $.35 = $3.50/class travel pay.

       --Store commission: 10% of store sales.

       --Instructors can invoice when the 6-8 week class is completed. They may invoice halfway through also, if they wish.

       --See the pay tab on the instructor excel pay form for more details.

SUPPLIES

--Receiving Shipments

       --if there is just 1 of an item (e.g. from Robbins), it's a sample. Robbins lets us order a few samples with each order. Please put it on Jeff's desk (you are welcome to look at it yourself first, of course).

       --please give invoices in the shipments received to Jeff.

       --if a box will be stored, mark with a sharpee what's in it before shelving.

Packing Suitcases

       --always use a checklist. (see google doc Props) Sign it and include it on the case for the instructor to reference.

        --stand items on end, where possible in the tubs so maximum items are visible at a quick glance, without having to unpack layers.

        --Don't overstuff the inside pocket or suitcases in general, or they will break.

        --Pack a case based on the # of classes the instructor will be doing. Giving a little extra enables the teacher to have enough supplies if they must sub, if items break, if kids lose them, etc.

        --Get ahead & have several art kits, pocket folder #1, and store cases ready to go.

--Store Management

        --please record each store order in the google docs store sheet with 24 hrs of receiving the order.

        --Criteria for choosing mystery (free) items:

                --Used in a previous program, have excess inventory.

                --Includes instructions

                --Quick & easy to learn

                --Not planning to use again soon

                --Not using it any more is a plus

--Office

        --please turn off lights in rooms you leave (e.g. warehouse area).

        --If you see debris lying on the floor as you walk by, please pick it up and put it in the trash can.

        --trash cans:

                --Please always put plastic liners in them. Keep a couple extra liners in bottom.

--Printer

--When you pick up an item from the printer, please write on the receipt (legibly) what the job was.

--Different Magic Cards We Use

--3.5 of clubs: we have normal size ones and jumbo ones. They are interchanagable, though 1 class should get all the same size. I put both sizes in the same bin.

--52/1 cards. (I.e. jumbo cards that have 52 cards on 1 side) There are 2 types of these, each in a different bin. 1 has a 7 of diamonds on the other side, and an envelope the card fits in. This card, 52/1-7 is used in a magic trick. The other card has a normal card back on the back. This card is a comedy prop and is used in the comedy program. In 1 version, you have a card face down on the table. Spectator selects a card. You have her name it. You turn over your card to show the chosen card is on it (along with 51 other cards)! The other version has a kicker—you turn over the card and their card, alone, is on the back of the card. So the first version is a gag. The second version is a gag, then a trick.

--Universal deck: This has 52 different trick cards in it. It is part of the Card Magic Kit, and we use this deck to demo an item from the kit.

--poker vs. bridge size cards: Poker size cards are a little wider than bridge size cards. If a trick uses multiple cards, they are generally either all bridge size or all poker size. Best not to mix & match.   Most cards we use are bridge size.

--3 card monte: This is a trick where you show a fan of 3 cards, which includes a different card in the middle. You turn the fan face down and ask the spectator to remove the odd card. They turn over the middle card—but it's a different card than they thought. The trick uses a gimmicked card with a flap card on it. We 3 versions of this in the warehouse. 1) Tree Card Monte. This is a self contained trick in its own packaging. 2) Aviator back version. This is in 1 bin. We have used this in camp as an art project. It includes a normal deck of aviator cards, triangular cut flap cards, which the kids tape to 1 of the cards, and some blank face cards, used to write a surprise message on the card pulled out at the end. 3) Made up version from the card decks we give out to the kids. 3 cards per set, one of which has a flap card taped to it. These will be used in magic kits we offer, and perhaps in some magic workshops.

--2 card monte: It uses 2 cards—1 double face and 1 double back. You show 2 different cards, put 1 behind your back, and it switches places with the other.

--Number Prediction: This is used in Wonders with Numbers. It uses 3-4 double blank cards, and 3-4 double back cards. Both of these decks are in a single bin.

EZC

--If an event cancels, please insert "CANC" in the time field, in front of the time.
     --Put "CANC" in all caps. Don't put just "CAN".
     --Leave the original time there.
--skip date field: use "/" for dates. E.g. "3/15".
--If we miss a date (for whatever reason)—add the date into skip date field, note "missed". If we extend the class by 1 week, change the end date, & note in (lvl 2) notepad the original end date, and why it changed.

--email1: always try to get the client's email. This is useful for invoicing & for sending a contract.

--time field: always include "am" & "pm". E.g 3:20pm-4:20pm
       If 12pm, put "noon". If 12am, put "midnight".
       On shows, always include start AND END time. E.g. 3pm-3:30pm.

--Grade field (for asp): put, e.g. "1-5", not "1st-5th". Why? Consistency & less room.

Procedures:

--If you add a record you don't mean to & want to delete it, type "DELETE" in the key_id field (1st 6 characters). The administrator goes through periodically & deletes such records.

--If there is a level 1 record for a contact, then he's replaced by a new contact, overwrite with the new contact's info: name, title, phone, key_id, salutation, email,… In the notepad, note that the old contact was there for __ shows.

SALES

--If someone asks prices on a show, before giving, find out some info. E.g. is the show in or out of town? What day & time? (e.g. holiday where costs may be higher?) Approx how many in the audience? (i.e. big show where we bring backdrop, or smaller one?)
--Let direct mail & email drive much of it. Use outgoing sales for high dollar ones—e.g. asp, in service; and for easy ones—e.g. repeats from last yr, other sales to existing clients, etc.
--ezc:
        --which field: for shows, be sure it contains the word "show". Service field does not appear in the contract—it's for our records only.

ASP Sales—Filling out Screens 2 & 3 of Level 2

- The account exec fills in the date column (column #1) & the 1of8 , 2of8, (or 1of7, 2of7,…), putting them in the appropriate weeks. The scheduler inserts the instructor in each of those weeks before the 1of. If the acct exec knows who the instructor will be, he is welcome to fill it in.
- Date column: Go the row 1 in the Wks column (1st column). Press F2 & lay in the appropriate set of 11 weeks (Mons). This serves as a guide.
    - Note: If you need the 2nd set of 11 weeks, press the page down key to go to the next screen, and do the same thing there. You'll get the 2nd set of weeks for the term to lay in there.
- 1ofs: Go to the day of the week your class is, top row. Press F2 & lay in the appropriate 1of row. Note that you need to make 2 choices: How many weeks is the class, and how many weeks into this term does it begin. Choose accordingly. Or you can manually type the 1ofs in.
    - Make any adjustments that might be necessary—e.g. for skip weeks.
- Instructor.
    - Go to the instructor field (near the top of the screen). Put 1 space after the instructor's last name. Highlight the instructor's name (and the space after it), & copy to clipboard. Then put the cursor in the 1of field, just to the left of "1of", and paste (control v). The space at the end provides 1 space between the instructor name & "1of".
    - Repeat this for each of the other class days.

- Subs: If there is a sub 1 day, put the sub's name in instead of the normal instructor, and put "**" before & after the sub's name, which flags that it is a sub. Put in the lvl 2 notepad that the regular teacher can't make it and, if possible, why.

Last Rev 12/28/10