

## A FEW REMINDERS FOR BRINGING THE FUNNY

**Acceptance!:** The principle of “yes, and.” Don’t deny other ideas, ya scallywag!

**Clean first, funny second:** We all know what the dirty ideas are. You’re not a genius just because you mention one of them. Work from the top of your intelligence, not the bottom of it.

**Be a partner people can trust:** Work to make the team look good and your show will improve.

**Everyone adds information:** The team’s brain is going to bring more good ideas than just using the ideas of “the leader.” This improves scenes—and builds the team!

**If it’s not working—change directions!:** You’ll know when your scene is dying. Don’t let it die! Take the scene in a new direction—create a new problem or find an unlikely solution to what’s already happening.

**Beware of split focus:** There can only be one place the audience’s focus goes at a time. Keep the business smaller in the area where the focus isn’t supposed to be directed and don’t keep the focus on you the entire scene!

**How to use pop culture references:** You should use what’s current in your show, but it shouldn’t be mean-spirited. Keep the audience on your side and avoid politics and religion.

**Remember, too much of a good thing is no longer a good thing:** It might be funny to climb into the large trash can you found and use it in one scene—but then it is off limits! You can’t do any crazy or creative idea more than once in a show. Find something else!

**Don’t do anything to embarrass anyone:** Self-deprecating material can be funny (if it doesn’t become uncomfortable), but you shouldn’t make fun of other people to get your laughs. Keeping the show positive keeps everyone a fan of yours. And I know you. You like fans.

**Use your strengths:** If you’re good at doing voices—use one in the show! If you think you don’t have any strengths, you haven’t accessed yourself very well. A strength can be anything you can do well that can be brought into the show. Remember, sometimes we laugh because it was impressive and unexpected—it isn’t only the funny stuff we laugh at.

**Honor your emcee and audience:** Be respectful of whatever ideas the audience gives you—don’t act over-excited for ideas you like or upset with ones you don’t like. And don’t “preview” anything by doing your Irish accent while we’re getting suggestions. Also, don’t talk over the emcee or interrupt them to add your own

jokes. It almost *never* pays off.

**Always end on a high note:** It's better for a scene to stop a minute earlier than planned (or a guessing game never to get all the way through, than for the audience to want it over with. Yikes. Leave them wanting more.)

**Know your role:** Someone on the team is the "ideas person." It's better to have multiple people in this role! If you *aren't* the one who generates ideas on where the scene should go, you should be someone who adds something else. Maybe you are the one who takes the role (many scenes have this) where it is just *begging* for a certain character. You know it, the audience knows it—but if it doesn't happen, the scene just won't be the same. Figure out what your strengths are and make sure you bring them to the table!