



# The Hit Play

## Chairing Bilingual Meetings

(Now playing in bilingual regions)

### Setting the Stage

- Use your talents to be an agent who promotes English and French at meetings: it's all part of creating an exemplary workplace.
- Make sure your "stage props" (invitations, agenda, documentation) are in English and French.
- If you feel that your second-language skills are not up to snuff, use an understudy (a bilingual co-chair). The bilingual "show must go on."
- If stage fright keeps you from chairing the meeting in both official languages, remember: the participants will feel validated by your efforts and will support you.

### Opening Scene

- To invite participants to use the language of their choice, you may wish to lead with these lines:
  - ***As you know, the documents for this meeting are in both official languages. Please feel free to use the language of your choice. Vous avez sans doute noté que les documents sont dans les deux langues officielles. J'invite chacun à s'exprimer dans la langue de son choix.***
- Remember that the presence of unilingual actors need not prevent a bilingual meeting.

### The Plot Thickens

- It's not a one-person show: everyone has to play his or her part.
- You have a lead role. If you play your part right, the participants will take their cue from you and feel free to speak in the language of their choice.
- Here's a tip from a seasoned actor: alternate between English and French.
- As a chairperson who seeks to master the art, you will switch from the language in which something was just said to the other language, perhaps saying:
  - ***What your colleague just said was ..., Votre collègue a dit que...***

### Before The Curtain Falls

- When it comes to making the meeting as bilingual as your troupe wants, their feedback is vital, so why not ask for it? You could say
  - ***I would appreciate your feedback on the bilingual aspect of the meeting.***
  - ***J'aimerais recevoir vos commentaires sur la dimension bilingue de la réunion.***

### The Actor's Motto

- Practice, practice, practice. See each meeting as a dress rehearsal for the next one.

***Pssst.*** For more information, please contact your official languages stage manager.