

## **Ring Meeting Ideas And Activities**

Maintaining interesting meetings is essential to a Ring's success. Over time a Ring's meeting activities often become predictable and nearly identical from one year to the next. This is fine if most members still obtain satisfaction from attending the meetings. However, membership interests usually change, and what was once of interest may no longer be.

Ring activities which were previously highly interesting also may no longer draw attendance due to the loss of a dynamic leader of the activity; however, often the event has just out lived its useful life. When that happens Rings should try new activities or new twists to the existing activity. An excellent idea is to add two or three new meeting ideas each year so there is a freshness to the Ring's programs.

This brochure is not about the business portion of a Ring meeting. Rather it is meant to suggest activities with which a Ring is not currently involved or tried recently in hopes that they will bring new or sustained interest to the magic portion of the Ring meeting. Such a list of ideas will never be complete as innovative Rings will always find new thoughts and approaches that will make their meetings highly successful and which should be added to the list presented here.

Looking inward to find new leadership and to utilize the magical talent within the Ring is important. When members are challenged to produce a special program or give a mini lecture or workshop they learn much themselves. They may provide insights not previously considered.

In this brochure sometimes only the basic idea of the meeting theme or activity is suggested since the approach is obvious. In other cases detail is provided and suggestions are made about specific activities to be tried. The Ring's activity leaders always should use their imagination to create a meeting that is interesting and tailored to their Ring's needs and interests.

The ideas expressed may be sufficient for a whole evening's meeting. Sometimes it is logical to combine several ideas and activities to fill out the meeting. Often items are suitable for either a mini lecture, a discussion group and/or a member performance night. Adapt and mix events to meet the Ring's needs. If your Ring has an interesting activity that should be included in the next update of this brochure send it to the Brochure Editor care of the International Brotherhood of Magicians headquarters' office.

## **Animal Magic**

*Mini-lecture and discussion on use and/or performance with animals in magic. Evening could include:*

Performance by magicians utilizing animals, animal related themes or props

Techniques with doves and rabbits in magical production

Care and humane treatment of animals used in magic

Magic with fake animals (Rocky, etc.)

## **Bag Magic**

*Discussion of and/or member performance with bags*

Bags include all types, e.g., Egg, Changing, Gag, Paper, Blendo, etc.

## **Black Art**

*Lecture, discussion and/or performance of black art magic*

## **Business Card Exchange**

*Members conduct a business card exchange or swap with also:*

Discussion on what makes a good business card

Prizes given to top three business cards chosen by members

Performance of magical effects using one's business card

## **Business Of Magic**

*Members and/or outside experts discuss aspects of managing a magic business. Examples of topics are shown:*

Promotion and publicity

Fees, expenses and contracts

Self booking vs. agents

Record keeping, taxes and liability insurance

## **Candles, Canes and Wands**

*Lecture or performance night with effects keyed to:*

Candles or canes

Wands, comedy or standard

## **Card Magic**

*Mini-lecture, discussion or performance of card magic with:*

Performance or teaching of a favorite routine or trick

Basic card sleights

Effects with cards and other props (coins, etc.)

Fanning or palming

Business card magic

Special cards or packet card tricks

## **Charity Show**

*Regular meeting is held at local hospital, senior citizen home, etc.*

Magicians provide an evening's entertainment for patients, senior citizens and other appropriate groups; often a meeting room is available for Ring business session at facility

## **Close Up Cavalcade Show**

*A major close up event with guests invited. Magicians of all skill levels have chance to perform*

In a large Ring three to five magicians rotate from one table to another and perform a five to ten minute close up routine.

In a small Ring and with few guests, magicians will perform their magic at one table

## **Collection**

*Discussion by a collector of books and magazines, posters or magical effects*

Getting started in collecting

Buying collectibles (sources and other tips)

Maintaining, inventorying and documenting a collection

Performance of old and rarely seen magic by one or more members who have collected magic

## **Contests**

*Contests provide focus for magicians to improve. However, they are also entertaining for guests and friends of the Ring. Types of contests include:*

Close up contest

Stand up contest

Stage contest

Team magic wherein teams of magicians (either randomly selected or pre-developed) compete. Winners declared by the audience vote

Best magic done with a specific chosen prop, for example, cards, coins, ropes, etc. Winners could be chosen by judges or audience vote

Best magic effect done with a self constructed prop

Best “original” magic effect

People’s choice “magician of the month.” At monthly meeting members perform a routine and an outstanding performer for the night is chosen. These winners may then compete in a final contest for magician of the year

## **Comedy Magic**

*Performance and/or discussion of comedy magic*

Members perform one of their favorite comedy routines

Discussion and/or mini lecture on the do’s and don’ts in use of comedy in magical performances (and with audience volunteers and assistants)

Discussion of favorite gags and comedy props

## **Costumes And Wardrobe**

*Mini lecture and discussion on dress for magicians and assistants. Discussion can include:*

What is appropriate dress for the magician and assistants?

Sources of wardrobe costumes

Use of “costume props” for volunteers

## **Critiques**

*A critique night of a key event is useful to improve the event or to provide feedback on a magician’s performance. Video taping of the event is extremely helpful. Critiques can be held for:*

Ring’s annual stage show or contest performances.

Note, critiques must be done in a way that they are productive in their result and not offensive to those involved

### **Cups And Balls**

*Performance night utilizing any effect done with cups or balls. Could also include dice stacking*

### **Dealer's Night**

*Local dealer(s) demonstrates and sells latest magical effects.*

### **Deja Vu Magic**

*Three to five magicians repeat same effect utilizing their own routine. Several effects are explored in the evening*

Differences in entertainment value are discussed. Members should take special caution to avoid copying another magician's patter and special innovations.

### **Emceeding A Magic Show**

*Tips from Ring experts and discussion*

Review such items as purpose or role of master of ceremonies, tips for warming up the audience, obtaining volunteers, introducing acts and closing the show

### **Escape From The Ordinary**

*Evening emphasizes lecture, demonstrations or performance of magic with an escape theme*

Demonstration or performance of handcuff or straight jacket escapes

Demonstration or performance of wrist or thumb ties

Performance by Ring members of any magic effect which has an escape theme

Lecture or discussion on the great escape artists

### **Ethics For Magicians**

*Presentation and discussion of ethics in magic. Possible areas of discussion are:*

What is ethical and non-ethical behavior?

What if unethical behavior is exhibited by an International Brotherhood of Magicians' member ?

The Ring's policy on ethics

## **Exchange Night**

*Have an exchange meeting with another Magic or Variety Arts Club*

Exchange stage and close up shows with another Ring or a SAM Assembly within driving distance

Invite local Juggling Club, Puppet Guild or a Clown Alley, etc. to do an exchange entertainment night

## **Favorite And/Or First Magic Trick**

*A performance night for entire Ring or one or two different magicians perform each meeting*

Members perform first trick ever performed and tell history of where and when they learned it

Ring members perform their favorite effect and explain why it is such

## **Gambling Night**

*Evening emphasizes performance of magic with gambling theme such as:*

Performance of card effects with a gambling theme

Non card gambling effects

Bar bets and other trickery

Carnival scams

Illustration of methods of cheating at cards, etc.

Historical look at riverboat gamblers or performance by a member as one

## **Helpful Hints**

*Round table discussion or mini lecture on helpful tips and hints that the experienced magicians have found over the years. This may include:*

The magician's tool kit

Care of and maintaining props and equipment

Emergency repairs, etc.

## **History of Magic**

*Mini Lecture On The History of Magic. May choose specific topics such as:*

- Beginning of Legerdemain
- History of the IBM and/or the local Ring
- Biographical sketch of a historical magical figure
- Historical development of a specific type of magic
- Display of local Ring archives

## **Holiday Theme Magic**

*Evening is both social and magical, with themes appropriate to the specific holiday. Note care should be taken in utilizing religious holidays as a Ring event so as not to exclude certain members. Here are some themes:*

- Halloween Magic (seances, ghosts, Houdini remembrance)
- Thanksgiving (“Turkey Magic” Or Magic I should have not bought)
- Winter holiday magic (Christmas, Hanukah Magic, etc.)
- St. Patrick’s Day
- Valentine’s Day (sweetheart or magic with a love theme)
- April Fools Day
- National Birthday (independence day, loyalty day or other patriotic event)

## **Illusions**

*Lecture and/or demonstration and performance of illusions.*

*May include:*

Ring members performing their illusions

Discussion of the great illusionists

Playing video tape of recent illusionist's TV show

Review of sources of plans and building tips for illusions

## **Induction Of New Members**

*Induction of new members should be a significant Ring event.*

*A separate brochure with information on induction ceremonies is available from the IBM headquarters or the Ring's Territorial Vice President. The evening may include:*

Member induction ceremony

New members describing their magical interests and background

Performance of a routine or an effect by the inductees

## **Installation Of Officers**

*A separate brochure is available on officer installation ceremonies from the IBM office. This event is special and should be conducted with the dignity befitting the occasion. It may include:*

Banquet with installation ceremony

Annual awards program

Historical displays of Ring activities and members

Video or slide presentation of the year's highlights

Close up show and Stage show (possibly featuring new and past officers)

## **Impromptu Magic**

*Members perform magic with readily available common items*

Members can be advised of the theme and bring their "common items" to the meeting

Members improvise from what is available in the meeting room or what they have with them

## **Lectures**

*Major outside lectures are a great Ring event and are encouraged. To schedule contact nearby Rings for their experiences and contacts and /or booking agents or lecturer's directly; some Ring's are off the major lecture circuit and/or cannot afford the lecturer's fee. Here are some alternatives:*

Mini lectures by Ring members

Exchange lectures with a nearby Ring

Use of commercial video tapes, followed by Ring discussion and/or workshop

## **Library And Video Basics**

*Ring members review and express opinions on:*

Essential or basic books and magazines for a magic library

Key video tapes to guide the beginner and expert

Sources of used and new books and videos

## **Liquid Or Chemical Magic**

*Performance or Mini Lecture utilizing liquids or chemistry to create the illusion*

## **Magic Accessories**

*Round table discussion on where to buy certain special needs, such as:*

Tables, fanning powder, magician's wax, special cards, costumes, etc.

## **Magic For Different Audiences**

*Ring members lecture, discuss or present magic in which they have expertise. Some examples are:*

Birthday parties

Comedy clubs

Restaurant magic

School shows

Cruise ship

Theme park

Trade show or corporate magic

Strolling or street magic

## **Magic Night And Performances By Specific Groups**

*Special groups organize meeting and perform in the evening's show. Meeting is usually open to guests. Groups could be:*

New and/or past officers

New members

Young members

Magicians specializing in some form of magic

## **Magic With A Message**

*Members who utilize magic as vehicle to deliver a message present portions of their act and discuss their approach to utilizing magic in this manner. Examples are:*

Gospel magic

Ecology or safety theme

Anti drug or health theme

Trade or Corporate magic

Motivational

School skills

## **Magic With A Story**

*A performance evening which includes:*

Members presenting a magical effect that has a story theme woven into it

Awards being given for the best original story and/or best presentation

## **Magical Presentations That Need Help And Improvement**

*Members perform effects and receive Ring's feedback and suggestions on effects that they wish to improve*

Suggestions should be broad and cover staging, patter, music, ending, etc.

## **Magic Performance Night With Specific Props**

*All members are invited to perform routines with the prop of the evening. Props can be standard, such as coins or cards, but the meeting is more interesting as the props become more unusual. However, they should still be possible for most members. A few brief examples of the latter are:*

Magic done with food, inedible food or food containers.

Magic with liquids and liquid containers

Handkerchiefs

## **Magic Performance Night With Specific Type Of Magical Effect**

*Members perform effects that meet evenings planned methodology or description of the magical effect such as:*

Suspension/levitation

Penetration

Transposition

Production or Vanish

Prediction

Restoration

Transformation

## **Mental Magic**

*A lecture and performance night that could include:*

Knowledgeable Ring member providing lecture or leading a discussion on mental magic

Performance of mentalism effects by Ring members

## **Money Magic**

*A performance, mini lecture, and/or workshop evening that could include:*

Coins and bills alone

Money effects with switches or shells

Money with other props

Lapping and sleeving techniques

## **Music In Magic**

*Mini lecture and discussion on use of music in the magic act including:*

Sources of music

How to use music in performance

Legal requirements

Music sound systems available for the solo performer

## **Original Magic**

*A performance evening that would include:*

Performance of a magical effect or with a prop that a Ring member has created

Use of original patter to a standard routine

Awards could be given for best original material

## **Paper Magic**

*Lecture, demonstration or performance evening, perhaps with general or specific approaches to paper magic such as:*

Torn and restored effects

Paper money

Origami effects

Streamers, and coils

Paper bags and other props

## **Performance Of Magic From A Specific Source**

*This performance meeting would include performance and/or discussion of effects that came from sources such as:*

The Linking Ring

The last convention

The most recent lecturer

Magic of a specific performer, e.g., Vernon

From specific books, e.g., Tarbell

## **Performance Or Teaching Themes For A Specific Audience**

*This meeting to include demonstration, panel discussion, mini-lecture or performance of effects for a specific audience such as:*

Magic for specific ages; pre-school, school children or teenagers

Shows for scouts and youth groups

Hospital shows for children or adult patients

Shows for senior citizens and retirement centers

Trade Shows attendees

Magic for bar patrons

Magic for fraternal organizations

## **Photo Or Video Evening**

### *Special meeting in which:*

Photographer is obtained to take pictures of Ring membership and also for individual publicity shots

Video camera is set up to record members performance which is then critiqued by Ring members

Playback of video recording of contests or shows with critique by judges or members.

Playback of a promotional tape and discuss value and qualities of a good promotional tape

Play and review a recent commercial magic teaching or performance video tape

### **Reel Or Thread Magic**

*Performance or lecture night where reels or threads are key to the effect*

### **Reviews**

*Part of the meeting is spent reviewing and discussing recent magical performances. They could include:*

Review and critique of recent Ring or other stage show

Review and critique of recent convention (possibly with performance of an effect learned or purchased by members)

Book review of recent purchase by a member (possible performance of effects from it)

Video tape reviews of commercial magic tapes (possible showing of specific sections of the tape)

Review and discussion of recent TV magic presentations

### **Rope And String Magic**

*Mini-lecture, demonstration and/or member performance on various effects and sleights utilizing ropes or strings. Some possibilities are:*

Cut and restored rope

Rope or string effects without cutting

Wrist and thumb ties

Ring and string effects

Knots, real and fake

## **Selling And Buying Magic Items**

*Magic auctions are a favorite event at many Rings. Here is how some Rings operate:*

Magic auction - - - items sold by Ring auctioneer. Ring may wish to charge sellers percent (often 10%) of sales price and bidders a registration fee. Ring administers funds

“Flea market” or “garage sale of magic,” - - - tables are set up for each seller who prices his own items for sale and negotiates the sales. Ring may charge sellers for table space.

Silent magic auction, - - - items for sale are placed on tables (with minimum sale price listed, if there is one) potential buyers add their bid to the bottom of a bidding sheet. At the end of specified time, highest bidder pays for and receives item. Ring administers funds and may charge sellers percent of sale and buyers a registration fee.

## **Silk Magic**

*Lecture, demonstration or performance of silk effects including:*

Production and color changing effects  
Silks with bags and other props  
Knots  
Care of silks, etc.

## **Sponge Magic**

*Lecture, demonstration and/or performance*

Sponge Balls  
Other Sponge Items

## **Stage Craft And Theatrical Techniques**

*A lecture or mini lecture and discussion meeting with:*

Ring stage performer or someone from a local theater group presents information on make up, lighting, staging of acts, etc.  
Ring members review portable sound systems, lighting systems, portable backdrops, etc.

## **Teaching And Mentoring**

*Extending the magical skill and knowledge of Ring members is one of the key activities of the Ring. Three methods below describe approaches to do this for new members or in some cases for all Ring magicians*

Beginner's Corner - - - before or after each meeting newcomers to magic and the Ring choose a theme and a senior member helps them with sleights, presentation, etc. Beginners are expected to read about and actively participate in development of skills.

Mentoring - - - members with a special interest in a type of magic or magical effect meet before or after meetings as either a self support group or assisted by a knowledgeable member to advance their skills in the chosen area

“Teach In,” - - - the Ring is broken up into small groups and two to four members teach one or two effects to each group. It is a workshop approach and the members should be able to do the effect at the conclusion of each instructor's presentation.

## **Techniques**

*A discussion or mini lecture on how to create or where to find specific magic materials. For example:*

Roughing fluid, fanning powder, gimmicked cards

## **Tips And Tubes**

*Lecture, discussion or performance night on or with the use of thumb tips and dye or other tubes*

## **Unusual Magic Performance Night Themes**

*A performance night for the Ring that could include:*

Performance of “Tricks I wish I never purchased” or “Turkey Magic”

Performance of “The first trick I ever learned”

“Take A Chance Night” - - variety of props are each placed in a bag; members draw for a bag and are expected to perform the effect with the prop after an appropriate time of preparation

## **Variety Arts Night**

*Demonstrations, lectures or workshops by allied variety artists. Includes:*

