

BIGIMOTIK
corporate skills adapted for a cosplayer world



So You Want to Do A Cosplay Skit

Getting Your Skit to the Stage

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Instagram | [bigimotikcosplay](#) | *Work-in-progress pictures*

Facebook | [facebook.com/bigimotikcosplay](#) | *Photo Albums: WIP, references, project files*

Website | [www.bigimotikcosplay.com](#) | *Costume portfolio, content archive*

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So you want to do a cosplay skit (Deciding Whether to Compete)

A big question is whether you want to compete with your skit. This can include competing for just performance or for both craftsmanship and performance.

Competing is stressful. Craftsmanship judging is akin to going to a job interview and is extremely nerve-wracking. Being judged on a performance will add to your nerves and it can be a let-down if you don't win anything. When you think about whether you want to compete, try asking yourself these questions:



1. Are we planning to make most of our costumes?

Most craftsmanship competitions require a certain percentage of a costume to be made by one or more members of the group. If you do not have someone who is making the costumes or not everyone in the group will be able to make their costume in time, then consider buying some/all of the costumes and competing for performance only.

2. Can everyone in the group commit to the skit?

This goes for time and effort. A competitive skit is stressful and requires a significant amount of time and effort from everyone. Competing is a fulfilling experience when everyone tries their best. If some members are not able to commit to time or effort (i.e. making a costume), then consider doing the skit for fun or wait until they are able to fully participate.

3. Are there any members who are new to the stage/have stage fright or are very young?

If this is someone's first attempt at performing on stage, you may want to keep the competition out of it. This puts less pressure on them and makes it more about having fun than the stress of being perfect.

4. Are we trying to improve our skills as craftsman/performers?

If yes, then competing is a great motivator to improve your costume making abilities or your ability to perform. Similarly, if you are strongly motivated when competing, then go for it!

5. Are we just looking for a good time?

Competing can be lots of fun, just be prepared for the stress and nerves that can crop up. Looking for a good time? Compete! Looking for a good time? Do it just for fun!

It's really up to you. Most masquerades will have an "Exhibition" option, which allows you to perform without competing. I've done several exhibition skills and they're an absolute blast!

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So you want to do a cosplay skit (The Costumes)

One of the most critical pieces about a cosplay skit is, well, the cosplay. Two big decisions your group will need to make are:

1. Is the group buying their costumes, making the costumes, or a combination of both?
2. Who is responsible for making sure everyone has a costume.

These questions usually go hand-in-hand and there is no wrong answer here. It's just a matter of figuring out what aligns with your goals and logistics.



Groups may consider buying all or some of their costumes if...

- Not everyone in the group can commit to making the outfits within the time frame
- Limited amount of time before the performance, but there is still enough time for the outfits to ship from a retailer
- Many of the same type of outfit (e.g. Attack on Titan or Full Metal Alchemist coats) and you want to ensure consistency even with different skill levels
- You have a larger budget – a pre-made costume price will factor in materials, time to make, as well as shipping cost



Consider making if...

- You are competing for craftsmanship – most competitions will require *at least* 80% of the costume to be home made
- You have a lot of time
- You have a smaller budget and want to take advantage of sales on materials
- Everyone can commit to making their own costumes, or there is someone in the group who has the time and is willing to make costumes for those in the group who cannot



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So you want to do a cosplay skit (Making Your Audio and Video)

All me to preface this by saying that I have no formal training in music and video. But, I have produced audio and video for over 30 cosplay events (masquerade skits, death match, lip sync battle, chess etc.) Here are some of the tips and tricks I've picked up:

Recording Audio

- Use dedicated mic (with headset) if possible to limit the amount of background noise. Onboard computer mics are notoriously bad. We use a standalone mic with ghost power to boost the signal.
- Record in a quiet place - I've heard wearing a blanket over your head can help
- Keep volume to a moderate level to avoid blowing out the mic (i.e. sound starts getting messy because the volume is too high)
- If recording a scream or a yell, I keep the volume down or move the mic away. This captures the emotion of the scream/yell and then I increase the volume during editing.
- Record lines in shorter clips (1 line at a time) to get more freedom when editing the audio

Editing Audio

I've found that I can get away with free software, but more recently I've been using NCH's Wavepad (for recording and audio quality) and MixPad (to combine multiple audio tracks). At minimum you really want something where you can:

- Splice audio clips and insert silence/pauses
- Work multiple tracks - at least one for dialogue (one track per character also works), one for music, and one for special effects
- Do fade in/fade out effects
- Move audio clips around easily
- Adjust sound levels within a clip

Creating Video

I do everything in PowerPoint to make the base video content unless I'm using a clip from the anime. I do this through slide transition effects, object movement paths and animations. You can record yourself going through the presentation and then export a movie of it using the timing in your recording.

However, this method doesn't render the best visuals. For that, you'll want a dedicated software that can be used to build animations – like the Adobe suite.

You will also want video editing software so you can combine your audio, video, and any graphic overlays. I use Corel Video Studio X9 for video editing and Corel Screen Cap for screen capture.

So that's the MacGuyver version of cosplay skit audio and video. If you'd like to see tutorials on how to do things in PowerPoint, send me a message!



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So you want to do a cosplay skit (Timing and Lines)

Getting Your Timing Down

This goes hand-in-hand with writing the script and putting together the audio. You need to make sure that your skit fits within the time limits.

Things to look out for

- If you are telling a joke, leave a pause for laughter
- Allow time for stage actions such as hand gestures or moving around the stage
- If you are doing a death scene or some other type of dramatic moment, slow down the pace - don't rush and go even slower than you think you might need to go
- If you have someone who needs to exit during the skit to prepare, or run around to the other side of the stage, leave as much time as possible. Assume the person will get stuck, will fumble etc. because that happens during performances.

Ways to shave off time

- Don't officially start your skit until everyone is already on stage to save time from entering. Similarly, end your skit with everyone on stage to save time from exiting.
- Plan to have someone say their lines as they are entering/moving on the stage, rather than get to the spot and say their lines
- Cut content from your script. Find lines that aren't necessary or find shorter ways to say the same things.

I'll cover more about line pacing and sound effects in my audio post, so that's it for now!

Nailing Your Lines

These are tricks that I learned in theater back in middle/high school, but they apply to cosplay skits too - regardless of whether you are using mics or pre-recorded audio.

1. Don't speak quickly

If you speak quickly, the audience will miss what you are saying. This is fine if they don't need to understand what is being said (i.e. a character is freaking out and what matters is the quantity, not quality). But otherwise, go slower than you think you'll need.

2. Tone down weird voices

Weird voices (think "Navi" from Zelda) do not travel well in a large auditorium. The audience will probably not understand you, which again is fine if that is the point. Instead of using a weird voice, try just modifying the pitch (high or low) or use mannerisms in the lines to convey the 'weirdness'.

3. Enunciate

Even though the audio might sound clear when you listen to it on your computer, it will not be as clear to the person in the last row in the auditorium. Enunciate your consonants, especially at the end of your words.

For example: "part" - make sure to emphasize the "t" so there is a clean break as you say the word

To summarize: speak slowly, try to avoid weird voices, and enunciate.



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So you want to do a cosplay skit (Applying to a Masquerade)

IMPORTANT: The rules and application process for each masquerade will be different and may change year to year (even at the same convention). Make sure to review ALL instructions and rules before applying to a masquerade.

Read the rules - Make you are familiar with the masquerade rules and policies. This will include:

- Number of people allowed in a skit
- Division classifications
- Length of skit
- Audio/video format
- Types of costume (anime, comic book, movie etc.), dress code policy
- Allowances for set pieces

Locate the sign-up page - Many conventions follow a first-come, first-serve basis. Knowing where the sign-up page is and following the convention on social media will increase your chances of signing up first.

Have group contact information ready - Your convention may require a list of the members in your group and potentially their contact information. At minimum, they will ask for a main point of contact - the person who the Masquerade coordinators will talk with.

Know your names - When you perform, the MC will announce who performed. Every convention I have performed at gives you the option to use your real name or an alias/stage name.

Look for Minors - If your group has members under 13, your group may qualify for the youth division. For under 16 or under 18, group members may be required to have guardian's sign a release form, or have a guardian present backstage.

Check the Schedule - You will likely have a time slot to rehearse on stage and a time slot for craftsmanship judging (if applicable). Make sure you know when all your group members are available.

This also includes knowing the deadlines for each portion. There are typically dates for submitting scripts, submitting audio/video files etc.

Stay Updated - If you are the main point of contact, makes sure to read and respond to any communications that come from the convention staff. Inform the Masquerade coordinator if there has been a change. Inform your group if there has been a convention updated.



So you want to make your cosplay skit work for you

(Translating cosplay skits into professional skills)

This purpose of this guide is to help translate skills you may have acquired by working on cosplay skits into professional examples that you can use during an interview or on the job.

Career Profiles: Content Marketing, Trainer

What is a content marketer? - Content marketing is one name of a type of role that is responsible for generating the assets (a.k.a. items) for marketing purposes like PowerPoint decks, graphics, videos, web pager, 1-pagers, infographics.

What is a trainer? - A corporate trainer is responsible for building materials for trainings like PowerPoint decks, graphics, videos, web pages, 1-pagers, and infographics.

As a cosplayer, you have the opportunity to build experience with the software tools to create these materials. As a corporate trainer, I can attest that every video I edited, every bit of audio I recorded, and every PowerPoint I made was a skill that I have used in my job to produce training materials.

Take the chance to ask the group member who is working on the technical elements to teach you a few things or even better yet – take the plunge and try making the materials yourself!



Recreation of the Final Fantasy IX battle sequence in PowerPoint using animations, which are a critical part of controlling the flow of information in a training.



Storybook sequence using PowerPoint slide transitions.

