

So you want to do a cosplay skit

# AWKWARD GROUP SITUATIONS



# WORKING ON A COSPLAY SKIT IN A GROUP ISN'T ALWAYS SUNNY.

*This guide aims to help you navigate those tough scenarios.*

While these tips are geared towards cosplayers working in a group to put on a skit or performance, I hope these can be helpful for craftsmanship-only or just-for-fun groups too.

Just remember: there's no one right way to resolve a difficult or awkward situation. What you see here may not work for you or your group specifically. Therefore, take all of this with a grain of salt.

As always, these materials are free and you are always welcome to contact me on social media if you have questions!



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***So you want to do a cosplay skit*** is a series of resources designed to help cosplayers jump into the world of cosplay performance!



## Drops

Different ways for how to handle a group member who says they want to drop from the skit.

## Prizes

A few suggestions for how to make sure the entire group feels like they got a bit of the prize.

## Conflict

Group work frequently means some form of conflict, but that doesn't mean it has to end in drama.

# SOMEONE DROPPED!

A group member dropped -  
what do you do?

Preparing for a masquerade or other staged performance is a commitment that folks might not always have time and energy for.

That's totally fine! Everyone should always make sure they are taking care of themselves first and foremost.

Now, if you're putting together a skit and someone says they have to drop - start by asking if they still WANT to do the skit (because they often do).

If they want to be in the skit, but can't - maybe there's a change you can make to allow them to keep going.

# Talk through the decision about whether to keep going with the skit

If they don't have time to rehearse - is there a smaller role they can have that needs fewer rehearsals or can be practiced virtually?

If they're worried, scared, or nervous - be supportive! See if there are tips or tricks online for helping to calm those fears!

If they have conditions that prevent them from being able to perform in the role: can you adjust your blocking or your script so they can still participate?

For example: reducing stage time and arranging for chairs to be placed backstage in the wings so cast members with mobility constraints can rest when they aren't onstage.

If it's not going to work out and they have to drop, how you choose to handle it may depend on the contest and skit.

Was your skit designed for a particular contest or convention? Maybe defer until next year.

Did the dropped person help come up with the idea, script, blocking, or production? Talk to them. Ask them if they'd be okay with you continuing the skit without them.

The other key point here is **conversation**. Talk to the dropped person, talk to your group. Let everyone voice their opinion before your group makes a decision to move forward with the skit or not.

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*If someone needs to drop, do not berate, shame, or guilt them. Respect their decision and move on.*

# If everyone wants to move forward, it's time to get creative

## **Option 1: Remove the character**

This only works if the dropped person had a small or background role, but if the drop was Line Dancer #7, chances are the skit can continue as-is.

## **Option 2: Find a replacement**

You might have a friend or acquaintance who can be the same character. Not recommended unless there is time for at least 2-3 rehearsals before your performance.

## **Option 3: Find similar replacement**

If there isn't a friend who can be the *exact* character, then you might be able to fulfill the role without changing the script.

For example, maybe you don't need Sailor Moon. Perhaps any magical girl might do!

Finding a comparable (not exact) replacement is only recommended if there is time for at least 3-4 rehearsals before the performance. Add at least a week before the rehearsals to re-record lines if needed.

## **Option 4: Change the skit**

This requires moving the lines or actions around to the remaining characters.

This is not recommended unless there is time for AT LEAST 4-6 rehearsals before the performance.

Add a week before rehearsals for each of the following:

- Script edits
- Line re-recording and audio mixes
- Background video edits

Then get ready to adjust blocking and choreography.

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*At the end of the day, if you need to postpone the skit, that's okay! That's more time to perfect your routine.*

# YOU WON!

# HOW DO YOU SPLIT

# THE PRIZE?

Chances are: if your skit wins an award, you might get a trophy, medal, ribbon, certificate, and/or some monetary prize in the form of cash or gift cards. The question becomes: how do you split a singular prize?

My first hint: never make assumptions. After the cheers on stage, the jumping, the hugs, and the photos - have a quick chat with the group before anyone walks away for the night. Even something as simple as “Would anyone mind if I took the trophy?” can go a long way to avoiding misunderstandings or conflict.



## Snapshots



Have everyone take a turn holding the trophy for a group and solo shot. Regardless of how the prize is split, this makes sure that everyone has the perfect photo to share online!

## Custody



Everyone could agree to share custody of the trophy, taking a turn to bring the trophy home in rotation. Warning: this usually ends up with the trophy living at someone's house.

## Frames



A fun way to keep the memory fresh (if you can spare the cash) is to have a group photo framed for each member. This can be a bit expensive, but a nice touch.

## Trophy v \$



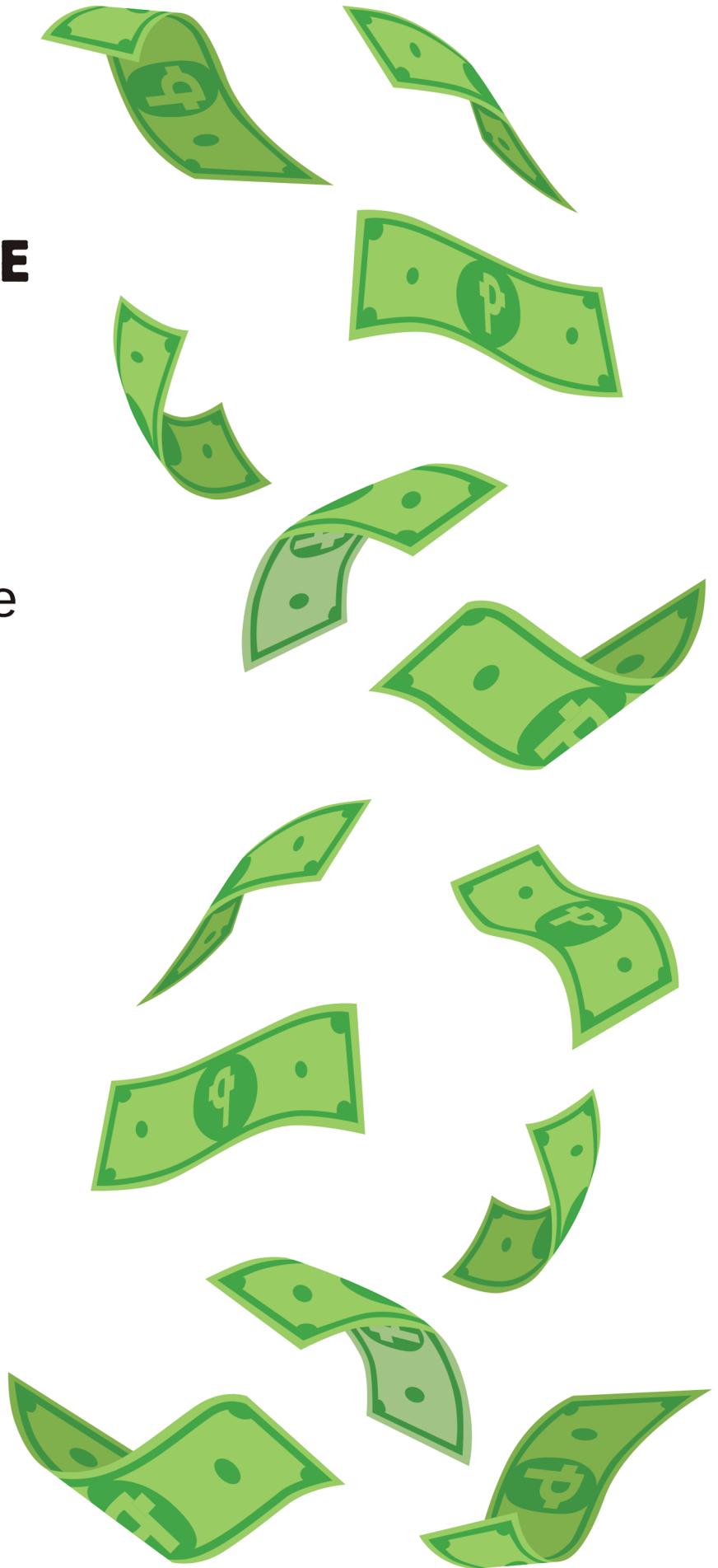
If someone wants the trophy, perhaps give the rest of the prize to the other group members to split evenly.



# HOW DO YOU SPLIT A SINGLE GIFT CARD PRIZE?

Consider giving the card to the person who would benefit the most.

Place a group order with the gift card so everyone can benefit a small amount from the prize is also an option!





# Group member is not working out

If you have a group member that's causing conflict whether that's clashing with others or not showing up, here are a few ways to potentially navigate those types of situations.

Before we tackle how to stop conflict, let's dig into why conflict can happen.

Conflict often occurs when there is a perceived imbalance, usually related to power, resources, ideas, or ideals. In most cases, there is no ill will - just a difference in expectations.

That's important to keep in mind when approaching a conflict.

# How to avoid reaching a dead end

Unfortunately, conflicts tend to escalate quickly.

It starts with coalition building - the person who believes they have been wronged will check with their friends, because they are likely to be empathetic or "on their side". Soon it turns into an "us-vs-them" mentality and the desire to punish the other side increases. Eventually, communication stops and both sides reach a dead end.

Some of the following tips can help you before you reach that point.

These steps aren't easy. Even I don't remember to activate them or get them right all the time. Be patient with yourself and the other person.

**#1** Let them know you'd like to talk about the issue. Avoid making them wait too long.

*"Do you have a few minutes tomorrow to talk about the skit rehearsals?"*

**#2** When you get to the talk, be specific and stick with the facts.

Try framing the problem in terms of how their actions made you feel. You will always be 100% right on how you felt in a situation.

*"You keep missing rehearsals and you're dragging the whole group down"*

**vs**

*"You missed our last two rehearsals, which made me feel frustrated because the group wasn't able to practice without everyone there."*

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*Conflict resolution is messy, emotional, and straight up difficult.*

# How to come out of the stalemate

**#3** Give them time to respond.

Conflict is about **perceived** imbalance. The person you're speaking to may not even be aware that they were causing a conflict.

They are allowed to respond to your statements. During this time, try to be as empathetic as possible; don't try to contradict them.

In our example - the person might say "you're being bossy", "you're taking this too seriously", "I didn't know it was going to take this much time".

While you might be tempted to remind them that it is a competition, that the time commitment was communicated up front: don't.

**BUT!** If things get heated, you can remind them to be civil. You can always excuse yourself to stay safe if it looks like they might become physically or verbally violent.

**#4** Decide how you would like to approach resolving the conflict.

Both you and the other person will have your own ideal future states.

You might want them to come to rehearsal. They might only want to practice briefly at the convention.

Under the widely used Thomas Kilmann Conflict Management Model, there are (5) ways to resolve conflict (i.e. reach a desired mutual future state).

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## *Recommended reading:*

Mishra, Arindra. "Thomas Kilmann Conflict Model." *Management Weekly*, 12 May 2021, <https://managementweekly.org/thomas-kilmann-conflict-resolution-model>.

**(A) Competing** - You advocate for them to accept your future state. The possible consequence is they decide to remove themselves from the conflict (and the group).

**(B) Collaborating** - You work together to create a new future state. This may end up not meeting either parties full needs.

For example - switching their role that doesn't need as much rehearsal, or finding a new time that works better for them. This may not work for the rest of your group.

**(C) Accommodating** - You agree to their future state. This is fast way to reduce the conflict with the person, but could start conflicts with others.

For example - letting the person only appear at rehearsals at con. This might frustrate other members of the group.

**(D) Avoiding** - You elect to let the conflict play out.

In the example, this means the person continues to skip rehearsals. Depending on stage combat, acrobatics, or other tricks, this could be dangerous to other group members.

**(E) Compromising** - You pick different parts of your ideal future states to come to consensus.

Maybe you agree that the person doesn't have to attend the rehearsals physically, but they are required to attend a video call to watch or participate.

Maybe you agree they don't have to rehearse, but you will have a post-rehearsal call with them to cover what they missed.

The downside of compromise, similarly to collaborating, is there may be aspects that neither of you are happy with.

***Keep in mind that the two of you may have different preferred conflict resolution styles.***

As a group leader, you'll ultimately need to decide which approach will work best for your group and your skit.

**ADOPT.  
ADAPT.  
ACT.**

*Use these tips as the starting point to help you resolve your own awkward situations.*

When in doubt, try to:

- Have patience
- Practice empathy
- Be flexible

And keep ***talking***. Conversation, communication is the easiest way out of a difficult circumstance.

With these tools in in your tool belt, you're sure to be able to weather the storm and steer your ship safely home!



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# **AWKWARD GROUP SITUATIONS**



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