

# MISSION CONTROL

In *Gravity*, when Stone and Kowalski lose contact with Mission Control, we learn that real control of any space mission depends not on that all-knowing voice from Houston but on the know-how of the astronauts working in space. Their training for the physical, technological, and emotional demands of their job is the basis for mission success.

## TEAMWORK

*Gravity*'s Stone and Kowalski take very different approaches to their work, but each contributes a unique strength. Together, they embody the importance of knowledge and experience to make a strong space team. Take a look at their profiles:



### Dr. Ryan Stone Mission Specialist

**Background:** Academic research; first time in space  
**Experience:** Six months simulation training  
**Personality:** Introspective, cautious, self-critical



### Lt. Matt Kowalski Space Shuttle Commander

**Background:** Pilot; seasoned astronaut  
**Experience:** Ranks second all-time for space walks  
**Personality:** Gregarious, impulsive, confident

Now imagine how these two very different personalities might react to some of the routine aspects of a space mission, and how they could work together to meet the challenges they face in *Gravity*. Choose one item from each of the lists below, and write a description or scene that shows how Stone and Kowalski might handle routine situations and how their separate strengths might combine to meet a challenge.

#### Space Routines

- Constant questions from Mission Control
- Spectacular view of Earth
- Weightlessness

#### Space Challenges

- Ordered to abort their mission only minutes from completion
- Stranded in space with no vehicle to return to Earth
- Limited oxygen supply

## TALENTS

While astronauts may have ultimate control of a mission, they rely on a vast team of experts without whom no space mission would be possible. Use these online resources to find out more about the many talents it takes to go into space. Then discuss in class how your talents and interests might lead to a career in the space industry.

## SPACE CAREER RESOURCES

[www.spacex.com](http://www.spacex.com)  
[www.nasajobs.nasa.gov](http://www.nasajobs.nasa.gov)  
[www.nasa.gov/audience/forstudents/5-8/career/index.html](http://www.nasa.gov/audience/forstudents/5-8/career/index.html)  
<http://mgs-mager.gsfc.nasa.gov/Kids/careers.html>



World Space Week  
October 4 - 10

Celebrate the 50th anniversary of women in space. Meet the 55 women who paved the way for *Gravity*'s Dr. Ryan Stone at <http://history.nasa.gov/women.html>.



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EXPERIENCE THE CHALLENGES OF SPACE WHEN **GRAVITY**  
OPENS AT THEATRES ON OCTOBER 4, 2013.