

The Power Packed Performance

Objective:

- ◆ To identify the components of a power packed performance.
- ◆ To learn how to prepare a performance that is power packed.

What is a power packed performance?

A performance that has:

- Energy
- Flow
- Visual appeal
- Pacing
- An engaging emcee
 - Variety
 - Audience connection
 - Electricity
 - Excitement
 - Well prepared
- Character
 - Does the mood of the 1st number grab you?
 - Do they keep up the pace and energy from song to song?
- Confidence
- Believability
- Strong audience appeal
 - Pulls you out of your seat
 - Pulls YOU into the performance, you forget you are the audience
- Unexpected surprise
- Deep emotion – whether tears or laughter
- Lasting impressions

What are the elements of a power packed performance?

Strong vocal skills/good singing

- Does the chorus effectively perform the visual plan and sing well?
- Is there a consistent delivery of strong vocal skills?
- Does the performance transcend the technical elements?

Strong Visual Plan

- Does the choreography/showmanship and staging completely support the music?
- Are the characters well defined?
- Is everyone the same character? Or are they different?
- Does everyone know who they are, where they are and what they are doing?
- Is everyone focused, in the moment and consistently engaged

Strong Emceeing/Dialogue

- Is the emcee staging and transitions before and after each song well planned/executed?
- What is the chorus's reaction to the dialogue? Are they part of it?
 - Timing
 - Is the pitch pipe technique well planned and well executed? Is it part of the performance?
 - Is there continuity? Is there flow from dialogue to pitch to singing to movement?

Packaging the performance - Performance Package – 2 Kinds

Traditional Emcee Work Package

- Four or five song set
- Can be focused around a theme
- Chorus usually stands in chorus position
- 1 or 2 person emcee spots
- Choreography

Character Driven Package (musical theatre) -As an entertainment package

- Has dialogue between several specific characters
- No emcee spots, as we know them
- Songs are a vehicle to drive the story line
- A strong story line
- Employs musical theatre techniques

Musical Theatre Techniques

- Involves more staging than riser placement
- Creating different tableaux throughout the package yields itself to having more entertainment value.

Regardless of the type of package, are these elements in place?

- ◆ Total commitment from everyone in the ensemble to the visual and vocal integrity of the plan
- ◆ Know the plan - Only then will you have the confidence to transcend the music
- ◆ The plan should build from beginning to end with consistent energy and joy.
- ◆ The director's role should be well defined.
- ◆ There should be energy and passion in all aspects of the plan.

What the Judging Category Description Book says about a Power Packed Performance.

I. Performance - the visual communication of the musical product

- Successful performance occurs when perfect rapport exists between the audience and performer. (JCDB Showmanship p. 2)

- “selling the song”- All of the facets of performance considered by the showmanship judge combine to achieve a specific goal: “selling the song”. Selling the music is the primary focus of the showmanship category. The musical product must be of acceptable quality for the sale to be completed.
- Clever choreography, dazzling costumes or exquisite makeup cannot compensate for a lack of accuracy and basic musicality.
- Poise and Command - the performer must appear poised and in command. “A poised, confident and self-assured attitude is paramount if the performer is to succeed in evoking an emotional response from the audience.” (Showmanship Category p. 3) The successful performer focuses on entertaining the audience rather than worrying about whether she will remember the words, notes or choreography.
- **“We are here to entertain you!”** - first impressions are extremely important.
- Physical Expression - Good posture is the basic foundation for effective physical expression.
- Facial Expression is a major component of physical expression, for effective expression is the best tool available to the performer in visual communication with the audience.

II. Audience Rapport

- Audience rapport is a circular phenomenon: The performer creates a mood; the audience responds to the mood and to the performance. The performer, sensing the positive response, feeds more energy and vitality into the performance, eliciting a heightened response from the audience! (Showmanship p. 7)
- Sincerity is a significant element in establishing rapport with the audience. A good actor plays a role with such sincerity that the character becomes believable.
- True audience rapport is established on entrance and maintained throughout the performance.

III. Energy

- Musical Energy - This involves not only vocal energy, but also a strong commitment to the song and arrangement. Added vitality helps the performer to convey mood, any characterization, any dynamic level, any rhythm, or any message. (Music Category p. 16)
- Energy is the vital element in the overall presentation. Energy is the key to whether or not the audience will continue to listen to the performance. There must be an energized vocal presentation in all four parts and from every individual singer in order to give vitality to the entire performance. (Expression Category p. 11)
- Energy is essential to the unity, clarity, musicality, artistry and emotional communication of any performance. (Expression p. 11)
- Energy is the force that propels all aspects of musical performance. It adds a special shine to the visual performance, taking it beyond routine into MAGIC. (Showmanship p. 2)

- **No Matter what size chorus- you must remember.....**
 - ◆ Strong vocal skills/good singing
 - ◆ Strong visual plan/performance skills
 - ◆ Strong emceeing/dialogue

It matters not which kind of package you do, Traditional Emcee Work, or Character Driven Package. Figure out which one works best for your chorus and use these guidelines and elements in preparing your package. We all want the ultimate performance from our chorus.

The ideal Sweet Adelines International performance creates an illusion so real, so alive, that both the performer and audience are caught up in its spell and all else is forgotten in the magic of song.

(Showmanship p. 14)