**IT’S SHOWTIME!**

So…you’ve been asked to sing in public! What makes a great show?

1. Music that is well-rehearsed and ready
2. Variety of musical styles / pleasing order
3. Recognizable music (at least some!)
4. Acceptable time limit
5. A touch of humor
6. Emotional impact
7. High level of visual energy
8. Smooth transitions song to song
9. Comfortable and effective MC work
10. Attention to grooming and costuming

**GROOMING AND COSTUMING**

* Read the judging category description booklet in this area
* Choose a costume that fits your image
* Choose a costume that fits and looks good on all members
* Try on costumes before any event to make sure they still fit
* Be honest, yet kind, about how the costume looks on each person
* Have someone look at you from the audience and/or judges’ perspective
* Look at costumes and makeup under stage lights
* Look each other over carefully before going on stage
* Hair should enhance the look and the facial features, not be a distraction

It’s Showtime Page 1

**EMCEEING DO’S AND DON’TS**

DO: Introduce the group and the individual members – briefly

DON’T: Spend too long talking about anything – sing!

DO: Share facts about certain songs that might be of interest to the audience

DON’T: Introduce every song the same way

DO: Pique their interest as to what’s coming next, either by the verbal “setup” or the visual “mood set” of the song

DON’T: Always give away the title of the song in the introduction

DO: Be sincere

DON’T: Try to play some character you have seen or heard. Be yourself, unless you have developed a successful character for the stay. If you have developed a character, stay in that character for the entire performance

DO: Involve the audience whenever possible. Be personal and personable

DON’T: “talk to the wall” Narrative style gets old quickly. Watch and listen for reactions and react back

DO: Include some light comedy or humor of some type.

DON’T: Be offensive to get a laugh. When it doubt, leave it out!

DO: Use the members of your quartet that have a knack for speaking and/or comedy.

DON’T: Make everyone talk if they are not comfortable in this role

DO: Plan and practice the MC work so that the pitch can be ready at the end of each talking spot or during the applause, if there is no spoken introduction

DON’T: “Wing it” Prepare, practice, and be consistent

It’s Showtime! Page 2

**HUMOR / COMEDY**

* Find a style of humor that works for you and is not forced:
* Over-exaggeration?
* Self-deprecation? (only funny to a point..)
* Puns, plays on word
* Slapstick/body comedy/props
* Outright joke telling
* Relating a true but funny experience
* Word order and word choice makes a difference
* Practice your delivery: word emphasis, looks, gestures
* Do not use questionable material
* Do not tell inside jokes – that the audience will not “get”
* Timing is everything!
* Never step on applause or laughter
* Know when to quit
* The non-verbal responses from the rest of the quartet/chorus

It’s Showtime! Page 3

**PUTTING THE SONGS IN ORDER**

* Open with something peppy, not too long and has a strong (barbershop) tag. Opener usually has a message that says “we’re glad to be here!”
* In a longer package, consider doing two songs back to back, before any talking and keep the second song “upbeat” this is a good place for a recognizable song to the audience
* Don’t follow a predictable pattern for alternating songs and mc work.
* Space out ballads so that they are not back to back – even ballads of different types.
* Be careful when trying to “fit” songs into a theme package. Sometimes we stretch too far.
* Always sing your best songs – not just songs you like. (Try to like your best songs!)
* Do not do solos unless you have a soloist! There is a difference between singing the melody notes and being a soloist.
* Select your songs and their order for the audience’s pleasure – not your own.
* The closer is their lasting impression of you. Make sure it leaves the message you want them to remember.
* Don’t assume an encore! Don’t mistake sincere applause for wanting another song. You can always come back for a bow only. And if they really truly “force you to do an encore – do one song….they didn’t ask for more than that!

It’s Showtime! Page 4