**Which Direction Did You Say?**

*Tips for Directors and chorus members*

Region 10 Fall Regional Meeting

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DIRECTORS

***Conducting elements***

-Posture/alignment/face

“What they see is what we get”

Energetic vs. tense

-Preparatory beat: The most important beat in all of music!

Remember, this isn’t just the start of the song…

-Ictus

Be specific and consistent

-Principally legato

-The “power box”

-The importance of eye contact

-One hand or two?

-To mouth or not to mouth the lyrics?

-Reinforcing vocal skills/other concepts

-Have someone on the risers you can connect with to give you feedback

Common issues

-Unenergized arms/hands

-Unclear preparatory gesture

-Excessive gesture (curly Q’s)

-Mixed messages

-Wandering/unclear ictus (or several!)

-Lack of eye contact

-Tension

-Singing along

-Beating individual words

-Bigger isn’t clearer, it’s just bigger!

***Other elements***

-Our attitude will determine the mood of the rehearsal/performance before any singing happens

-Be as prepared as possible

-Use your eyes and ears at least as much as your hands

-Smile, but be assertive as necessary

-There is a positive way to say everything

-The importance of demonstration

-Use a variety of approaches/styles (left/right brain, visual, auditory, kinesthetic)

-Be specific (not just in instruction, but in praise)

-Sing more!

-Use humor

-Vary pacing, but err on the side of faster

-Three things should be a part of each rehearsal: AHA! AHHHHH and HAHA! (Education/self-discovery, humor, and success/performance)

-The six most important words I know: It’s my fault; I don’t know

-Never be afraid to ask for help

-Remember the four agreements (Don Miguel Ruiz):

1. Don’t take anything personally

2. Don’t make assumptions

3. Be impeccable with your word

4. Always do your best

-Keep Rule #6 in mind at all times: **Don’t take yourself so #%&$ seriously!** (Thanks to Ben Zander and Ros Stone Zander)

FOR CHORUS MEMBERS

-Respond to everything your director does gesturally

-Be as prepared as possible

-Bring all your skills, all the time!

-Remember that we are all works in progress, and that elements will change—extend patience and grace

-Offer to help, however you can

-Offer constructive criticism/feedback *privately* (and always ask if it’s okay to do so); if something isn’t clear, it’s important for your director to know (remember, they may have a trusted person to give them feedback from the risers)

-Say “thank you” often! Your director spends *many* additional hours outside of rehearsal (planning rehearsals, seeking out music, long-range planning, communicating with coaches, working with management and music teams, and much more); a little appreciation goes a long way!

-Remember the four agreements and Rule #6!

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