So...you’ve been asked to sing in public!

**Elements of a Great Show:**

A. Music that is well-rehearsed and ready for stage  
B. Variety of musical styles in a pleasing order  
C. Recognizable music (at least some!)  
D. Acceptable time limit  
E. A touch of humor  
F. Emotional impact  
G. High level of visual energy  
H. Smooth transitions from song to song  
I. Comfortable and effective MC work  
J. Attention to grooming and costuming

In this class, we will look at the above elements in order to “give ‘em a show they’ll never forget!”
GROOMING AND COSTUMING SUGGESTIONS

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 WITH ONE ANOTHER, 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
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 so, 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 in 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
EMCEE MATERIAL

USE A VARIETY OF THE FOLLOWING:

INTRODUCTION OF THE QUARTET AND ITS MEMBERS

FACTS ABOUT THE SONGS

INCLUDING THE AUDIENCE

POETRY OR QUOTES

COMEDY
HUMOR / COMEDY

SOME GUIDELINES TO FOLLOW:

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 WORDS
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
SONG ORDER – GENERAL SUGGESTIONS:

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!