

ROAD TO EXCELLENCE (RTE)

Quality Assurance Program

Auditions for Membership

Section Leaders are participate in the chorus's audition procedure for prospective members but in the event a section leader is not available, it is very important that you be prepared to sing in a quartet with a prospective member. It is imperative that you be rock-solid on your part so that the prospective member can easily sing her part and be successful in her audition.

Self-Evaluations

Singers regularly perform self-evaluations on chorus songs to be sure you are singing the right notes and words before incorrect habits are being formed (we all know how difficult it is to relearn something that's been learned incorrectly). Before starting the self-evaluation process, the singer must set aside about 1 hour, gather your supplies (recording, music, pencil, self-evaluation sheet, word sheet), and find a quiet, private place. Now...take a deep breath and say out loud, "I am a competent singer. I am improving every day. I am an important part of the chorus, and no one can replace ME!"

STEP 1: Listen to your tape with your eyes closed.

Write down 3 things you did correctly (i.e., kept tempo going, carried to end of phrase, etc.).

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

STEP 2: Listen to your recording while looking at the WORD SHEET.

Underline the words/phrases that have errors (no matter how minor). If you are not sure, listen again. Aim for perfect - it's a continual goal for all of us.

STEP 3: Listen to your recording while looking at the MUSIC.

Do this even if you don't read music. You can tell if the notes are going up, down, or staying the same; just be sure your voice is going in the direction of the notes – that's reading music. If you hear something that doesn't seem quite right, listen again until you have it figured out. When you find a wrong note, circle the note on the music and the word on your word sheet.

STEP 4: Take steps to improve on what you heard. Always have a sense of moving forward in your progress as a singer. Now that you know what needs some work, you're on your way to 100% accuracy! We are all at different stages in the process, but just keep at it -- and you'll be the singer that you always dreamed you could be!

Believe in yourself, do the work, and anything is possible!

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The entire chorus is involved in this process and can be accomplished in less than an hour. Singers are notified in advance when this evaluation is planned so they can prepare.

1. The chorus performs on the risers, while the Reviewers are positioned along the front.
2. The singer gives her copy of her sheet music to the Reviewer.
3. The singer sings LIVE for their Reviewer while the chorus PERFORMS behind them.
 - The whole chorus sings while the Reviewer listens to the singer and writes comments on the singer's sheet music: Underline incorrect words
 - Circle incorrect notes.
 - Other comments regarding breaths, tuning, support, resonance, vowels
4. At the end of the song, the Reviewer goes through her comments with the singer for about 2 minutes. If comments cannot be communicated in just a few minutes, they agree to meet later to discuss in more detail.
5. The singer moves back to the risers with their music and will sing along with the chorus, watching their sheet music so they can address the issues just discussed, while the next group of singers moves forward for their review. Comments can include achievements and challenges.
6. The process is repeated until all singers are done.
7. If a person is absent on the night of the review, the Section Leaders can plan a "make up" night or provide another type of evaluation for that individual.
8. If there are issues that need additional attention, the Section Leader will request a recording from the singer so that more detailed information can be provided to assist her in her road to excellence.

SUGGESTIONS FOR SELF-IMPROVEMENT

-  Work on your own as often as possible – recommend 3-4 times/week.
-  Take a voice lesson (PVI) from someone who knows about full, resonant barbershop-style singing.
 - Record the PVI session
 - Listen to the recording and make notes for improvement goals
 - Set one goal on what concept made the biggest difference in your voice; reinforce this concept and apply it in your daily vocal work.
 - After 2-3 weeks, record yourself again and hear what has changed/improved.
-  Participate in the octet coaching sessions offered by the Director.
-  Have someone check your status and progress – a Section Leader, an assistant director, a friend, another singer in your section.
-  Make a personal goal – and work steadily to reach it.
-  Record yourself at chorus weekly, and continue self-evaluations on all repertoire songs.

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-  Record yourself while doing the visual plan – see if it makes a difference (positive or negative) in how you sound.
-  Be accountable and responsible for your own vocal program – it's worth it!

CONGRATULATE YOURSELF ON YOUR PERSONAL PROGRESS!