

CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVE SECTION LEADERS

- Set a strong, positive example
- Create a productive atmosphere
- Musical Leaders
- Quick, accurate learners
- Use/demonstrate correct vocal production
- Confident and prepared
- Have the respect of the section
- Enthusiastic and positive
- Sense of humor
- Diplomatic, tactful, honest
- Care about the section and chorus
- Know people's names and use them
- Know individual voices in their sections
- Continue to learn/grow
- Knows what sound the chorus is aiming for
- Good communication skills
- Consistency
- Empathy and fairness
- Good listening skills
- Ability to handle conflict
- Delegate responsibility

RESPONSIBILITIES OF SECTION LEADERS

- ❖ Improve the musical quality of the chorus
- ❖ Create a long-term plan and set goals for her section
- ❖ Know the music and the interpretation plan
- ❖ Understand part technique (tenor, lead, bari, bass)
- ❖ Knows the relationship of her part to other parts (octaves, root, thirds, etc.)
- ❖ Knows the individual voices in her section
- ❖ Build section camaraderie and sense of belonging
- ❖ Evaluate individual needs, strengths, weaknesses
- ❖ Know where and how to get answers
- ❖ Understand people's different learning styles
- ❖ Communicate with the Director

RESPONSIBILITIES OF ASSISTANT SECTION LEADERS

In addition to the above:

- ❖ Run a section rehearsal if the leader is absent
- ❖ Work one-on-one to fix individual problems

EFFECTIVE SECTION REHEARSALS

- ⚡ Make good use of the time allotted (specific goals and focus)
- ⚡ Have a positive atmosphere
- ⚡ Use barbershop terminology
- ⚡ Emphasize good vocal production
- ⚡ Include everyone and build camaraderie
- ⚡ Build vocal skills and expand individual vocal potential
- ⚡ Raise the level of critical listening skills
- ⚡ Target specific areas of need (vocal problems, difficult musical passages, part technique)
- ⚡ Motivate and inspire

PLANNING SECTION REHEARSALS

1. Determine the goals for the session. Consider suggestions from your director, coaches, etc. Share the goals with your section.
2. Determine the hierarchy of needs: what is the most important thing to be addressed during this rehearsal?
3. Budget time carefully. Allow time for questions and clarification.
4. Keep all comments positive. Offer praise and reinforcement.
5. Delegate tasks to assistants.

COMMON SECTION NEEDS

1. Assistance learning notes/words on new music.
2. Reinforcement of previously learned material.
3. Practice with difficult phrases and measures.
4. Work on vocal production and breath support.
5. Work on blend and vowel match.
6. Work on synchronization.
7. Section identity: sense of belonging to the group.
8. Development of individual potential.

JOBS FOR ASSISTANTS

1. Work with individual members who have not mastered previously taught skills or songs.
2. Practice critical listening and provide input.
3. Stand in different places around the group to assess needs.
4. Become "experts" on difficult passages or phrases.
5. Tape listeners.
6. Monitor good singing posture and correct as necessary

Section Rehearsal Plan

Date: _____ Time Allotted: _____

Song/Skill: _____

Goals: _____

Problem Areas: _____

Tasks for Assistant: _____

Needs of Individuals: _____

Future needs: _____

Techniques for Section Leaders

Addressing musical problems:

- ✓ difficult phrases or passages
- ✓ Play it on the piano
- ✓ Have them sing to a partner. Partner listens and offers feedback.
- ✓ Sing it in small groups.
- ✓ Match difficult intervals with examples from commonly known songs
- ✓ Make and use learning tapes, modeling correct vocal techniques

Building vocal blend, unity:

- ✓ Start with one strong voice. Add voices individually, taking time to match resonance and synchronize.
- ✓ Have half of the group sing for the other half.
- ✓ Mix up the standing positions
- ✓ Increase the distance between singers but maintain the matched vocal qualities.
- ✓ Sing vowels only, no consonants. Emphasis on smoothness
- ✓ Half the group sings just the key note (on vowel of choice), the other half sings the phrase.
- ✓ Sing in unison with the leads to improve synchronization
- ✓ Singers form a circle around a small group of listeners. Listeners assess blend and resonance match

Building Section Teams

- ✓ Create common short term and long-term goals
- ✓ Use motivational phrases consistently
- ✓ Praise frequently
- ✓ Insist on excellence
- ✓ Be aware of varying learning styles and preferences
- ✓ Create opportunities for social interaction (Section parties, fun events)
- ✓ Wear matching colors to chorus rehearsals
- ✓ Celebrate individual achievement

EVALUATING VOICES

1. Determine the singer's vocal range.
 - a. Is she singing in the correct section for her voice range?
 - b. Where is her register break?
2. Assess the singer's breathing ability.
 - a. Correct singers' posture
 - b. Correct breathing techniques (shoulders, abdomen, ribs, etc)
 - c. How long can she sustain a note?
3. Assess the singer's voice type. Using a scale of 1 to 5 (5 = none), Rate:
 - a. How much vibrato is audible?
 - b. How much resonance does the voice have?
 - c. How much clarity does the voice have? (Is it dark or bright)
4. Assess the singer's vowel production.
 - a. Are "ah" vowels tall and open?
 - b. Are "ooh" and "oh" vowels round?
 - c. Are vowels overly-controlled by consonants?
5. Assess the singer's ability to handle dynamics.
 - a. Does vocal quality remain consistent for both loud and soft notes?
6. Assess the singer's ability to sing accurate intervals.
 - a. Is she able to match intervals easily?
 - b. Are her intervals correct or consistently under pitch?
7. Match this voice with others with similar qualities in the section.