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Coaching Performance

Power, Unity and Execution
HANDOUT



“You get the best efforts
from others not by lighting a
fire beneath them, but by
building a fire within”

Bob Nelson

My Experience and Director's Feedback

- The moves are sometimes mechanical
- The performance is not projected out far enough (behind the limbs)
- There are places where the choreography does not compliment the music or lacks meaning
- "I would like to see choreo that is a natural extension of the arrangement and enhances our ability to sing it, not just clever moves on top of the music."
- The moves tend to be repetitive across songs
- There is a mismatch in emotional approach
- "I would like to see less spoon feeding..too many tools."
- "I would like to see less talking and more demonstration/reps."
- "My choreographer tends to teach to the slowest member

My Experience & Director's Feedback

- "We have trouble dealing with our older members."
- "My choreographer choreographs to her voice part and misses some of the important pick-ups, musical moments."
- "I would like my choreographer to have a stronger understanding of down beat and back beat."
- "I would like warm-ups that come in Packages of four or eight counts."
- "I would like the visual to match the dynamic plan:"
- "We want to make the performer look like they mean it, not just that they know it."
- "I would like more work on Characterization"
- "I would like her to understand the impact the passion has on the voice"
- "I would love to help my chorus with freedom of movement."
- "I would love it if my choreographer utilized the skills of her team"

Communication

Reaching Our Audience

Element	Definition	Importance in Reaching People
Verbal	What we say, the words we choose	7%
Vocal	intonations, tones, variations in pitch and volume, texture, etc	35%
Visual	gestures, facial expressions, eye contact, body gestures and movement	58%

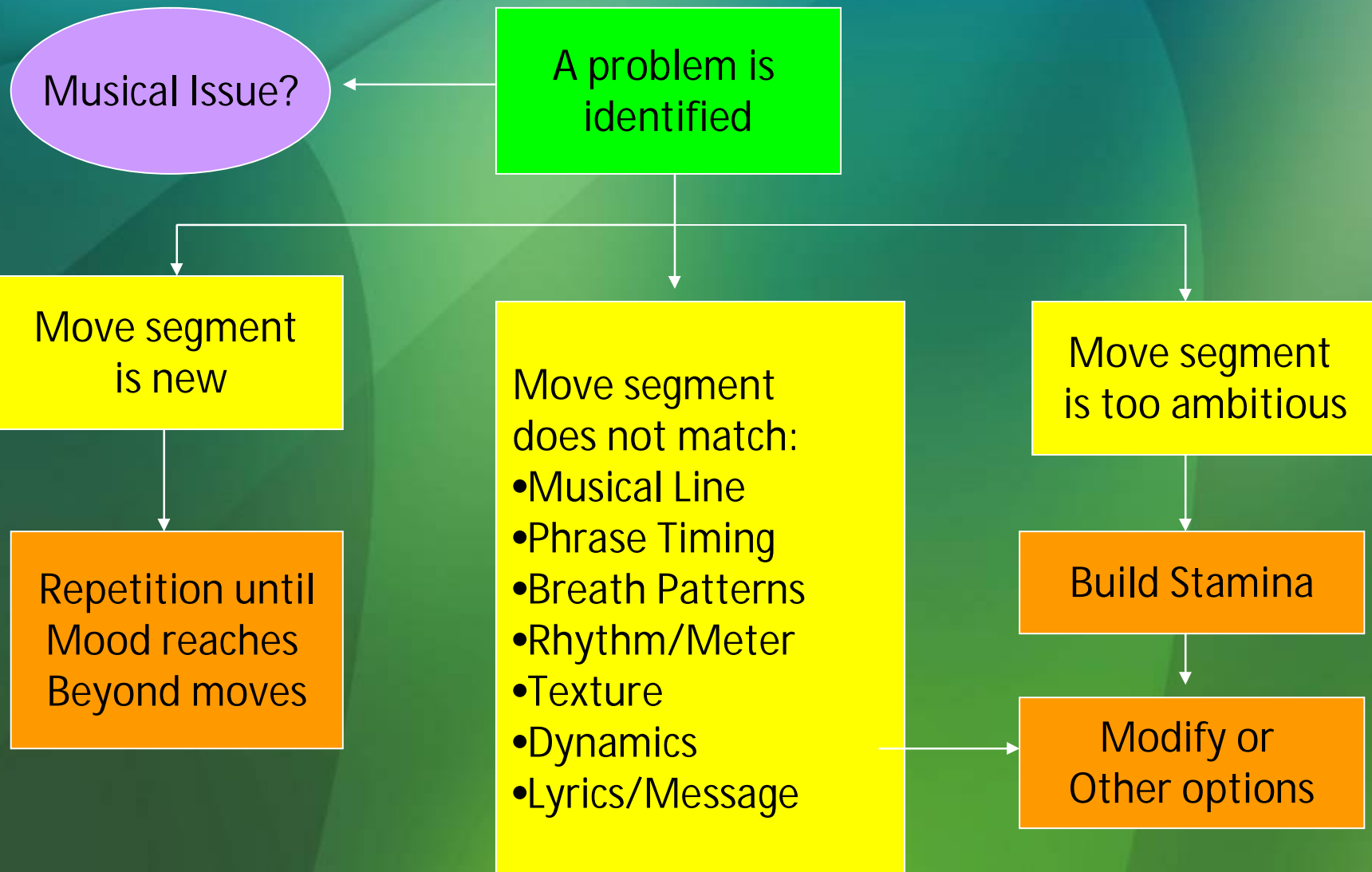
Teaching Tips

- Begin with **discussion on character and story-line**
- Don't feel pressured to start at the beginning (no rules)—**REPEAT AND ADD**
- **General to specific**
- **Teach with your ears**
- **Teach the front row first**
- Demonstrate full passionate delivery of message through the body (**limited verbal instruction**)—**you must perform!**
- **Use Visual Imagery**
- Connect the plan to the lyrics, story and musical embellishments as you teach (use the lyric to time the movement)—**Link to purpose(Why?, not just what)**
- **Make them speak or preferably sing** as they learn (avoid recordings if possible)
- Teach **spatial relationships and frames of reference (focal points, angles)**
- Communicate using **point to point movement** (Key words, syllables)
- Reinforce the need for the performer to **sing as they learn**
- **Be flexible when something is not working or if the music changes**
- **Minimize questions** during the learning process...keep it moving!

Identifying the Performance Gaps



It Just Is Not Working!!!



Finding and Closing Performance Gaps

Identification Exercise/Idea	Purpose
Small Group Spread	Reduces leaning, gives a better view of differences and performance issues
End Chunks to the Middle	Increases the performance level of end sections
Row Rotation	Increases confidence (reduces tendency to lean and increases visibility)
Row Call (sing and perform)	Forces singer to be prepared and to sing out
Remove the Front Row	Riser exposure
Move the Director In Front of Sections or Remove Director	Increased attention / Independence
Back to the Chorus (mark music where vocal line suffers, then look at those sections)	Helps to focus on the influence of the visual on the sound
Visual With No Sound (no director)	Checks unity of interp, meter, enhances emoting
Sing and Perform the Space	Allows for mass expansion (individual and ensemble)
Unity Circles	Unifies the emotional understanding & approach
Internal Partner Coaching Exercise	Increases individual performance
Lay on the Floor (feet at eye level)	Check for Unity with feet and floor execution
Freeze Frame Video Work (Video sections)	Helps to identify unity issues (conflicting emotions)
Small Groups (Issue specific)	Helps get at specific problem themes

Performance Feedback



Building Rapport

- The first few seconds of interaction are critical...
- Without trust and rapport, nothing can be done



Performance Feedback

- Specific rather than general feedback (positive feedback and gap identification)
- Reinforcement of expectations
- Communication of results of their actions
- Give them an opportunity to voice their position or ask questions
- Consider their input
- Ask them for an action plan if required
- Reinforce the expectation of performance going forward
- Provide support and encouragement
- Be time sensitive



Coach the singer utilizing Visual Imagery

Rehearsing Smart



- Get rid of business at the beginning
- Maximize quality rehearsal time (personal warm-up, etc.)
- Minimize extra rehearsals (balance)
- Rehearse to perform
- Rehearse for excellence vs. perfection
- Try entering the emotional door first
- Stamina building
- Set the bar high for participation
- Involve others in leading
- Keep your emotions in check
- Wrap-up with accomplishments
- Inject variety

Tips for the Final Weeks

- Keep your eye on your purpose!!!!!!
- Don't panic!!!!!!
- Believe
- Put your members in the driver's seat
- Do not adjust your normal rehearsal schedule
- Use language wisely (self fulfilling prophecy)
- Minimize last minute changes.
- Encourage and practice positive reinforcement and self-talk
- Celebrate successes
- Visualization exercises
- Relaxation exercises
- Choose your battles
- Work more emotionally than technically
- Run the music in full multiple times consecutively per night (try to mirror contest experience—costume, etc.)
- Host a Pep Rally
- Inject inspirational activities into your rehearsals
- Have fun!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Contest Day—Final Rehearsal

- Choose your battles!!!!!!
- Inspire confidence in your product
- Run Intros, breaks, tags, key musical spots
- Visualization
- Do not over-rehearse
- Plan a motivational talk or inspiring message to leave them with
- Avoid running full songs in the warm-up room (fatigue)—invest in vocal w/u, intros, tags, etc.
- Let them know how much you love them!

*"You gave me wings, now
let me fly"*

Don Ward

Performance Power & Unity



The Individual Performer

- Strong, Unified Character
- Unified emotional through-line (Purpose, honesty, passion, intention)
- Mirroring the Vocal line (emotionally and physically)
- Directed Energy
- Strong Centered Posture (Giant)
- Lower Body Driven, Sing From the Core
- Keep Your Sound and Physicality Out of the Floor
- Perform in front of the body
- Mental Mass (Body & Space)
- Proximity
- Body Shaping
- Sustain Centered Approach
- Remain Aware of Placement in relation to others
- Launching on Predominant Targets
- Continuous Large Sweeping Energy Circles (singing and visual)
- Power Skating
- Use Extension and Dimension (individual & ensemble)
- Sing and perform the ensemble (mentally connect the energy and advance as one)