

Education Coordinator

Job Description

- Develops, coordinates, and monitors regional educational programs in conjunction with other coordinators.
- Plans curriculum for educational events such as seminars and workshops.
- Works in coordination with Events and Marketing Coordinators on marketing events.
- Coordinates regional faculty visits to choruses.
- Maintains five-year education plan document.
- Implements the chapter revitalization plan for maintaining the integrity of the musical product and administrative process as outlined in the RMT Handbook.
- Approves chapters and prospective chapters for public performance.
- Auditions chapter-at-large quartets for public performance.
- Develops faculty or staff to assist in implementing regional educational programs.
- Appoints an Arrangers Coordinator who administers the program that offers training for aspiring arrangers within the region.
- Appoints a YWIH Coordinator to educate and inform the musical leaders in each chorus about the YWIH program.
- Appoints a DCP Coordinator who administers the program within the region.
- Maintains contact with appropriate staff members at international headquarters.
- Maintains comprehensive records and forwards materials to her successor.
- Trains her successor.
- Appoints staff to assist with the implementation of responsibilities as needed

Developing Education Plans

Each region tailors its educational offerings to suit the needs of its membership. Regional education weekends or training sessions are scheduled throughout the year as a service to its members and as a means of generating income for the region. Since the mission of Sweet Adelines International places education as its fundamental purpose, the responsibility for regional education is a serious undertaking.

Long-range educational needs are planned in response to some or all of the following:

- Common trends in regional competition scores (Consult judges' comment sheets.)
- Evaluation forms distributed at educational events
- Information provided from international headquarters
- Questionnaires to directors/members
- The region's strategic plan

Also consider who will be targeted for training: arrangers, directors, quartets, section leaders, chapter leaders, etc. Each group will need individualized training with emphasis on its specialty.

The coordination of subject areas and the responsibility for continuity in planning will be the responsibility of the Education Coordinator with input from the Directors' Coordinator, the Membership Coordinator and other members of the regional management team.

A long-term educational plan should assess the following:

- Determine the groups currently being educated.
- Review subject matter being covered.
- Analyze the time-frame for subject introduction and dissemination of information.
- Determine follow-up needs.
 - How often?
 - By whom?
- Establish administrative needs and responsibilities.
- Determine subjects missing that need to be added to curriculum.
- Develop a plan for assessment and evaluation of programs.
- Look for areas of educational programs overlap. What information needs to go to whom? How does training for one group change the information that needs to be passed on to other groups?
- Define plans that need to be made to address the future needs of the region and of its members.

Once this information is compiled, it can be used as a reference by all seminar chairs, class presenters, and committee chairs.

Since Sweet Adelines International's mission statement includes "advancing the musical art form of barbershop harmony through education and performance," a music education plan should define a sequential curriculum for each of the target groups identified for education. Once the needs have been identified and an educational plan written, a schedule should be set for faculty selection and class offerings.

Although the regional team cultivates a pool of resource people to teach, coach and advise choruses at the regional level and to make chapter visits, for a special event you may wish to hire outside faculty. Remember that most members of the International Faculty are booked several years in advance.

There are a number of methods for finding the right person to teach your event. One place to begin is to look in the International Faculty résumés (available on the Sweet Adelines International Web site) to match faculty interest with the subject matter of your class. This is also a good time to use your communications network with other Education Coordinators and ask them for faculty referrals. Don't forget the obvious: ask for input from your region's leaders and grass root members.

It is important that the Education Coordinator keep the regional management team informed. Once an educational event has been set, the Team Coordinator should add the event to the regional calendar and other members of the team should begin promoting the event according to their position, for example, when making chorus visits, through regional newsletters, etc.

It is the responsibility of the Education Coordinator to ensure that the curriculum plan is updated and reviewed every two years (or as needed) to maintain the region's continuing focus on quality music education.

Planning and Scheduling Regional Events

Successful events take long-range planning, lots of teamwork and specific job descriptions or guides to achieve the results you want. Each chorus and region is unique. Geography and the size of the group play a role. Financial considerations are a reality.

Event planning and project planning use the same process. Complex events or projects require the use of all the tools that come with the process; simpler projects generally use only a few. The tools are flexible, but the process remains the same.

Successful project leaders are the ones who know how to create a vision that engages everyone involved in the project. They will be able to define expected results, delegate responsibility, break the project down into manageable chunks, develop achievable schedules, communicate concisely, clearly, and rapidly, adjust to changes, monitor progress, and accept nothing short of project success.

The four basic steps for project management are:

- **Visualize**—What is the project (or event) supposed to look like when it has been completed? What is to be accomplished? If it is an educational event, what will the learner learn?
- **Plan**—What tasks need to be completed? Who will do which tasks? When and where will they do them? How much time is required? How much will the event cost?
- **Implement**—The process of communication, coordination, monitoring and adjusting to keep a project on track toward successful completion.
- **Close**—Compare the outcome of the project with the intended results. Celebrate, honor, and reward the efforts of everyone involved. Use evaluation as a learning opportunity to improve future events.

Educational Event Checklist

2-3 Years Out (or as long-range as currently possible!)

- Planning committee meets
- Finalize dates
- Determine target group
- Invite faculty or coach
- Select facility—negotiate contract
- Set up master notebook

1 Year Out—minimum

- Contract reconfirmed with meeting facility
- Reconfirm faculty
- Finalize purpose and learning objectives
- Prepare tentative schedule
- Finalize budget
- Develop marketing plan
- Plan for special events: parties, entertainment, opening/closing sessions

9 Months Out

- Send confirmation letters to faculty or coach
 - outline what was discussed by telephone
 - include a draft schedule
 - include the Hospitality Form to be completed and returned to you
- Contact any demo or performing groups if appropriate
- Design registration form
- Begin marketing

6 Months Out

- Prepare final schedule
- Confirm schedule with facility
- Make special events arrangements
- Continue marketing to members
- Locate equipment for audio/visual needs

3 Months Out

- Confirm meal arrangements if appropriate
- Contact faculty and confirm schedule
- Organize faculty transportation if appropriate
- Finalize arrangements for faculty housing and meals
- Prepare evaluation form
- Confirm status of handouts if appropriate
- Continue marketing to members and public

1 Month Out

- Prepare name tags and all registration materials
- Finalize preparations for classes (handouts duplicated, equipment, seating, etc.)

Event

- Have fun

1-3 Weeks After Event

- Write thank you letters to faculty, staff, and anyone else appropriate
- Review evaluations, make recommendations for future
- Prepare final report
- Take a vacation

Creating an Event Timeline

Once the big picture is identified, outline and break down the project into smaller levels of detail, as far as necessary to identify who is doing what. It may be easier to do this outline in a nonlinear form such as a mindmap rather than completing a traditional outline, but either method is equally effective.

- **Major Pieces**—Begin by identifying the major pieces of the event. Some major pieces such as budget or facility are standard for most events. Major pieces should cover all the work to be done on an event. If you can think of any task, no matter how small, that does not fit under one of the major pieces, you have not yet determined all of the major pieces.
- **Minor Pieces**—Most major pieces can be further divided into smaller pieces to help make the project clear and manageable.
- **Tasks**—Once an event project is broken down into major and minor pieces, the individual tasks begin to be apparent. A task is a small and manageable activity that can generally be done in a short time by one person.

Once it is understood what needs to be done, look at the logical sequence of the tasks. This is critical, since certain tasks may have to be completed before the next ones can be started. Tasks can be divided into two groups:

Parallel—a task that can be done during the same time frame as other tasks.

Dependent—a task that cannot begin until certain predecessor tasks are complete.

It is likely that there is an interdependence which makes careful sequencing important. (Hint: To speed up the sequencing process, put each task on a “Post-it” note. Then just move the notes around until you have them all lined up in order.) Once the sequence has been determined, the tasks can be entered on a project timeline in order.

Using a project timeline can be very helpful because the timeline provides important information in visual terms that most people can understand. Project management software and many sophisticated timeline forms are available. The project timeline form included in this component is a simple tool that you may find helpful. It is similar to a Gantt chart, which is a visual guide that shows the relationships between tasks and time. It was created by Henry Gantt around the turn of the century to help manage some of the early industrial projects.

Project timelines are invaluable for keeping everyone involved on the project aware of deadlines. It is important to decide who is going to take responsibility for each task and to enter that information on the project timeline. This makes the timeline an effective tool not only for planning but also for communicating. Everyone is aware of deadlines and can see her part in the big picture.

Actual completion dates can be entered on the form as each task is completed. This becomes helpful information when you evaluate the event.

Project Timeline

Event Title: Singwell Chorus Retreat

Dates: March 15, 2007

Time Line - Month/Date		2006		2007													
		May	Finish	June	July	Sept.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Jan.	Feb.	Feb.	Mar.	Mar.	Apr.	Actual	
✓	ACTIVITIES/TASKS 1. Facility	Delegated To:	Predecessor	15	1	1	15	15	15	10	20	1	1	1	5	1	
✓	1.1 Get bids (two or more)	Chair		↑													
	1.2 Management Team selects facility		1.1	↑													
	2. Budget																
✓	2.1 Prepare	Chair		↑													
✓	2.2 Approved by Management Team		2.1	↑													
	3. Schedule	Director						↑									
	4. Coach																
✓	4.1 Hospitality form sent	Mary	1.2	↑													
✓	4.2 Hospitality form returned			↑													
	4.3 Make transportation arrangements	Mary	4.2					↑									
	4.4 Send confirmation letter & schedule	Mary	3					↑									
	4.5 Make meal arrangements	Mary	4.2														
	5. Meals																
	5.1 Choose caterer & menu for event	Sue	1.2					↑									
	5.2 Arrange for coffee, rolls, paper cups, etc.	Sue															
	5.3 Collect money for evening meal	Sue	5.1														
	5.4 Make final arrangements with caterer	Sue															
	6. Entertainment																
	6.1 Sign-up sheet for quartets and skits	Cindy															
	6.2 Get emcee	Cindy															
	6.3 Prepare order of performances	Cindy	6.1														
	7. Equipment Chair																
	7.1 Appoint equipment coordinator	Chair															
	7.2 Tables and chairs for meals	??	1.2														
	7.3 Lavalier mic	??	1.2														
	7.4 Make arrangements to move risers	??	1.2														

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		Predecessor	Finish	May	June	July	Sept.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Jan.	Feb.	Feb.	Mar.	Mar.		Apr.
	8. On site Stuff			15	1	1	15	15	15	10	20	1	15	1	5	1	
	8.1 Appoint set-up and clean-up committees	Chair															
	8.2 Prepare name tags	Chair															
	8.3 Prepare evaluation form	Chair															
	8.4 Distribute and collect evaluation forms	Chair															
	9. Information to chorus																
	9.1 Begin announcements in weekly "hot sheet"	Barbara	3														
	9.2 Information sheet and schedule to chorus	Barbara	3														
	10. Chorus																
	10.1 Thank you notes	Chair															
	10.2 Final report to Management Team	Chair	8.4														

Working with Out-of-Region Faculty

Members of the Sweet Adelines International Faculty are some of the most energetic, most musically and administratively talented people in the world! As a result, their skills are highly valued and their services are much in demand. Booking these busy people is often easier said than done. Here are some important tips to ensure a minimum amount of frustration during this process.

Obtain Updated Avenues of Communication

Contact international headquarters in order to update all available telephone numbers, current mailing addresses, e-mail addresses, fax numbers, cell phone numbers, etc. In this fast-changing age of technology and transient living, information becomes outdated quickly.

Follow-up all Telephone Contact with Written Confirmation

The addition of e-mail technology has proven to be an invaluable tool in reaching faculty members. Should you or the faculty member not have e-mail, you will most likely make your initial contact by telephone. If you do reach faculty member(s) this way, be sure that you take accurate notes of the result of your discussion, document them and send written confirmation to the faculty member(s) of any bookings you have made. Remember also to provide copies of this confirmation for fellow regional leaders, international headquarters and/or your files, etc.

Written Contacts

E-mail and facsimile technology are convenient ways to contact faculty members. Letters by traditional mail provide sure but very slow means of contact. Should you make written contact, consider the following:

Traditional Letters—Include a form which allows the faculty member to answer your questions with a simple check mark or a yes or no. The less time consuming the form appears, the more likely you are to get it back. **Always include a self-addressed, stamped envelope.**

Facsimile Letters—This is a fairly convenient way for a regional leader to make contact, but this type of contact can prove to be inconvenient from the faculty member's perspective. Fax machines are often available through a work environment and not always conveniently available for use.

E-mail—This form of contact is considered, by far, the most convenient way to reach most members of the international faculty. Faculty members and regional leaders benefit the most from this form of communication because it is efficient, fast, private and can be handled by both parties at their convenience.

Your contact with the desired faculty member(s) should include questions about availability, fees, anticipated flight costs, etc. The following information and questions should be standard and included as a part of your initial telephone call, e-mail, or letter or fax inquiries:

- State the dates of the meeting and the teaching hours you would like the faculty member to provide. Ask, “What is the anticipated fee?”

- Indicate the location of the facility and the anticipated arrival airport. Ask, “What are the parking fees? Mileage costs?” from the departing airport.
- Be sure to include extra quartet or chorus coaching hours, which may be requested outside of prepared class material. Ask, “What is the anticipated additional fee?”
- Request an update of the faculty member’s credentials. (This is important for regional publicity purposes.)
- Ask if there are additional classes that have been added to the faculty member’s lists that don’t appear on their online faculty résumés.
- If you need a specific class developed, be sure to inquire whether the faculty person is able and willing to do it. If so, ask what type of materials and lead time is required for new classes to be developed.

Once you’ve confirmed availability and secured answers to the questions above, begin planning a preliminary schedule of classes which best satisfy the needs of the region. Feel free to communicate your insights with the faculty member. She may have helpful suggestions regarding class order, subject matter, etc.

You’ve done your job. You’ve secured quality faculty, two years have passed, and now your regional event is at hand. Hosting out-of-region faculty is an important job and one that should not be taken lightly. Consider appointing a regional guest faculty host coordinator who specifically concerns herself (and/or her committee) with faculty transportation to and from the airport, updated flight arrival and departure times, special dietary needs of the faculty member(s), transportation of guest faculty throughout his/her stay, hospitality snacks or beverages, etc. The little amenities are wonderfully appreciated by every faculty member and are easily managed with an organized, caring person in charge.

Check-in at a hotel, retreat site, campus, etc., is best handled in advance of the faculty member’s arrival. **Put your guest faculty on a master account or pre-pay the account before he/she arrives.** Confusion with accounting issues can and should be avoided at the time of the faculty member’s arrival.

Whenever possible, provide a private room for your guest(s). “Down” time is an important part of “up” time, and energetic, enthusiastic faculty members appreciate and need a few hours of uninterrupted rejuvenation. This courtesy is so important.

Regional weekends come and go, each of them offering special memories, classes, faculty teaching styles and personalities, etc. Be proud about your part in all of it. You’ve helped plan and implement events that affect hundreds of people... maybe forever.

Working with the Education Coordinator's Staff

Two questions you've most likely given a lot of thought to since learning about your appointment are, "What does it mean to be the Education Coordinator?" and "What will I be doing?" You should be pleased to learn that you aren't responsible for carrying out the tasks of every function that falls under your umbrella. As the regional team member in charge of the education focus, it is your responsibility to see that all functions are executed. Fortunately for you, some tasks can best be handled by your staff with you as the manager.

Managing Your Staff

Management is a people job. You will need to work with, help, listen to, encourage, and guide those whom you appoint to carry on the work of the region. When you want to get a task done through someone else, you employ an entirely different set of skills than when you do the task yourself; you introduce an interpersonal element into your equation. No matter how good you are at "doing" the job, you will need good planning skills, organization skills, leadership skills, and follow-up skills. In other words, in addition to being a good doer, your goal is to be a good manager of doers.

Assuming that you've already selected your staff according to the education and training needs of your region, define the expertise of each of these individuals and the way in which their talents can be used to fulfill the goals of the region's education program.

Select personnel who are capable of handling the various functions necessary to carry out the plan. There are basically two types of functions they will need to fulfill:

- **Faculty**- those who teach, facilitate, and coach choruses and quartets. These are the personnel you will rely on to provide educational training at regional workshops and to assist you with chorus visits that require coaching and/or instruction in the barbershop style.
- **Administrators**- those who carry out programs under the Education Coordinator structure. Program administration can be successfully delegated for the Director Certification Program, Young Women in Harmony Program, Quartet Promotion, and Arrangers Program.

A third optional function might be a resource or visionary team composed of experts in your region who are actively involved in other areas in the organization, such as judges, program, arrangers, international faculty, etc. While these women already have busy lives, they also have a pulse on what is happening in the organization and can assist you in keeping up-to-date with barbershop standards and current trends in the organization.

Communicating With Staff

Being a good manager is by no means an easy task, and you will find that in order to get the job done efficiently, you will need to exercise, on a consistent basis, good communication skills. In addition to a current job description, your staff members will need to know your expectations of the functions they are to perform. If there are specific deadlines they need to meet, let them know, preferably in writing. Talk with each staff member one-on-one about what she thinks she can do in her assigned position as well as what you expect of her. It is important to get ideas from your staff; they may come up with something you haven't thought of. And, if it is their idea, they will have an even greater commitment to good results.

It is also necessary to communicate the procedures that are involved with the tasks they will be performing. If someone is assigned to make a chorus visit, who is responsible for setting up the visit? Can your staff member expect to receive reimbursement for her mileage? Will it be paid by the region or by international through an internationally funded visit? Will she be expected to write a report on the visit? Are there specific forms to be used? How do you want her to report back to you? If you haven't already established procedures for chorus visits, for faculty who will be teaching at workshops, or for various other events that occur during the course of the year, be sure to do so as soon as possible so that everyone will know what to expect.

Budget Constraints

Another area that needs to be communicated to your staff members is the dollar amount that has been budgeted to their operation. A Quartet Promotion Coordinator needs to know how much she can spend to rent a facility and invite potential quartet members or if she has money to plan a novice quartet contest and provide a reception for the contestants following the contest. Give your staff a budget and hold them accountable. They will increase their own creative skills and appreciate you for trusting them.

Leading Your Staff

Great managers are experts at taking their current organizations and optimizing them to accomplish their goals and get the job done. For an organization to be great, it must also have great leadership. Leaders have vision and share a common trait. They look beyond today by painting compelling visions that grab the imagination of their followers, and then they challenge them to see the potential and achieve these visions. Within the vision, both short-term and future goals are established. Goals help provide direction and tell you how far you've traveled. They also help make the overall vision attainable and clarify everyone's role. It is believed that people are more motivated when challenged to attain a goal that is beyond their normal level of performance. Not only do goals give people a sense of purpose, but they also relieve the boredom from performing routine jobs.

Inspiring Your Staff

The skills required to be a leader are no secret: it's just that some have learned to use them and others haven't. While some seem to be born leaders, anyone can learn what leaders do and how to apply these skills, such as inspiring action. People want to do a

good job, a creative job, and if they are provided the proper environment, they will do so. Use your influence to help your subordinates create energy in their responsibilities by creating the vision, providing the training and skills necessary to complete the task, delegating the bigger and better challenges that make a difference, and sharing your knowledge. Knowledge is power. If you are in the know, you have a clear advantage over someone who is left in the dark. In a cooperative work environment, teams must work together and share their areas of knowledge and expertise. The wise leader acts as a role model by sharing the information that will give her subordinates the edge on excellent work.

Empowering Your Staff

Great managers and leaders allow their subordinates to do great work by empowering them with the freedom to apply personal creativity and expertise. Have you ever worked for someone who didn't let you do your job without questioning every decision? Despite rumors to the contrary, when you empower others, you do not stop managing. What changes is the way you manage. You still provide vision, establish goals, and share knowledge. But, then get out of the way so that your subordinates may tackle their responsibilities with creativity and pride.

Motivating Your Staff

As a busy manager, you'll need to motivate your subordinates so they'll continue to do the good work you appreciate. The most motivating incentives are recognition from one's own supervisor or manager and recognition for the job. The following incentives are simple to execute, take little time, and are among the most motivating:

- Personal thank you's; one-on-one or in writing, or both
- Public recognition; on regional weekends or in the regional newsletter
- Ask for their opinions and involve them in decisions
- Morale-building meetings to celebrate the successes
- Increased responsibility as a result of good work

Giving Feedback to Your Staff

Another critical area that provides recognition is giving feedback. Your subordinates need to know if their performance meets your expectations. Whether it's your own personal evaluation of their work, feedback from a presentation made at a regional workshop, or peer evaluation, the information should be shared in a setting that is non-threatening and constructive. Ask your staff members how things are going and whether they have any questions or need help to do their work. Thank them for doing a good job. The more feedback you give, and the more often you give it, the better able they are to respond to your needs and the goals of the organization.

End-of-year performance evaluations should also be given and this information should become one of the resource tools for making future decisions regarding regional personnel appointments.

Director Certification Program

The Director Certification Program (DCP) is an educational program designed to provide additional training and further develop skills for Sweet Adelines International directors, potential directors, and musical leaders. The program provides opportunities to validate the skills and knowledge required to direct a Sweet Adelines chorus. The DCP should not be viewed as the only source of training for directors, but rather should be seen as one component of each region's director development program.

The Education Coordinator is responsible for administering the program in her region. She does this by appointing a DCP Coordinator who is responsible for maintaining records, administering tests, answering questions, communicating with international headquarters, and tracking advancements. The Education Coordinator needs to coordinate within her long-range educational plan the needs of program members so that appropriate regional training occurs on a consistent and timely basis. Analyzing the results of the DCP testing can provide specific areas that need more emphasis and attention for the region as a whole.

The Education Coordinator is provided with a complimentary copy of the DCP resource material and an administrator's guide. The administrator's guide presents a detailed overview and instructions for administering the program. This set should be given to the DCP Coordinator. The Education or DCP Coordinator is responsible for giving this copy to her successor.

Young Women in Harmony Program

Mission Statement: *The Young Women in Harmony Program, sponsored by Sweet Adelines International, offers to music educators a means of including the study and performance of barbershop harmony in school music programs. The aim is to provide materials, training and performance opportunities for young women and to foster appreciation for this American musical art form. The program is administered through the education department at international headquarters, through the guidance of the Education Direction Committee.*

Regional YWIH Coordinators are appointed by the Education Coordinator to facilitate youth outreach activities and education. The coordinator's position is mainly administrative. She receives information and suggested activities through the education department at international headquarters. Her focus is to help chapters inform their local school districts of the availability of the Young Women in Harmony materials and to ensure the visibility of the program by organizing representation at state conventions of MENC; the National Association for Music Education.

With the inception of the Rising Star Quartet contest, held annually at the International Education Symposium, the Young Women in Harmony coordinator's position now includes publicity for this event. The contest is open to female singers 25 and younger.

Regional coordinators encourage participation and may organize preliminary contests at regional educational events.

The Young Women in Harmony materials are provided at no charge in an introductory packet to music educators by requesting them from international sales. Assistance with festival planning, teaching at regional weekends, funds for MENC booth rentals and general information may be obtained through the director of education.

Making Chorus Visits

One of the highlights of a chorus' year should be a visit from a member of the regional management team or a regional faculty member. It is the Education Coordinator's responsibility to coordinate regional faculty visits and, in conjunction with the Membership Coordinator, to schedule internationally funded visits to choruses. There are different types of chorus visits:

- **To Chartered Choruses**
 - Coaching Visits (administrative or musical)
 - Evaluative Visits
 - Revitalization Visits
- **To Prospective Choruses**
 - Step One Visit – Musical and Administrative
 - Step Two Visit – Musical and Administrative

The purpose of any visit should be to provide musical or administrative education and guidance or to help with issues regarding membership. The visit might be made in conjunction with your region's program which is designed specifically to help small choruses, choruses that scored below a certain level in competition, or those that haven't competed for the past year or two. Or it could be made to provide regional support and assistance for choruses anticipating major changes and/or challenges, such as loss of a director or planning for international competition. Regardless of the purpose for the visit, a record of what transpired should be made and copies sent to the regional management team for its review.

One of the primary responsibilities of the Education Coordinator is to assure that chapters, prospective chapters and Chapter-at-Large quartets have been approved for public performance. If Sweet Adelines International is to be respected in the music and entertainment world, all choruses and quartets must present a positive example of the organization and its style of singing. What the public sees and hears will determine its attitude toward four-part harmony barbershop style.

Preparations for the Visit

- Contact the chorus to set a date and time.
- Confirm in writing and, depending on the purpose of the visit, work with the chorus leadership to set up a time schedule and make plans for what will be accomplished.

- Review chorus files, making note of potential problems/areas of strength, and ascertain contest scores and placement, perhaps asking for a recording of a performance in order to plan for specific areas on which to work.
- Contact the region's Chapter Coordinator (appointed by the Membership Coordinator) and/or Directors' Coordinator for any background information they may have.
- Establish a definite plan with a tentative schedule for the visit.
- Determine guidelines to be used in any analysis or critique: e.g. Basic Criteria for Public Performance, international or regional report information. Review any paperwork to be filled out to ensure that you obtain all the information needed.

During the Visit

Even under the best circumstances, some tension on the part of chorus members, as well as administrative and musical leaders is inevitable when a regional visitor makes an official visit. Therefore, it is important that the visit be structured to help everyone feel at ease.

Suggestions for the Visitor

- Meet with chorus leaders before the rehearsal/meeting to review plans for the session, get acquainted with the leadership, and give them an opportunity to discuss what they perceive to be areas needing work. It's important that they understand your role is not to "police" them but to provide regional support and/or assistance for their chorus.
- If the visit is at a rehearsal, have the chorus follow its usual rehearsal routine for 20-30 minutes as you observe. Hopefully, this will allow chorus members to relax.
- If the visit is for musical evaluation, the chorus should be told in advance to be prepared to present a sample package for a public performance. The evaluation should happen early in the rehearsal so the members can concentrate on any coaching that follows. During the presentation, the visitor should be as attentive as possible using positive, encouraging body language—watching, not writing most of the time—to put the chorus at ease.
- Spend most of the planned schedule working with the chorus on specific areas to help it reach its musical potential. Having observed the chorus, you will be able to ascertain which areas, when improved, will make the most significant difference in the ability of the chorus. If problems are numerous, work on only a few during this first visit, because if all problems are discussed, the chorus and director will be overwhelmed and could become discouraged. Often, solving one major problem results in improvement in other areas.
- Be sure to provide sufficient time for members to ask questions about any topics on which they desire more information. You can use this time to promote regional and international programs and activities.

If the musical caliber is low, the visitor should guide the discussion so that goals for improvement are established. Specific objectives and timelines could be suggested, and offers for continuing regional assistance can be noted and passed on to the proper regional coordinators.

Often during a question/answer or rap session, the visitor will discern a definite conflict between the chorus and certain leaders or find that there are definite factions in the chorus. If this occurs, she must maintain calm control of the discussion and not be drawn into the conflict. Hopefully, prior to the visit, any contacts that have been made regarding this chorus will have alerted the visitor to possible areas of conflict so that she can be prepared with problem-solving techniques.

After the Visit

As soon as possible the visitor should:

- Thank the chorus for its hospitality and again praise the chorus' strengths and determination.
- Confirm in writing any verbal critique and suggestions, reiterating specific areas that need improvement, giving any additional suggestions for making those improvements and suggesting any additional deadlines. Attach a copy of the letter to any official report form that may be required and distribute as appropriate. Necessary reports and a follow-up message to the chorus are critical to the success of regional visits and should be completed as soon as possible following the visit.
- Contact the chorus leadership on a regular basis to assist in monitoring progress. Show a genuine interest in the chorus' progress. Hopefully, this will help encourage the chorus to seek advice on a more regular basis.
- Schedule a follow-up visit, within a few months if necessary, so that the chorus has a definite short-range goal toward which to work.

Evaluating Readiness for Public Performance

Unfortunately, not all choruses and quartets realize the importance of singing in tune, being neat in appearance, and using material that presents themselves and the organization in a tasteful manner. Therefore, the Education Coordinator must evaluate the abilities of choruses and prospective chapters to publicly perform at a level that promotes the positive image of barbershop harmony and Sweet Adelines International. In addition, quartets composed of four Chapter-at-Large members must be evaluated by the Education Coordinator before performing publicly.

Quality Control

To provide Education Coordinators and performing groups a common basis for evaluation, the International Board of Directors adopted the Basic Criteria for Public Performance. This basic criteria sets out the minimum standards that must be met; often-times, groups perform above that standard and are to be congratulated.

Although the Education Coordinator, or her representative, must make two visits to prospective chapters to evaluate their musical progress before chartering, she is not required to evaluate every chorus in the region. However, there are certain instances when it becomes obvious that a visit and perhaps an evaluation of the chorus' readiness for public performance needs to be done. For instance:

- after analyzing the tabulated results of the regional chorus competition
- after viewing a show or singing engagement

- after hearing comments from the public regarding performance material or quality
- after hearing that a chorus might be considering not competing or performing for evaluation only for the third year in a row (which would mean loss of its charter).

If any of these situations exist, it is time for an evaluative visit to be made. The chorus will, of course, feel uncomfortable, even threatened, so it is up to the Education Coordinator or her designee to do whatever she can to lessen the atmosphere of fear that may be created. In addition to the aspects of chorus visits previously discussed, the Education Coordinator should:

- Notify the chorus of a planned visit to evaluate its readiness for public performance. Include a copy of the Basic Criteria for Public Performance and make sure the chorus understands the expectations.
- Devote time during the visit to explain why the standards are important and should be met. Stress the benefits to the chorus.
- Work hard to establish a trusting atmosphere with the chorus director, the administrative leadership and the members. Give positive comments about their performance and use language that denotes recognition of their attempts to achieve what you're asking: e.g. "Continue working on...", "You've made a good start, now build on...". In particular, stress that chorus improvement will come with each member's individual attention to the basics of good singing.
- Contact the chorus leadership with confirmation of the comments made during the visit.
- Work with the chorus director to define musical targets that must be reached, set a time frame for reaching them, and inform the director and chorus what help the region will provide to aid the chorus in reaching those targets.
- Maintain contact with the chorus, offering assistance to meet the deadlines that have been set.
- Ensure all chartered chapters comply with the policy requiring that they compete or perform for evaluation every three years. If the Education Coordinator determines that this experience would be detrimental to a chapter, she may submit a written request to the Director of Music Services at international headquarters asking that the policy be waived. This request should include rationale for the request and an explanation of what has been done regionally to assist the chorus with its musical progress.

Basic Criteria for Public Performance

Musical Performance

Performing groups and their audiences enjoy variety (including novelty or comedy songs, solos, and songs with modern chords) in a performance. However, the performance should include predominant use of barbershop arrangements sung in barbershop style as defined in the Judging Category Description Book.

Public performances should include the following musical skills

- Correct notes and words
- In synch and in tune
- Energy and forward motion

Visual Performance

- Correct stage stance and posture
- Even spacing between chorus and quartet members
- Synchronization of planned movement
- Display of appropriate facial expression and poise
- Energy and emotional connection with the audience

Appropriateness

- Subject matter, lyrics or presentation should not be offensive to members and/or audience
- Length of performance should fit the occasion and the audience
- Emcee material is planned ahead and relevant to the audience
- Delivery enhances the performance and creates a sense of continuity throughout the program
- Use appropriate material in good taste. Good singing is the emphasis; joke telling should be minimized and used with caution

Unit Appearance**Costume**

- Proper fit
- Clean, pressed and in good repair
- Appropriate for venue and audience

Grooming

- Hair that is neat, clean, and styled suitably for the costume
- Appropriate stage or street makeup applied in a uniform manner

Members as Ambassadors

All performance-related contacts between Sweet Adelines and the public should be business-like and pleasant. A generic plan, either formal or informal, should be developed that assigns responsibilities and ensures that all performance-related administrative details are properly handled.

Each chorus and quartet member should be aware that any interaction is a chance to make a positive impression. Of particular importance are:

- Interaction between the performance coordinator and those who hire the group to perform
- Interaction between the performing group and the audience, before, during and after the performance
- Interaction with personnel at the performance site

Quartet Evaluations

Most chapters have established audition procedures to determine a quartet's readiness for public performance. Since the primary responsibility for auditioning quartets is with the chapters, the Education Coordinator should encourage a quartet not approved for public performance to re-audition with its chapter. Work with the chapter to establish effective audition procedures. Maintain contact with the quartet, be encouraging, remind the members of deadlines (if necessary) and offer help. However, questions arise now and then concerning auditioning quartets whose members are not affiliated with a chapter or are in a chapter position that precludes an honest evaluation of performance ability. Some instances in which the Education Coordinator may be called upon to evaluate the musical abilities of a quartet are:

- All four members of the quartet belong to Chapter-at-Large
- The Education Coordinator has heard the quartet in a public performance that did not meet the basic criteria as outlined previously
- A quartet's contest score indicates that it may not be meeting the basic criteria
- The chorus director or chapter to which the quartet members belong has asked the Education Coordinator to evaluate the quartet's readiness to perform.

At best, these situations can be awkward. As Education Coordinator you do not want to be viewed as sitting in judgment waiting to render a verdict. Instead, you will want to help the performers see and understand the basic criteria; then (if necessary) develop the desire to make improvements with a plan to achieve or exceed the standards of the basic criteria. You may want to use the following suggestions:

- Contact the quartet in writing. Focus your comments on information, observation, time, place, the "what" and "how." Avoid conclusions, judgments, advice, and the "whys."
- Ask the quartet to send you a video recording of a 15-20 minute performance package, in costume and including emcee material, just like an actual performance.
- Ask another qualified person (judge, former Education Coordinator/DMA, etc.) in your region to give you a confidential evaluation of the video recording. Let the quartet know that both you and the other person will be watching the recording. Use her evaluation along with yours to make a decision regarding permission to perform in public.
- No matter what the decision, when you return the video and results of the evaluation, also send comments directly related to the songs and video. Note specific strengths as well as areas that need improvement, giving suggestions for making those improvements.
- If the quartet is not approved for public performance, offer suggestions for coaching help. Work with the quartet to define musical goals and develop a plan and timeline for reaching those goals.

As you watch the video, imagine that you are in the audience for the performance. What is your overall impression of the barbershop style as evidenced by the performance? Now, watch the video again and imagine that you are the coach for this quartet. Your job is to help the members improve their skills by becoming aware of their strengths and errors. Awareness of strong points brings confidence, motivation, and satisfaction. However, it is only awareness of weaknesses that allows the quartet to improve.

Avoid generalizations and assumptions and be able to give specific comments about the following:

- Correct notes and words sung together and in tune
- Body language and poise
- Appropriate, attractive and well-fitting costume on all quartet members
- Appropriate grooming, makeup and hairstyles
- Emcee work content and delivery

No one performs poorly on purpose. The members of our quartets and choruses are constantly looking for ways to change, improve, and learn. Awareness is the key to learning. Performers need to be aware of what the basic criteria mean and how their performance compares. Even though awareness is essential to improvement, we often resist it because it can be so disillusioning. Sometimes, as performers become more aware of what needs to be learned, they feel as if they are getting worse, and so they quit just at the time when they could become more proficient. A competent, caring, positive teacher can help the quartet through this period. The Education Coordinator can assist the quartet in finding this person.

When you return the video and comments to the quartet, ask the members to:

- Watch the video while reading the comments.
- Invite a competent coach or “fifth ear” to join them as they watch the video. (The Education Coordinator may need to help them find outside assistance.)
- Write down some specific short-term goals, including a step-by-step plan. (Almost any accomplishment can be broken into a series of steps, which makes the process of achievement much more manageable and enjoyable.)
- Contact you to set up a telephone conference with each member on a different extension so that all can ask questions and hear the same responses.

The Education Coordinator should remain in touch with the quartet in a timely manner, as the members work the plan to successfully re-audition.

Congratulate and celebrate with the quartet when it successfully re-auditions!

Sample Letters

Date

The ABCD Quartet Name, Contact
Address

Dear ABCD:

As Education Coordinator, it is my responsibility to evaluate the musical abilities of choruses and quartets including their readiness for public performance.

I know that you are working hard to learn and grow as singers and performers. However, it has been brought to my attention that some of your performances may not meet the standards required by our organization for public performance as a Sweet Adelines quartet. I heard you perform at _____ in _____. Because this was only one song (or performance), it is unfair to use that as a basis for evaluation.

Therefore, this is a request that you send me a video recording of your entertainment package. I would like to receive the video before _____. If that date is a problem, please let me know and we'll work out a different time schedule. You should wear a costume, include emcee material, and sing four or more songs as in a normal 15-20 minute performance. The purpose of this video is to assure that you are prepared musically to give fine barbershop performances. If there are some areas that need specific help, I will work with you to find someone who can help you develop those skills.

Making a video recording may seem stressful to you, but you can be sure that I will evaluate the video as a friend. Most of us look back in gratitude to those tough teachers who insisted that we meet our potential. The purpose of this evaluation is to help the ABCD Quartet succeed, sing well, and have fun. I will do everything I can to assist you in that effort. If you have any questions, please call.

In harmony,

Name, Education Coordinator

cc: Team Coordinator
Chorus Director(s)
Director of Music Services

Sample letters

Date

The ABCD Quartet Name, Contact Address

Dear ABCD:

It was good to talk with all of you on the phone last night. Thanks for calling and for being so cooperative.

Approved Judge _____ and I evaluated the video you sent on _____. Enclosed are the notes and comments written by the two of us as we watched and listened. Based on that evaluation, we recommend that the ABCD Quartet not accept any further public performances until you have re-auditioned and been approved for public performance.

(Note: The following paragraph refers to correspondence coaching. This isn't meant to imply that it is the preferred method, but is an option if other coaching help is not available. If the quartet chooses this option, make sure the members understand that it is slow.)

Regional Staff Member _____ is willing to coach you by correspondence with the use of audio recordings. In addition, I recommend that you also find someone in your community who can be a good "fifth ear" for you. This person doesn't have to be an experienced coach but should have a good ear for accuracy. Let her know what specific skills _____ has asked you to work on and she will be able to help you progress much faster. Correspondence coaching can be very helpful, but it is also very slow.

Invite your "fifth ear" to meet with you and watch the video as you read the enclosed notes and comments. Then work together to develop a detailed plan to improve your musical skills. Enclosed you will find a sample action plan that may help you in this endeavor.

Once the plan is in place, it is a matter of disciplining yourselves to carry out that plan one step at a time. Please keep in contact with me. I am looking forward to your success and wish you the best of luck as you prepare to re-audition.

In harmony,

name, Education Coordinator

cc: Team Coordinator
Chorus Director(s)
Director of Music Services

Internationally Funded Visits

The Education Coordinator, in conjunction with the Membership Coordinator, is responsible for scheduling the internationally funded visits. Funded visits are allocated as follows:

- A total of 15 internationally funded education visits to **chartered chapters** is allocated. The focus of internationally funded visits is education, administration or issues regarding membership. Internationally funded visits should not be used for “get acquainted” visits.

As each member of the regional management team has differing areas of expertise, the region will determine which of the coordinators or her designee will make each visit.

Your region will be able to download reporting forms from the Sweet Adelines International Web site for use in internationally funded visits. The form includes request for reimbursement. Worldwide regions may be issued reimbursement in their country’s currency if they choose that option.

Many regional leaders determine which chapters could most benefit from internationally funded visits and then schedule these visits as early in the fiscal year as possible. This gives the visiting leader time to plan for her trip and the chapters time to confirm a date convenient for their members.

- **Prospective chapters** require two musical and two administrative visits in order to fulfill their chartering requirements. Typically, one visit would occur when the chapter is in Step One and one would occur when the chapter is in Step Two. (If determined necessary, a third musical visit may be granted with permission from international.) The musical visit should be made by the Education Coordinator or her designee. The administrative visits are made by the Membership Coordinator or her designee.
- Two internationally funded visits are available per year (maximum two years) for chapters in **revitalization**. The regional management team chooses the visitor based on chorus need.

Of course, the region may plan visits funded by the region in addition to those funded by international. Although it is not mandatory that international receive a report of visits funded by the region, you are encouraged to do so as the music services and communications departments at headquarters are interested in chorus progress.

To receive prompt reimbursement for internationally funded visits, please comply with the following:

- Always use the appropriate funded visit form. Additional forms are available upon request.
- If a designee is assigned to make the visit, the form must be signed (approved) by the appropriate coordinator (Education Coordinator or Membership Coordinator) before being forwarded to international.

- Round-trip ground transportation is reimbursed at the mileage rate approved by the International Board of Directors for the current fiscal year. Ground transportation reported in kilometers will be converted to miles.
- When considering funded visits, please note that hotel nights and food are not included as part of reimbursable expenses.
- Any chapter visit requiring transportation in excess of \$600 must be pre-approved. Phone or e-mail the Director of Meetings and Corporate Services at Meet-Corp@sweetadelineintl.org, or the Corporate Secretary at corp_secy@sweetadelineintl.org or 800-992-7464 or 1-918-622-1444 to obtain pre-approval.
- Regions may use World Travel Service to purchase tickets for internationally funded visits.

If World Travel Service is being used, charges are billed directly to the Sweet Adelines International master account. Following is information on World Travel Service:

- Call World Travel Service at 800-324-4987 (Worldwide Regions call collect 1-918-743-8856) Monday-Friday 7:30 a.m. - 6:30 p.m. CST.
- Identify yourself to the receptionist as a Sweet Adeline.
- Tell the agent handling your call that you are booking an internationally funded visit and give the applicable code:
 - Code # 7660 - Visits to prospective chapters
 - Code # 7670 - Visits to chartered chapters
 - Code # 7675 - Visits to revitalizing chapters
- Make the visit and complete the appropriate funded visit form. Attach the airline ticket stub to the visit form and submit it to international headquarters.

Members may choose to book flights through another travel agency or via the Internet. If so, provide copies of receipts, ticket stubs, or itineraries indicating the amount of airfare along with a funded visit report form for reimbursement.

Prospective Chapters and Steps Toward Chartering

Early and continued communication is essential in the development of a prospective chapter, administratively and musically. When notice is received from international headquarters that a prospective chapter has received the Step One materials, the Education Coordinator should write to the prospective chapter, welcoming the chapter to Sweet Adelines International and to the region. The letter should explain the Education Coordinator's position as it relates to extension and tell the prospective chapter what is expected of it musically.

The Education Coordinator is required to make two visits to each prospective chapter before the chapter may charter. A third visit may be made upon request to international headquarters. The Education Coordinator's approval is required before the group may perform in public and before the charter is granted. If the Education Coordinator is unable to make a visit, a representative may be assigned to do so.

The first musical visit should take place in Step One to ensure that:

- The group understands the barbershop sound.
- Singers are singing correct notes.
- Prospective members are being auditioned.
- The chorus director has good musical potential.

If the chorus director does not have a barbershop background, the Education Coordinator or a representative may provide assistance in directing and teaching techniques. Directors of prospective choruses should be encouraged to attend regional musical events and to familiarize themselves with materials available through international.

The first musical visit is the most important. Since time is limited, the Education Coordinator must be prepared to make efficient use of time with the prospective. The Education Coordinator should write to the chorus director, with a copy to the chapter president or contact person, to establish the plans for the visit. It is best to meet early with the chorus director and/or officers, if possible.

When the Education Coordinator meets with the chorus, she should:

- Give them time to get to know her. She should tell a little about herself and her Sweet Adelines experience.
- Tell the group about how and when Sweet Adelines International was organized.
- Explain the organization's educational programs.
- Explain the difference between the barbershop style and other forms of choral music. It is helpful to use visuals and recorded examples of the styles of music so that the members can hear and see the differences.
- Teach a song, a part of a song, or a tag, so that they get the feel of barbershop harmony.
- Explain some of the new words members of the group will be hearing (for example, lock-and-ring, swipe, tag).
- Emphasize the importance of good vocal production. Demonstrate correct breathing and vocal exercises. The Education Coordinator might recommend books or other publications of benefit to the prospective chapter.
- Discuss the role of the director and chorus-director relationship. Remind the group that areas of responsibility and specific duties should be spelled out in the director's agreement.
- Allow time for questions and discussion.
- Tell them what will be expected of them for the next Education Coordinator visit.

To whet their appetite, prepare a table of literature, pictures, handbooks, and other materials for prospective members to examine during breaks. The Education Coordinator should keep in mind that the typical prospective chapter will be at a beginning musical level. Pictures, recordings, and remarks about the accomplishments of the Education Coordinator's chorus should not lead prospectives to feel that such achievements are beyond them.

Every musical visit should include singing. The first visit provides the Education Coordinator the opportunity to work with the group on the basic components of balance, blend, and vocal production. Also, she can observe the director working with the chorus and offer constructive feedback. Any criticism of the director should be given privately and not in front of the group.

The second visit should occur during Step Two, to evaluate the group's readiness for public performance. The prospective group should be told to be ready to present a sample performance of five or six songs, complete with costumes, makeup, and emcee material. The Basic Criteria for Public Performance should be reviewed so that the group will understand the standards of measurement. It should be determined at this visit whether the group is to be approved musically for charter. If the group is not "charter ready," a third visit may occur if approved by international headquarters.

Though it may be difficult to deny approval for public performance or charter, the long-term effect must be considered. If chorus members realize from the very beginning that musical standards must be met, they will be more likely to demand more of themselves musically.

For the required visits, international reimburses the Education Coordinator, or her representative, for travel at the current rate approved by the international organization. If the transportation costs exceed \$600, the Education Coordinator must seek prior approval from the Director of Corporate Services or Corporate Secretary.

After each visit to a prospective chorus, the Education Coordinator must complete a Prospective Chapter Musical Progress Report and submit it to international headquarters before being reimbursed. If the visit was made by a representative, the Education Coordinator must cosign the report. As part of the report, the Education Coordinator is asked to specify whether or not the group may perform in public and whether or not the group is approved musically for charter. When the Education Coordinator approves a group to charter, a copy of the report must be sent to the Team Coordinator.

Often the Education Coordinator feels it necessary to monitor a prospective chapter's musical progress between the required visits. Many Education Coordinators have developed an evaluation program in which the group is requested to send an audio recording at regular intervals. The Education Coordinator listens to the recording and provides a written or oral critique. Most regions provide funding for an interim visit.

Occasionally the Education Coordinator will feel that an additional visit is necessary because of unusual circumstances. For example, there may have been a change in directors, the membership may have changed significantly, or musical approval for charter was not granted following the second visit. If the Education Coordinator wishes to make an additional visit to be funded by the international organization, prior approval of the Director of Communications must be requested. Of course, the Education Coordinator is not limited to making only the required visits. Additional visits may be funded by the region.

The Education Coordinator can provide other educational opportunities for prospective chapters. All prospectives should be included in regular mailings regarding regional and international schools and other regional events. Directors of prospective choruses should receive copies of all regional newsletters. Some time should be set aside to meet with and recognize prospectives during regional weekends. Another possibility is for a competing chorus and director to host the director of a prospective chorus during the regional competition. This provides an opportunity to gain exposure to competition through the competitor's eyes.

The Education Coordinator should remain in touch with each prospective chapter. Choruses, both prospective and chartered, that feel they have been sought after, that they have received regional assistance, and that the Education Coordinator sincerely cares for them, are more likely to participate in and support other regional programs than those that feel they've been left on their own to do the best they can.

A prospective chapter that has been provided a firm foundation of music education will be a strong chorus musically after chartering. The responsibility for laying that foundation lies with the Education Coordinator.

Script Writing

"It takes three weeks to prepare a good impromptu speech." -Mark Twain

Have you ever written a script? Well, get ready! In your position as Education Coordinator you'll undoubtedly need to write a script for an upcoming class at one time or another. How do you feel when presented with such a request? Do you know where to begin? Whatever your initial response, the thought of composing a script can be somewhat daunting. To assist you, remember the three "P"s of script writing:

Preplanning

When faced with the task of writing a script, remember the following information:

- Topic/subject of script
- Class objective or purpose
- Number of attendees
- Time frame (start at . . . finish by . . .)
- Time of presentation
- Setting (proactive/formal or interactive/informal)
- Special instructions

The time frame, time of presentation and the setting will have a big impact on the content of the script you will eventually write. The informality of a group of 20 on a college campus will lend itself to a different type of presentation than will an audience of 500 in a hotel ballroom. A different type of script may be needed for a class given at 9:00 a.m. as compared to a class given in the evening after a full day of education.

Before putting pen to paper or turning on your computer, sit down and visualize your audience. To do that, you'll need an "audience snapshot." Some of the things you'll want to know:

- Gender
- Age group
- Special interest group (i.e., directors, board members, choreographers, general membership)
- Barbershop experience
- Mood and expectations

Sometimes you may not have specific information about a class made up of general members. In that case, remember the rule of "Predominantly." Most audiences are composed of people who are "predominantly" something. In our organization, most are predominantly adults, are predominantly female, and are predominantly chorus members. All are singers!

Once you have the audience profile, approach your subject from the audience's point of view. Many script writers make this common mistake: they approach their subject matter from one point of view—theirs. Your message, however, must speak to the needs of the listeners; to achieve that, you must structure the script from their point of view. Your script doesn't need to be meaningful to you; it needs to be meaningful to your audience! Imagine listening to you from their perspective. Then ask yourself the following questions:

- How do I want the audience to perceive me (or the presenter)?
- What's important to them? What will "speak" to them from their perspective?
- How can this topic be approached to make it meaningful and memorable to this audience?

Once these questions have been answered, you're ready to begin working on the script.

Packaging

The first question you'll face is "What type of script should I write?" Which type you choose generally depends upon your own preference; another important influence, however, is whether you will be the sole presenter of the script or if you're writing the script for other people to present.

One type of script is the narrative. In narrative style, a script is written word for word the way it will be presented. The advantages of this style are that it forces the writer to organize every detail and allows the presenter to actually present what is written. That, too, is its disadvantage. Visually, page upon page of written material can be overwhelming to another presenter. In addition, it's written in a style unique to the writer with that individual's nuances and vocabulary. That often makes it more difficult for other presenters to "make it their own."

The opposite end of the spectrum is the outline type of script. A formal outline forces the material into a specific framework, breaking down the content into smaller and smaller

subsections. It's the type of outline you probably had to do in school, where if you have an "A," you must have a "B;" if you have a "1," you must have a "2." It's that specificity that makes this type of script somewhat cumbersome and limiting. In today's jargon, a formal outline is not "user friendly."

A third type of script lies somewhere between narrative and formal outline and that's the lesson plan. In a lesson plan, the items to be discussed are presented, but without all the wording of the narrative. The writer still includes all the aspects discussed in the "Preparation section," but it will be written in incomplete sentences and notes. This works well if you're the sole presenter; if someone else is to present your script, however, you must make sure you've included all the pertinent information. Visually, this type of script packaging is not as overwhelming as the narrative.

Preparation

The first thing to know about preparing a script is that it isn't usually written in the same order as it will be presented. Every presentation begins with some type of introductory opener. That's not the place to begin, however. You'll prepare the script in one order and present it in another order.

Prepare a script in stages. Don't try to sit down and write the entire thing at one sitting. The writer needs to:

- Outline each component
- Develop the narrative
- Design supplemental materials (audiovisuals, handouts, etc.)
- Practice

Objective

Your first task is to write—yes, write—a brief statement that answers the question, "What do I want to accomplish by writing this script/delivering this presentation?" This is the foundation of your script. It is the first element to prepare because all the rest of the script must be designed to support your objective. If it doesn't support your objective don't include it in the script!

One way of formulating your objective is to complete the sentence: "By the end of my presentation, people will . . ." When preparing a script, you typically want the audience to:

- Understand something
- Be able to do something
- Do something

Key Points

Once you have the objective, develop the body of the script by determining which key points will best support the objective and be meaningful for the audience. In organizing key points, remember the rule of three. Try to group your material into one, two or three key points, but no more than three. (This doesn't mean that you'll always have three key points; sometimes you may have two and in rare instances you might have four.) This

forces you to organize your material into a clear, logical order which will be easier for your listeners to understand and remember. It also keeps it simple for your listeners so they'll be able to retain more.

To best determine your three key points, try answering these questions:

- What points will best lead to my objective?
- What points do I most want the audience to remember?

There are several ways to organize key points once they are determined. Make sure to put them in a sequence that's easy to follow. Here are some suggestions:

- Chronological order
 - Past, present, future
 - First, second, third
- Spatial arrangement
 - Major, minor, symmetrical chords, for example
 - Chorus size
 - Chorus level (A, B, C, etc.)
- Topical: from the least important to the most important

Concerns and Solutions

If your script and your subject matter lend themselves to an easily remembered mnemonic device, use it; it helps your audience remember the key points. Don't let the search for cute memory devices take up the bulk of your time, however.

Supporting Material

Once the key points are determined, gather the supporting material which will substantiate those points. There are a variety of sources from which to gather information:

- **Internal:** all Sweet Adelines' various manuals and publications; faculty members; regional personnel; handouts you've collected over the years; headquarters staff; audio and video recordings.
- **External:** local and university libraries; outside experts; multi-media (TV, audio, video); computer database; newspapers and magazines.
- **Personal:** your own experience; your personal library.

As you collect the supporting material for your key points, think about the most effective ways of presenting it for that particular audience in that particular setting.

Supporting material could take any of these forms:

Examples: Examples provide support based upon experience, using a person or event to prove a point. Sometimes, instead of using a factual example, ask the audience to visualize a scenario of what might occur given certain parameters. For example, visualize what might be the outcome of trying to prepare a script an hour before you're scheduled to present it!

Comparisons: Sometimes you can compare the point you want to make to something with which the audience is familiar. Comparisons can be either similar or contrasting. In writing a script on judging levels, for example, you might compare a chorus which spent time perfecting vocal production skills with a chorus which did not. If a direct comparison isn't available, use an analogy: "Not teaching vocal production skills is analogous to trying to build a house without a foundation."

Quotations: If you present a quote from some famous person, the audience will usually assume that it's true. Who are some "quotable notables?"

Findings: Findings are factual, quantitative data. If findings are used, make sure they are current and accurate. Comparing membership figures for the past three years would be appropriate use of data in a class evaluating the effectiveness of the *Singers Wanted* and *Ready, Set,...Grow* programs.

Audio/visual: Audio/visual materials provide vocal or graphic substantiation for supporting material. Certainly visual images can have a longer lasting impact than words alone. They are not intended to be your entire presentation, however; they should merely support it. Visual aids should be just that: visual. They are not intended to be mere representations of words on an overhead. Instead, they should support your material pictorially.

Attempt to strike a balance when researching supporting material: consult various sources, combining internal, external and personal, and choose varying ways of presenting it, using as many of the ways listed above as fit naturally into the script. The supporting material will be the bulk of the script. When first starting your script, don't get bogged down in research or in trying to be cute or creative. Just jot down some ideas; once you begin writing, you can add more "flesh" to those "bare bones." Avoid the temptation of using too much supporting material. Either there won't be enough time to present the script in the time allotted or the presenter will end up with a shopping list of information.

Now that the supporting material is written and the bulk of the script is prepared, you're ready to lead the audience from one point to the next by writing transitions.

Transitions

Transitions are merely mini-summaries of the key points made and mini-previews of where you're heading. Transition statements don't have to be long; they make your message easier to follow and they help keep the audience on track. Each key point should end with some type of transition statement. If you get stuck and can't think how to write a transition, try following this formula: "Having considered point number one, let's now take a look at point number two."

Preview and Summary

The preview and the summary are the next two pieces of the script that you write. Basically, the preview tells the audience what you're going to tell them and the summary tells them what you told them. Apply the formula of:

T x 3:

- T-1: PREVIEW: Tell them what you're going to tell them.
- T-2: BODY: Tell them.
- T-3: SUMMARY: Tell them what you told them.

The summary statement is the opposite of the preview statement; it looks back and shows where the writer's been.

Opener

Every presentation begins with some sort of an opener. If you're the one presenting your script, include the opener in the script. If someone else is presenting the script, she may opt to come up with her own opener. The opener is not actually the beginning of the content of your presentation, but instead is a way of opening up the audience. It should capture the audience's attention while foreshadowing the upcoming theme. Wait to prepare the opener until after you've developed the body of the script. There are several different types of openers:

Quotation: Any quotation should come from a recognized authority on your subject. The authority should also have universal recognition, so that everyone knows the name. The person whom you quote should be an attention-getter.

Rhetorical question: A rhetorical question involves the audience immediately in the subject matter, it instantly focuses attention to the matter at hand and the audience becomes involved by formulating a mental response.

Declarative statement: This is a bold, emphatic statement of fact. It needs to be interesting to the members of the audience and grab both their attention and their imagination. To open a class on Pythagorean tuning, the declarative statement might be, "She who makes the most overtones wins! This class will teach you how to do just that."

Scenario: Make up something to create a picture in the mind of your audience. Scenarios are already used often in choruses as the members visualize themselves in a competition or performance situation. One type of successful scenario is to lead the audience members through a visualization in which they already know the material you are about to present. Through such a scenario, they can see themselves as knowledgeable, successful, professional, or whatever you want the outcome of your presentation to be.

Anecdote: An anecdote is usually a personal story that relates to your upcoming material. It can be entertaining, humorous, or emotional, but above all it must be brief.

The best openers are usually a combination of two or more of the elements just discussed. Whatever type of opener you choose, it should fit your own personal style so that your beginning is comfortable and natural. Once you've decided upon an opener, the only piece left is the closer.

The Final Response

The closing comments in the script are used to remind the audience of what the objective was. Present what you want the audience to do after the summary, either as a reminder, an application, or for approval. Here's an example of each type of closing:

- **Approval:** We witness the best example of approval every time we watch a champion quartet perform. Invariably, after their performance, one member will say something like, "If you liked our performance this evening, you'll enjoy it just as much in your living room. We will have CDs available for sale in the foyer immediately following the show." That's an approval closing.
- **Reminder:** "By using the three P's—preplanning, preparation, and packaging—you will be able to write an effective, cohesive, well organized script that will be the envy of all the participants."
- **Application:** "Now that you have the tools necessary for writing a good script, take the last few minutes to jot down two or three new organizational skills which you'll use the next time you're invited to write a script."

If you follow the three "P's" for script writing, you'll appear more confident, better organized, and more professional and you'll truly give a "thumbs-up" presentation!