

Polished Performances

Elements of a Great Show Package

Music that is well-rehearsed and ready for stage
Variety of musical styles in a pleasing order
Recognizable music (at least some)
Acceptable time limits
A touch of humor
Emotional impact
High energy
Smooth transition from song to song
Comfortable and effective MC work
Attention to grooming and costuming

Grooming and Costuming Suggestions

Read the Judging Category Description Booklet in this area
Choose a costume that fits your image
Choose a costume that fits and looks good on all members
Try on costumes before any event to make sure they still fit!
Be honest (but still kind) about how the costume looks on each person
Have someone look at you from the audience/judge perspective
Look at costume and make-up under stage lights
Carefully examine each other before going onstage

EMCEE Material

Introduce quartet and members of quartet
Facts about the songs
Facts about the audience
Poetry or quotes
Comedy

Comedy Guidelines

Find a style of humor that Works for you and is not forced
Practice your delivery: word emphasis, looks, features, etc.
DO NOT USE QUESTIONABLE MATERIAL
DO NOT tell inside jokes -- things the audience won't "get"
Timing is EVERYTHING!
NEVER step on applause or laughter
Know when to quit
The non-verbal responses from the rest of the quartet make a huge difference

Emceeding Do's and Dont's

DO: Introduce the group and the individual members – briefly

DON'T: Spend too long talking – about anything. Sing!

DO: Share facts about certain songs that might be of interest to the audience

DON'T: Introduce every song in the same way

DO: Pique their interest as to what's coming next, either by the verbal "setup" or the visual "mood set" of the song

DON'T: Always give away the title of the song in the introduction

DO: Be sincere

DON'T: Try to play some character you have seen or heard. Be yourself, unless you have developed a successful character for the stage. If so, stay in that character for the entire performance

DO: Involve the audience whenever possible. Be personal and personable

DON'T: "Talk to the wall" Narrative style gets old quickly. Watch and listen for reactions and react back

DO: Include some light comedy or humor of some type

DON'T: Be offensive to get a laugh. When in doubt, leave it out!

DO: Use the members of your quartet that have a knack for speaking and/or comedy

DON'T: Make anyone talk who is not comfortable in that role

DO: Plan and practice the MC work so that the pitch can be ready at the end of each talking spot or during the applause, if there is no spoken introduction

DON'T: "Wing it" Prepare, practice, and be consistent

Song Order for the Performance

Open with something peppy, strong tag, that says "We're glad to be here!"

In a longer package, consider doing two songs back to back before doing any talking, with the second song also upbeat.

Don't follow a predictable pattern for alternating songs and MC work

Space out ballads so that they aren't back to back, even if they're different kinds of ballads.

Be cautious when trying to fit songs into a themed package -- sometimes we stretch too far.

Always sing your best songs, not just the songs you like.

Don't do solos unless you have a soloist! There is a difference between singing the melody and being a soloist.

The "closer" is their lasting impression of you. Make sure it leaves the message you want them to remember.

DON'T ASSUME AN ENCORE! Don't mistake sincere applause for wanting another song. You can always come back for a bow only. If they really, truly force you to do an encore, only do one song. They didn't ask for more than that.