**Building Music & Visual Teams For Growth**

Script: Diane M. Porsch, IF

Region 9 Workshop – June 2018

**SCENARIOS HANDOUT**

**SCENARIO #1**

**Background:**

1. **Chorus:**
2. **Membership** is a good mix of young, middle-aged and senior singers. Fluctuates between 80-90 the past 10 years. Retention is strong though consistent appearances at International is expensive time-wise and financially and is beginning to impact commitment of members (especially with families) as chorus continues to earn the opportunity to compete at the International level.
3. **A-/A Chorus** – Competes annually. Regional contest scores: 665-680.
4. **International Placement**: Top Ten since 2008.
5. **Chorus Focus**: Contest plus annual show & cabaret. Full chorus community performances are few and far between with chapter quartets and/or small ensembles from within the chorus accepting the few requests received for chorus to provide entertainment.
6. **Director**:
7. **Master Director**. Has been a well-respected and organized front-line director in the organization for the past 44 years. Director of current chorus since 2001.
8. **Director Focus**: Contest and full-chorus type performances (show/cabaret). Musical excellence through education and competition is what drives this leader.
9. **Chorus Culture & Expectations:**
10. **New members** (rookies) have a 2-year timeline to qualify on existing rep and may perform songs they know for upcoming performances.
11. **Experienced members** are expected to be qualified visually and vocally on all chorus rep in order to perform with the chorus.
12. **Members** are expected to participate in full chorus events whenever possible:
13. Rehearsals, Show, Cabaret, Regional & International Contests, etc… with the understanding that there *are* exceptions to these expectations.
14. **New member gain during the past 6 months** – 10 new members – Two experienced singers who have chosen to return after a one-year hiatus and 8 new members who found us on MeetUp.
15. **Chorus is happy, healthy and growing**.

**SITUATION:**

This is a happy, healthy, successful and growing competition-focused chorus and director. Goals of chapter and musical leadership are a match! All is good…however…barbershop harmony and the organizations that represent it seem to be evolving in directions that cause concern for the *long-time* singers and the director in this chorus. There is little to no interest in mixed ensemble competitions, joining the BHS or Harmony, Inc., etc… There are concerns regarding “where” Sweet Adelines is going and what type of changes are going to be recommended by the IBOD. Is the organization *less* focused on competition as an educational event? Will Sweet Adelines be able to stand on its own should BHS and Harmony, Inc. become one? What type of flexibility will be required, if any, for choruses like this to continue on their current path?

***Discuss…***

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**SCENARIOS HANDOUT**

**SCENARIO #2**

**Background:**

1. **Chorus:**
2. **Membership** is comprised mostly of women in their 50s through 70s. Fluctuates between 15-20 singers – (only two tenors!) which has been the case for the past 20 years. Retention has been an issue as some members are duals with the regional champion chorus just down the road. Also, musical product is not high enough to maintain singers who prefer less redundancy in instruction and would like a better challenge.

The women who are the “core” of the chorus have been here for many years. Their sisterhood and “family” connection is wonderful and what keeps them going.

A few members, however, are finding it difficult to remember the music, lyrics, choreography, etc…impacting musical progress at times.

1. **C/C+ Chorus** *when* the chorus competes at regional convention – which is every third year per Sweet Adelines requirements.
2. **Regional Placement** varies. Most often this group is in the bottom 3rd in the contest which proves to be very deflating for them; consequently, they only compete when it’s required.
3. **Open Division** is something they are considering for the next contest.
4. **Chorus Focus:** Community performances. They love to perform and are fairly

well-known because they make themselves available at the drop of a hat and will sing for little or no payment. The chorus rep consists of 30+ songs and constantly changing. Songs, however, are not always sung well – which doesn’t seem to be of concern to the chorus as a whole. They just love to sing!

1. **Director:**
2. **Newest (2 years)** in a series of directors over the past ten years. This is the first

front-line Sweet Adeline directing experience for current director – though she was an Assistant Director at the nearby Regional Champion chorus for the past 12 years.

1. **Director Focus:** She would like to help the chorus to sing better, have more confidence regarding contest involvement and introduce top notch vocal education to them at each and every rehearsal. She is focused on an improved musical product but has found it challenging to convince the members to want to do likewise.

**Frustration** sometimes abounds as director’s focus and goals are not in alignment with chorus culture.

1. **Chorus Culture & Expectations:**
2. **Musical Expectations** – Learn your music the best you can. Qualifications are via recordings however there’s little follow-through. Some people just don’t do it…There’s a fear of imposing too much restriction here as all singers are needed in order to accept the many community gigs the chorus does.
3. **Members are needed for just about everything** the chorus does – as many of them are on several committees at the same time. No attendance requirement – But great hope that most members will be committed to rehearsals, performances, etc…
4. **New Member Gain** – No new members during the past 8 months.

**Situation:**

This chorus is on its last leg. Commitment to regular rehearsal attendance is low. Director is frustrated as there’s little desire to improve musical product. Members don’t like that they must compete every third year and rumblings about leaving the organization are taking place.

**What can be done to turn this situation around?**

**Discuss…**