

“Give me six hours to chop down a tree and I will spend the first four sharpening the axe”. Abraham Lincoln

OR

Preparing to Judge a Marching Show

- ❖ Long-term (year round)
 - Develop/review personal philosophy: WHY DO I WANT TO JUDGE?
 - As a band director, what did I value in judges comments.
 - Tools to communicate with students
 - Affirm work done, illuminate areas that need attention
 - Provide a source for creative growth
 - How will my comments be perceived or used by band directors?
 - Expand your listening/watching pallet.
 - Evaluate from a judges perspective
 - Why did something work...Pacing? Volume? Communication skill of the performers? What makes someone want to stand up and applaud?
 - LOTS of Venues to explore (Opera Arias, Musicals, Eurovision, DCI, etc)
 - You Tube clips...search out clips of marching bands with embedded judges comments
 - Were the comments useful? What did you hear? What did the judge comment about? How much of the information imparted would be useful for improving the ensemble if you were their director?
 - Visit with band directors...be willing to have frank discussions...Were my tapes valuable? What would make them better? etc
 - Attend live events that include fine marching ensembles. As you watch a Broken Arrow or Avon, construct a tape in your head...what information could you give these ensembles to help them grow?
- ❖ Seasonal Preparation
 - Judges training
 - Know your adjudication form(s)
 - Purpose
 - Language
 - Point distribution
 - If you are judging an away event, request their sheets early (many are online...do check them out)
 - **Make practice comments**...listening in the car? Make a “tape”, especially early in the season. Practice speaking out loud...Listen then comment
 - Have all of your judging assignments on your calendar...include all details...Stadium, time, Flight info, hotel, etc. Have that info backed up.
 - Have all contact info loaded on your phone. (Who do you call if there is a family emergency and you have to cancel?)

- Have your judging “kit” ready to go. Clip boards, Mechanical pencils, any special spreadsheets or forms that you use. I also have throat lozenges, reading glasses, hand wipes, hand warmers, Kleenex, hat, phone charger, SUNSCREEN, etc.
 - Weather Bug is your friend...will you need a jacket...parka...bear skin...rain coat...scuba gear?
 - Remembering what you heard through-out the day is crucial to getting ensembles into the correct order. Most contest schedules are available on line. I prepare a tablet dedicating a page for each band. I have attached a copy of the form I use, remember details of each group.
 - Preparing for Non-CBA events: Most contests send out detailed judges directions and expectations. **READ ALL OF THE INFORMATION.** Understand purpose and philosophy of event, scoring process, judging criteria, etc. If no information is sent, it is wise to call and discuss the event with the person who contacted you.
- ❖ Day before competition
- Where are you going? What is suggested arrival time? Drive time, Stadium address loaded into MAPS. Who is the contest organizer...Chief Judge?
 - Away events: Flight times? Boarding Pass? Luggage? Contact information? Hotel? Make the day as stress free a possible by being very organized and prepared.
 - Kit ready? Check supplies, etc.
 - Get a good night’s sleep.
- ❖ Day of competition
- Recommendation: Eat a healthy breakfast...tough to maintain energy at the end of the day on an early morning extravaganza of Krispy Kream donuts and coffee.
 - Recommendation: Professional attire.
 - Know your drive times...**arrive early**: Take pressure off of the contest organizers by letting them know you have arrived, and leave time for you to focus and prep for the day.
 - Look at the schedule...Important...Locate the bathroom.
 - Fill out any forms needed.
 - Most contests have the adjudication forms in order...**double check them anyway**...nothing will mess up your day more than using mixed-up judging sheets. (Assuming that the contest is using paper forms).
 - Organize your station. I bring extra clip boards, post it notes, paper clips, etc. I find that when judging on the field this is especially important.
 - If available, get a printed program.
 - Make sure you understand the technology being employed. **ASK QUESTIONS** if you are not sure how everything works. Also, know who will assist...student...band parent...other official. If there is a problem with the technology...who helps?
 - Water!
 - Most festival/contests have a quick judges meeting before the event. Do they hold the first sheets? Are there any special instructions? Are there any restrictions on scores? School sizes?
 - Understand the judging format in terms of when do you actually start to judge a group. CBA is very structured...everything runs like clockwork. Other contests may have different or less formal ways of starting the judging process. Know what is expected before you start.

