

Sing Like a Champ

Harmony College NW

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Singing is a process of development. There is no perfection...just “better”. And it is ultimately all about “impact”.

In today’s course we will explore some key components of creating a championship model of singing or artistic vocal production. While there are MANY ways to teach, learn, understand and develop optimal singing concepts for barbershop, I have found these to be highly effective for many people.

Take those aspects you are ready for and start working with them!! Let the rest percolate in the back of your brain until you are ready for them. As your skills and understanding grow, you’ll be able to access them and make further connections as you are ready.

I find it helpful to tie everything back to two primary, yet intimately interrelated branches of understanding.

1. Technique/Skill – Vocal Development, Ensemble Skills, Performance Skills, etc.
2. Artistry – Musicality, expression, stage presence, engagement, song delivery, etc

While the GOAL of performance is the second – Artistry – the majority of the work that must be done is in the first – Technique/Skill development.

Since it is important that we frequently perform, I recommend (for all upper/mid-B level singers and below) the following model of how to balance the two.

- Home practice, and much of rehearsals should be focused on developing technique/skills and infusing them into your repertoire...up until a few weeks prior to a major performance (show or contest).
 - Yes, performance practice is a good idea, even while in the “technique development phase”. Technique must always be related back to the artistic intent.
- As we approach PERFORMANCE TIME, shift over as completely as possible to focus on the artistry and presentation. Trust the technique you HAVE developed.

To put it another way, spend the bulk of your time and energy developing skills that make EVERYTHING you sing – better. As performance opportunities get closer, tip the balance of your work into the expressive and artistic delivery elements.

In one’s journey of developing both the technique/skill aspects AND the artistic aspects, it is VERY helpful to look for the following:

- Seek places/avenues to practice your developing technique that are safe and encouraging. In your car during a commute. Alone time at home. Chorus rehearsals are IDEAL areas to experiment and develop. Quartets are outstanding for personal accountability.
- Find coaches, take private voice instruction (PVI’s) and/or regular voice lessons from people you trust and that help you work toward your goals.

*Ted Chamberlain is National Board Certified Music Teacher who taught choir and orchestra for 28 years, and is now a Private Voice Instructor, Chorus Director, Quartet/Chorus Coach.

Ted is a District Champion and international quartet competitor as a baritone and bass and tenor.

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Resonance Alignment
Using Vowel Modification
Singer's Reference Chart

