

### **Elements Of Directing/Arm Waving**

- 1. Posture-Stance which emanates readiness to lead and imparts confidence in that leadership. Stand tall and straight with arms extended. Attitude, stance, facial expression, and position of hands should set mood for the song.**
- 2. Define Ictus-Fixed Plane (approximately level with elbow) which allows the singer to focus on the direction being given. Consistency in location of Ictus will result in good communication and appropriate synchronization. The Ictus range should be between the sternum and the beltline.**
- 3. Preparatory Beat-Defined as the beat before the entrance. If the entrance is on the downbeat, then upbeat is preparatory. If the entrance is on the upbeat, the preceding beat serves as preparatory. Preparatory beat may also establish tempo. Therefore, the preparatory beat should always be given at the same pace as desired in the subsequent measures.**
- 4. Entrance-begin to sing.**
- 5. Beat Patterns (Meter)**
  - a. One Beat (1 / 1, 1 / 2, 1 / 4)**
  - b. Two Beat (2 / 1, 2 / 2, 2 / 4)**
  - c. Three Beat (3 / 2, 3 / 4,)**
  - d. Four Beat (4 / 4)**

**Use right hand to direct beat and meter, and left hand to support and signal, for all directors (right and left handed). The left hand is used primarily to direct dynamics, cues, special emphasis, balance, and vowel signals.**

- 6. Cutoff or Release-usually an upward motion**

### **Application For Directing a Barbershop Ensemble**

- 1. Ballad Delivery-generally performed ad lib (at liberty) or rubato. Implied meter remains, however, acceleration and ritard of rhythm and tempo is evident. Indication of downbeat is often valuable, though emphasis is on directing a smooth vocal line.**
- 2. Uptune Delivery-directing patterns may be used successfully. Directing the meter and pulse (downbeat, backbeat) may be helpful when training the singers.**

**2010 Region 10  
HandOut Page 2  
Arm Waving / Conducting Skills  
Harriette Walters**

- 3. Other Considerations-Communication verbal vs. non verbal**
  - a. eye contact-presence of eye contact conveys authority, sincerity, knowledge, and purpose. Absence reflects uncertainty, weakness, and tension. It is the most effective and immediate means of commanding attention.**
  - b. effective and meaningful use of hands-second to the eyes, hands are what is used to convey non verbal communication. As a Director, we must become comfortable with our own individual style and use of hands. Then, our singers will be comfortable.**
  - c. facial expressions-mood and the meaning of music should be ever present on the Director's face. Singers usually reflect directly, what they see on the Director. This is probably the most important thing to remember! If we are receiving what we want from our singers, bravo! If we are not, let's look at ourselves to determine why not.**
  - d. communicate what you want to your singers. Expect them to sing the way you are communicating. Take responsibility for group and individual issues. Copy others while you develop your own style.**

**In Barbershop Music, we strive for continuous vocal lines and for a fluid flow of music or wall of sound. This constant flow of music and sound gives forward motion and flow to the music and the performance of each song. As Directors, we must command this musical delivery from our singers, with our direction.**

**In order to reach a comfort level with the group we are directing (chorus, section, etc.), we must master the techniques covered thus far. With experience, these techniques will become comfortable, and our own individual style will emerge and develop. Then, we can approach and experiment with Interpretive directing, or directing with Artistry and Finesse.**

### **Interpretive Directing**

- 1. Allow the freedom of the music. Convey the interpretation to the singer.**
- 2. Dynamic gestures**
  - a. To increase dynamic levels, palm up usually indicates crescendo, palm down usually indicates decrescendo.**
  - b. “Soft” is usually indicated by small movements. Large movements indicate louder dynamic levels.**
- 3. Body Language is instinctively used by Directors as they continue to develop their style. This can play a large part in obtaining appropriate syncopation, as well as enhancing the phrasing plan desired by the Director. As long as the individual Director’s Body Language does not detract or interfere with the visual delivery of the presentation, this can be one of the most effective means of obtaining a truly artistic performance.**
- 4. Demonstration is another extremely effective means of teaching your chorus/ensemble to sing exactly the way you want them to. Evaluate first, what they are singing. Then explain verbally, and sing to them pitch, rhythm, articulation, and phrasing, as though you were the “Lead” in their “Quartet”. As long as they have the vocal skill to “mimic” your demonstration, this can be very effective.**
- 5. Consonant/Vowel Delivery. Make certain that somewhere in your directing style, you are encouraging and reminding your singers to sing with appropriate target vowels, helping them to identify and turn diphthongs together, sing through singable consonants, and articulate those that should be articulated. Although we teach these techniques and basics to our singers, we must constantly be reinforcing them with our directing techniques.**

**2010 Region 10  
HandOut Page 4  
Arm Waving / Conducting Skills  
Harriette Walters**

**Director as Performer**

- 1. Guidance and communication with the eyes is as vital and important as the gestures of the hands and the arms.**
- 2. Through radiance and strength of style and personality, continuously transfer the energies of the chorus.**
- 3. Allow the music to flow through the director to the audience. Be a part of the performing group at all times.**
- 4. Be in control of your chorus. Be ready for anything! Be ready to and do not fear retaking a pitch, regaining synchronization, continue despite any distractions to you or the performing group. These can all be accomplished easily, and without interrupting the ambiance or professionalism of the performance and the ensemble.**

**(Identification of) Possible Trends with Directors.**

- 1. Over Direction.**
- 2. Director is directing every syllable, or every word, rather than meter, therefore singing is choppy, lacks flow. Tempo will also be inconsistent.**
- 3. Chorus cannot ascertain point of Ictus, therefore attacks and releases are inconsistent, as well as synchronization.**
- 4. Director is directing with floppy wrists and flowery gestures. This will not encourage commitment to delivery or vocal energy.**
- 5. Director's posture is not consistent. Therefore, singing will be apologetic and lack commitment and energy. The singers will mirror the director.**

**Questions / Answers / Demonstration**