

Thoughts on supporting newer callers

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Pitfalls / Difficulties

- To call is like juggling, a caller needs to keep lots of balls in the air. Therefore, there is much to learn for a new caller.
- Calling looks easy when an experienced caller is calling → Dancers often do not see how much effort is needed to become a good caller.

Going through the Caller Training Curriculum, there are some thoughts on what is important for a newer caller and how we as more experienced callers can help.

General ideas

- Sending a newer Caller to a beginner caller school is one of the best ways to ensure that the basics will be learned.
- Work with the caller one-on-one through the Caller Training Curriculum. As a mentor, it might be an idea to get a copy from the Home office.
- Dancers are often willing and interested, to help newer callers. Organize practice squares.
- When giving Feedback on practice sessions, start and end positive. Often with newer callers, you see lots of topics to work on. Keep you feedback to the most important ones.
- Inform the newer caller about local and international Caller Organizations, about Caller Meetings / Conventions. It is very motivating for a new caller to go to these events and talk to other callers.

Mechanics of Choreography

- Understanding the 4 elements, specially Formation and Arrangement.

Methods of Choreographic Management

- A newer caller needs to have something to call -> module calling!
- ‚Full‘ sight calling often too early, resulting in stop-and-go-dancing
- Learn to move dancers -> one-couple sight

Music / Voice / Delivery / Sound/Equipment

- To help with Patter Calling
 1. Talk in rhythm (use 2-beats)
 2. Use harmony notes
- If a caller has trouble singing, recommend voice coach
- Traditional Patter music is much easier to call to.

Teaching

- Let the newer caller help in a beginners class (under supervision of an experienced caller), e.g. let him/her do the “reteach” tips.
- Explain the planning/programming, so the newer caller understands the reasons behind the plan.

Programming

- Understanding the Call
 - o It is very important, to understand the calls we are using. Knowing for each call the definition, timing, body flow, good calls before and after, ... is essential for calling good/flowing choreography
 - o Use call analysis sheets, MS lists and definitions
- A newer caller often starts with programming a single tip

Smooth Dancing / Body Flow

- Understand the basics of body flow.
- Needed when writing & combining modules.
- As a mentor, you might want to check the modules for good flow (it avoids that the newer caller memorizes “bad sequences”).

Timing

- In module calling, a caller needs to learn to watch and follow the dancers, knowing when to say the next call

Singing Call Techniques

- Know how to change Singing Call Modules
- Give a newer caller some “standard” Singing Call Modules.
- Help to find singing calls, that fits his/her voice/range

Ethics / Leadership

- Talk about the code of ethics. A newer caller needs for instance to understand why s/he must not copy music.
- A caller becomes a leader the moment s/he picks up the microphone. Dancers look at that newer caller in a different way.