

Business Side of Calling

by Tim Marriner

Square dance calling is a business. You became a professional once you accepted your first payment for your services. At one time it might have been just a hobby but at some point you knew that you had to get reimbursed for your investment of both time and money. Being paid is at least an incentive for your efforts. The fact is, now you are a small business owner operator. There is a sense of pride to be able to watch the growth. The dancers cast their vote of confidence every time they come back, paying at the door. With growth however, sometimes come more problems. Proper record keeping of income and expenditures must be kept for tax purposes. The consequences can be severe. Consult a tax specialist or an accountant for best results. Not only are you juggling dancers, you are now juggling bookkeeping! But wait; you are a lot more than that. There are several other hats that you are going to have to wear as a small business owner.

Sales/Marketing: A caller is the principal product and usually the entire sales force. Advertising, negotiating contracts and rates, all fall under this department.

Purchasing: Equipment, records, accommodations, automobiles and airline tickets are a few items that must be covered.

Research and Development: Continual education such as this, fall under the supervision of this department. Subscriptions, exclusive music memberships, note services, are also handled here.

Maintenance: Automobiles, equipment, and sometimes even yourself and/or partner need maintenance; sometimes preventative.

Personnel: Club officers, partners, family members all fit under this department. Listening skills and leadership skills are needed to keep this department up and running. Having some skills in psychology can help. At times you have to know how to handle difficult situations.

Management: Organizational skills are needed to keep up with this department. Advanced planning is necessary to maintain success. Balancing and overseeing all the above departments can be time consuming. You have to be self-motivated to keep it all running smooth.

Measurement of Organizational Skills

Organizational skills are inversely proportional to the number of paper piles one has in their office. Develop systems to help with the workload. Calendars, bookkeeping, emails, snail-mail, and phone calls all are workloads that need to be managed.

File, Act, Refer, Trash is a method I have used for years.

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