

THE IDEAL QUARTET MEMBER

By Sharon Babb

- has a pleasing voice, sings accurately and with good vocal production, and knows the craft of her chosen voice part
- can sing consistently accurate intervals
- has a good working knowledge of music, chord tuning, barbershop style
- knows the principles of breathing for singing and open resonance and applies them every time she sings
- works on her voice daily
- is able to sight-read her part and/or has a strategy for using learning and recording media effectively and efficiently
- has a retentive memory for words, notes and interpretive plans
- has an earnest desire to work with others to develop herself and her musical potential as well as that of the quartet
- demonstrates individual motivation to excel and continually strives for excellence
- is willing and able to learn, participate actively, and be coached
- has an adult sense of internal discipline
- understands human relations and has the patience and forthrightness to deal with issues
- does her part vocally and personally consistently
- loves performing with her quartet
- is willing to form vocal partnerships with others in the quartet

*Note: Only a portion of these criteria deal with native ability; the rest reflect standards within the control of each diligent member. **The degree of excellence achieved in any endeavor largely depends on the individual effort put forth.** What are you doing to improve yourself and your quartet?*

Final comment that I always want to say to a quartet: “Such an exceptional ensemble singing with great bravura.”

BARBERSHOP SKILL HIERARCHY FOR QUARTETS

Singing Basics:

Vocal Skills—Breathing and resonance; freedom and support

Accuracy—notes, intervals, chords, tuning

Balance—chords—components and “size”; voice parts; bass/lead match

Coning: within chorus; within range; within own voice

Blend—Intonation and Vowel Production

Musical Delivery:

Tempo

Phrasing/Interpretation

Synchronization

Unity

Dynamics

Pulse

Lyrical artistry

Vowel match

Artistry/Finesse

Visual Delivery:

Standing position

Unit movement

Individual movement

Characterization--understanding; face, body, costume unity

Energy

Visual/vocal match and balance

Other Factors:

Synergy

Make music, not just singing

Avoid internal coaching

Focus control

Swipe control and teamwork