

"The 409 Treatment"

Compiled at MA Line and Officer Camps

Director Inspirations

Style Show - Begin by viewing a video of the particular style selected. Presenting a professional visual will aid in the comprehension of the overall method.

Mental Image - Explain the mood and attitude of the piece. Ask small groups to list the dynamics of this style. This exercise should list differences such as body angles, facials, positioning of hands or feet, overall attitude, etc. Then allow the groups to share their findings.

Verbal Critiques - Record your own verbal critique on cassette as the team performs the routine. Allow the dancers to listen to the taped comments so they will be accustomed to hearing a critique from a judge's viewpoint.

Audience Perspective - View the routine from several different positions, i.e. side, back, angles, to obtain a different perspective for cleaning and video these areas as well - a picture is worth a thousand words!

Fast Forward - Listen to your final oral critique of the previous day's rehearsal in the car on the way to practice to remind yourself of the areas that need your attention and concentration.

Zooming In - Video the final performance of the day and then have the team view it the following morning. This will help to place them in the mind-set of the previous day & help them begin rehearsal at a higher level of concentration.

Visual Effect - View your routine choreography and movement to maximize the visual effectiveness. Are you executing your transitions as a choreographed statement (as opposed to just changing formations)?

Flash Back - Compare the video of your team's performance to the example video utilized to demonstrate the style. Have them critique the technique, showmanship, and general effect

Memory Devices

The Memory Game - Run dance until memory mistake, then start over (can be used for projection, technique, precision errors, too)

Mental Case - Doing a mental run-through before a performance to envision the show they are about to perform (technique used by many Olympic athletes)

Pounding - Performing the routine or a particular section over and over, speeding up the counts each time

Third Time's a Charm - Making the group do the routine or specific parts of the routine that are difficult or fast with no memory mistakes 3 times in a row

Team Counting - Teams counts aloud so that the movements and their corresponding counts are better remembered

Formations, Transitions, & Alignment Techniques

Slo-Mo - Group moves 1 count at a time through a transition to detect traffic problems

Fast-Mo - Group moves through all transitions from beginning of routine to end to memorize order of position on floor

Peripheral Vision - Lines of 5-10 march (or move) down the floor staying in line. Individuals learn to perfect their sense of spacing and alignment

Sense & Sensibility - To get a "sense" of your positioning, go through a particular movement or transition with eyes closed

Articulation, Placement & Technique Exercises

Autopsy - The person cleaning focuses on one part of the body (i.e. only heads, arms, hands, feet, or body angles)

Freeze-Frame - Stopping on every count to check positions & technique

Check points - Stopping on specific counts

Thumb Theory - Placing thumbs apart in air or on floor to clean hand and arm placement

Vertical File - Place squad in vertical file to clean placement (front person watches and then rotates to the end of the file while new front person cleans, etc.)



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Precision & Timing Activities

Last Second - Squad delays a movement until the last second

The Clapper - Clapping the beats to improve timing

Count and Shout - Have line call out certain "important" counts while rehearsing a certain phrase

Projection Games

Imagery - Each person creates image to evoke the emotion desired (i.e. Leonardo DiCaprio watching to evoke look of excitement and anticipation)

L - Put hand in L shape under chin to keep chin lift

Smile Drill - Line up in height line, play music, have them smile for entire song

Psyche Up - Right before performance, huddle and build the mood intended for the routine, psyching each other up

On-Site Psyche - While practicing, "psycho person" is building excitement by yelling encouraging & motivating remarks

Sign Psyche - Make a "Smile" sign and post high for girls to focus on during the performance

Kick Technique

Hit (height is there) - When kicking across the floor, say "Hit" at the highest point of the kick: improves synchronization of kicks

Floor Plan - Lay on floor in kick line and kick, yelling "Hit" as above

Fan Over the Chair - Kick over the back of chairs to improve fan kicks

Sidewatch - The cleaner watches the kick line from side to detect posture, extension, & alignment problems

Polishing as a Whole Group

Copy Cat - Select one dancer or group of dancers, hopefully the captain or officers, who perform this specified style to perfection. Have that person or group teach and clean the routine to provide another visual to emulate.

Mirror Image - Utilize mirrors whenever possible to allow the dancers to compare their head, arm, body, & foot positions. Even allowing only a few dancers at a time to see themselves in comparison to dancers who are performing the movement correctly will yield a marked improvement.

Add-On - One person (or group) does a movement, then repeat, adding next, etc.

Team Bloopers - Video record practice and critique from tapes

The Backward Beat - Cleaning from the end sections backward, as it is the least rehearsed

Polishing by Splitting Up

Squad Competition - Split into squads and clean then compete

Rotation - Squads rotate among different officers who clean only a specific part of the routine; more consistent than different officers cleaning the same parts

Clocking - Use polishing stations - one area cleans head, one arms, etc.

Half 'N Half - Half of the team performs, other half critiques

Partner Critiques - Break into partners and critique each other

Positive Reinforcement

Incentives - Hand out stickers, candy, bottle of "Mr. Clean" to those line members who stand out (projection, effort, positive attitude)

Thank-You - Each girl says "thank you" after she is critiqued (whether being commended or corrected) to instill in each girl the reality that the cleaner is doing her a favor

Working as a team toward a successful performance will be both rewarding educationally and personally. Remember to emphasize that their performance will reflect their dedication, but also stress that if they have performed to their best ability, they should be proud!

