

Powerful Performances

By Scott Chandler

You've spent endless hours on technique. You've learned an incredible amount of counts. You've worked the individuals and the ensemble through the rigorous endurance of repetition. You've found the synergy of music and motion. You've visualized, analyzed and defined your product. How on earth do you take performers to a new level? Beyond maintaining your previous accomplishments, it's time to be a little creative, and explore a new physical and, perhaps most importantly, mental awareness. Whether you choose to incorporate fresh ideas of training to the beginning, end, or all throughout your process, being open to the possibilities is essential to growth. I've used a multitude of performance and sports psychology techniques to enhance the competitive experience, and there are always exciting discoveries based on the personality of the performers themselves.

Sincerity

There's no way around it, honest, sincere communication is the ultimate when trying to connect with your audience. Finding a way to transcend the choreography through honest communication will surpass fabricated, phony characterization any day. The first step in reaching this goal has to be the ability of the performer to feel comfortable while expressing him or herself within the given situation. Improvisation exercises can increase comfort and possibility. The space in which you practice improvisation can also impact the experience. Make sure the rehearsal space is comfortable, and provides a non-inhibiting environment.

Related Fields

The first time I read Pat Summit's book, "*Reach for the Summit*," a light bulb burst in my head. The lessons this incredible basketball coach incorporates into her job are easily understood, and applicable to any team performance situation. I've also been known to show figure skating to performers on more than one occasion. When athletes or performers are put into situations where they must meet certain standards, they learn the valuable lesson of desire overcoming fear. Watching other people handle a similar theatrical experience can prompt discussion, and showcase great examples.

Picture it!

If I see a magazine advertisement, photograph or a print of a famous painting that exudes the feeling or look of a piece, I save it. Needless to say, I'm quite the "pack rat", but sometimes a certain look or indescribable flash of color can define the intent of a moment. The character and attitude of a piece, or even an isolated moment can be defined by a visual analogy. Place related materials around the rehearsal space, and let them serve as a constant reminder of the intent of the performance.