

WORKING WITH CALLERS & OTHER CUERS

1. **Be considerate** - think "What would I want - how would I want to be treated."

Callers & cuers working together on stage gives the dancers a feeling of continuity - "**one dance**" - not a square dance and a round dance

Again, the dancers won't be able to tell you WHY, but they will go home feeling satisfied, and the caller (or other cuer) will also.

Don't try to "outdo" each other. Try to **compliment** each others' program. You can ask the caller **if** he has a specific plan in mind. Otherwise try and follow his lead with how he works the floor.

You can also help by gently bringing the people down. Remember everyone can only go "up" so high. Let the caller feel like he has brought them up. But don't let them "crash" down with a really slow waltz, for instance.

2. **Be professional** - one reason callers have so little respect for cuers is that cuers are still only "in it for the fun".

Your fun now comes from creating a good program that successfully gives fun to the dancers. A program that keeps them coming back.

3. **Showmanship & Others** - With other callers or cuers (or dancers) you never get a 2nd chance to make a first impression.

Callers have **very delicate ego's** (& we do too!!)

You are both stars on a program - **BUT** - If it is a SQUARE DANCE SPECIAL or dance, **YOU ARE THE "LESSER" STAR!!**

This does not mean that you are less important as a person - but RD is at that point the fill-in. **DO NOT ACT LESS PROFESSIONALLY, BUT MORE SO.**

4. **MY SET - YOUR SET - THEIR SET.** Learning to work your equipment properly is one of the biggest ways you can earn the respect of callers. You will also feel more comfortable on stage, and will cue more confidently.

Some guidelines:

- If you use someone else's equipment always ask first! (If in your contract or verbal agreement it is stated that equipment will be provided, then you don't need to ask - it has already been stated that you can use it.)
- Always use your own mike - if you need to make an announcement or something short & will use someone else's mike **ASK FIRST!!**
- Always turn your remote volume control down when done. If you are working with a caller (or cuer) who also uses the remote volume control, one of them has to be turned down for the other to work. **ALMOST ALL CALLERS USE THE REMOTE VOLUME CONTROL. You should learn how to work it as well.**
- Make sure all controls are at the lowest setting before turning the player on, and also when you are done for the event, **turn them down before turning the set off.**
- Be sure the mike volume is down before plugging the mike in.
- For the caller's sake (who is used to being treated "as God" ☺ & not always used to sharing equipment) try to remember to reset the set the way he had it. Especially speed and

volume. Also, if you use a MD or whatever, and he doesn't, be sure to unplug your set if it interferes with his sound.

Callers pride themselves on being able to set their equipment and that cuers can't. But they don't want to reset it every time (why we have to I don't know)

IF YOU DO KNOW HOW TO WORK YOUR EQUIPMENT YOU WILL BE CONFIDENT, AND WILL GAIN THE RESPECT OF THE CALLERS.

- You (usually) will have more than just a speed control & record volume - you should have bass/treble for both record & voice. **Learn how to use these controls.**

If you know how to adjust the set, you can use this to make the best program possible for the dancers, and that's what you're hired to do.

Sometimes if you sound unclear or "garbled" you should turn your bass down or treble up a bit.

At home tape yourself at different settings to see what is best for your voice.

- Adjusting record (output) volume - using remote knob on your mike.
 - a) turn knob (on mike) up all the way (with volume on record player down all the way
 - b) turn record player volume so that the music is just "too" loud
 - c) adjust (fine tone) with knob on mike

(NOTE: If using a player with 2 mikes and you do not get enough volume, check to see if the other mike has the remote turned down.)

- Have your dances ready & be on stage as soon as the caller is done. If the dancers need a break, let the caller give them one by starting later.

If you are working with another cuer, arrange with each other how many dancers will be in each tip (I like 3), and when you will give the dancers a break in between.

- I have talked to a number of callers to get their ideas on how a cuer can help them make a good overall program. Here are some of their comments:
 - * Help set the mood. Gently "swing" - no "crashers" (like Sleepy Lagoon). You have lots of rhythms - use them. Especially if you are working with a caller who always likes "high, high, higher", you can even ask, "Gee, they are so high now, should I bring them down just a little so you can bring them up again?"
 - * Plan to stop the RD portion of the program 5 minutes before squares need to begin to give the dancers a chance to regroup, and the caller a chance to set up and get ready. (Getting ready is more than just putting your mike in. You need to survey the floor a bit.)
 - * **NEVER, NEVER, NEVER** cut down other callers/cuers in front of dancers. You may say that you don't get along so well (personality conflict), or that you don't prefer his/her way of teaching - but don't cut them down professionally.

In front of callers be very careful about saying anything negative about cuers - we have a hard enough time building our reputation