



Judgement!

- *Caller*
- *Teacher*
- *Entertainer*

Judgement!



⇒ *On Stage*

⇒ *Off Stage*

⇒ *Working with Others*

⇒ *Knowing “Who” your customers are*

⇒ *Professionalism*

⇒ *Private Life*

⇒ *Choreography*

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What is Judgement – Really!

The act of making a decision, or forming an opinion objectively, authoritatively, and wisely, especially in matters affecting action; good sense & discretion:

My wife and I have been blessed with four sons!

As we raised our sons we impressed upon them the power of good judgement.

We told them whenever they had a decision to make about doing anything, they had to ask themselves three questions:

1: Will I or anyone else get in trouble if I do this?

2: Will I or anyone else be hurt? (not just physically)

3: Will I be able live with any possible ramifications.

So why do I tell you this. Because these are questions you need to consider when you employ judgement.

On Stage

1. When you are on stage there is an expectation from your customers. Your judgement will determine whether or not you meet that expectation.
2. And “on stage” means from the time you leave home until the time get back home again.
3. Did you dress appropriately for the event?
4. Were you prepared?
5. Did you arrive on time?

These are all judgements you make.

Off Stage

Really has two sides.

1. Are you greeting people as they expect or at least available if someone wishes to talk with you or are you sitting off in a corner on a chair talking with the same person each night?
2. Do you actually get off the stage between breaks? Are you mingling and talking with several dancers or are you hiding off in the corner on your cell phone or sitting with one person.
3. Do you bid the dancers farewell.

These are some of the types of judgement calls you have to make each time you call a dance

The other side is:

1. When you are at club parties such as picnics or outings or when your club hires a guest caller. Are you still the professional they all know and love☺
2. When you are out at a dance that you are not calling, are you the same professional they all expect you to be?

Working with Others

- 1. When you are working with others, be it another caller or a round dance cuer, are you easy to work with? Must you have it all your way and force others to conform?*
- 2. Ie: Your stage setup, your equipment, your choice of music, etc.*
- 3. Do you contact the other performer before hand and discuss the program. Or do you show up and assume they will adjust to you?*

These are all judgement calls you make each and every time.

Knowing “Who” your customers are

Who are your customers?

- 1. Are they kids? Young adults? Retirees?*
- 2. Is it a church group with all of the above?*
- 3. How do you speak to them?*
- 4. In my opinion, it is never appropriate to use foul language or profanity over the mic but I have heard callers do it. Often by accident but it is hard to take back once out.*

You make a conscious decision every time you open your mouth to speak and Your judgement determines what comes out.

Professionalism

It has been stated for years if you are paid for what you do, you are considered a professional. So how do you behave as a professional? Your judgement determines your behavior.

- 1. Do you tell off colour jokes? Are you bias in any fashion? Do you push your political views over the microphone?*
- 2. Do you always offer a smile and a warm handshake? Not only to visitors!*
- 3. **Dale Carnige** was stated “ I no longer listen to what men say but rather watch when men do” Do you walk the talk of a professional??*

A reputation takes many years to build but can be destroyed overnight. These all come under judgement. As a professional, you need to be aware that what comes out of your mouth or the actions you perform stay with you.

Private Life

You need to be aware that, even in your private life you are seen by people who know you in your “professional” life. With the amount of Social Media today you need to be careful how you present yourself, in what you may think is your private life

Recent events have really brought out some nasty stuff on social media with the US Presidential Election, Covid-19, and even SSD in our world. There have been some individuals who have been very vocal on some or all of these subjects and have made some serious enemies out of folks that used be good friends.

Your Judgement will determine if dancers and colleagues see a different person or persona from your “professional” dancing world image and that is something that you must decide and control.

Choreography

In past when we talked about Judgement this was usually the only topic that was discussed and although it certainly is important, as you can see, it is not the only judgement issue to be considered by callers.

There are many aspects to Choreographic judgement!

When you are hired to be a guest caller and you are calling for an unknown group of people, how do you start the dance? Do you start out easy and work your way to more challenging material? Or do you come out the gate with your best stuff and show them how good you are - and then decide to call what they can dance?

Or when you get your 15 minutes of glory at a National or local Convention, are you going to be the caller who shines by entertaining the floor or the caller who wants to show other callers in the room how much you know and call choreography that will be too challenging for most?

Personally, I prefer the KISS method, Keep It Spectacularly Simple. Be an Entertainer, give them something to smile about and smooth flowing danceable choreography. Let them win and you win. That's a win/win...

Your Own Clubs!

How do you teach at your own clubs as far as degree of difficulty goes? Do you teach full position or work up to it slowly? Do you build a teaching program for the duration? If you work for an executive run club these decision are still yours to make. You are the teacher and should be able to assess the skill level of the club based on what you call and how. Your degree of difficulty will differ from group to group. Just because you build a program for one PLUS club doesn't mean that will fit all the PLUS clubs you call for. Pay attention to your members abilities and call to their skill level.

I attended A callers school in the early 70's one of my coaches said, "The dancers don't care how much you know, they want to be entertained with how much they know." I have never forgotten that! These are all judgement decisions.

Music: Has Two Parts...

Part One ...

How do you program for the customer?

Are you doing a church group? It's probably not a good idea to call "The Devil When Down To Georgia". What if you're calling a father daughter dance? You probably shouldn't program "Who's In the Strawberry Patch with Sally" or worse, "I'll Love You Tonight in My Dreams".

The tempo of what you call also is part of your judgement and will determine the success of the event. Too fast they get tired and leave early, too slow they find it boring and leave early. You need to find a tempo that fits the group.

What style of music are you using. Does it fit your voice and personality? Does it help your performance. Don't do singing calls just because you heard another caller do it. You may not be able to emulate that experience.

Part Two...

The big topic of Judgement today with the advent of digital music is piracy. This has become a huge issue for our music producers. You need to set a standard for yourself in your judgement as a caller about how you are going to deal with this issue.

It is very easy to say to another caller, “I really like that tune can you give me a copy. They put it on a thumb drive, hand it to you, you load it on your laptop and you’re good to go – or are you? No payment to the producers and no Royalties paid on these tunes either!

Legally, they can’t give you that tune! Legally, you can’t use it even if they give it to you without you asking for it. Sometimes Judgement is a tough road! Have the guts to say NO!

Maybe the three questions I raised my kids with might be of help in some of these judgement issues.

- 1: Will I or anyone else get in trouble if I do this?
- 2: Will I or anyone else be hurt? (not just physically)
- 3: Will I be able live with any possible ramifications.

It truly is up to you – only you can be the true judge of you!