



Selecting Judges for Your Tryouts

By: Katherine Reut

Katherine Reut has been dancing in the Albuquerque area for several years. She is a veteran member of the Universal Dance Association Staff. She danced for the Rio Grande High School Castenettes from 2003-2007. She is the former assistant coach and head choreographer for the RGHS Castenettes. Today she is the assistant coach for the Volcano Vista High School Talons Dance Team.

One of the most important components of your tryout is the judges. These persons are brought in to give their opinions about the individuals trying out for your team. When picking these judges be sure to keep these do's and don'ts in mind:

- **Do** pick people whose opinion you value: they might be someone highly recommended by the dance community but if you don't value their accomplishments it could be a waste of a time for both of you.
- **Do** keep your number of judges reasonable: most panels for team tryouts consist of three to five judges. Having larger panels could affect the performance of those trying out.
- **Do** select a knowledgeable group of judges: judges won't do you any good if they are unaware of the technical skills and/or style you are looking for.
- **Do** give your judges at least a one-week notice: Allow your judges time to mentally prepare for your tryouts. Giving them a one day notice could frazzle their judging.
- **Don't** select someone with a bias: make sure that anyone you select does not personally know someone trying out; this could cause problems with those you did/didn't select.
- **Don't** use former members as judges: It is great if graduating seniors want to help with tryouts but they could alter your results for the new season based on old feelings. Have them help with other aspects of the tryout instead.
- **Don't** settle for second rate judges: If you want your team to be the best you must use the best judges possible.
- **Don't** force someone to judge: Forcing a friend or co-worker to judge could ruin your relationship or alter your results.

Also, make sure once you have selected your judges that you provide them with a physical copy (e-mail, text message, flyer, ECT.) of directions to the try out location. Remember, your team can only be as great as you want it to be. Selecting judges is never an easy task; hopefully these tips will help guide you and make the process a breeze.

Need help finding judges? Contact your UDA State Director for help!