

## "Plan your work and work your plan"

*..was used often in church sermons from at least the 1880s. The origin of the saying is unknown.*

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No doubt that most, if not all of you, already do put together a plan of some sort for each & every dance that you call, be it a regular club night, a one-night stand or demo, or a major dance that you've been contracted to call for!

In this presentation, my goal is not to have you 'do what I do', or change what you do or how you do it, but to stimulate some discussion or thought on this topic of "Planning your Dance". The material that follows is how "I" do things - my ideas, my plans, my procedures, my forms, ie:- those things that work for me.

**Do you have a plan?** Do you have a goal or direction to go for each dance? Without a plan, or a direction to go, how do you know whether or not you've succeeded in accomplishing your goals? From my experiences as a Bell Manager & Instructor, as well as having taught many a Public Speaking course, every "teacher" must have a plan, to achieve the goal(s) they have set for that day, month, or year so that their 'students' complete the required curriculum in order for them to 'graduate'.

As Square Dance Callers, we are also 'teachers' and thus we should have a plan, be it a regular club night or an Open Dance. For the purposes of this presentation, I'm just going to focus on a regular club night, as this is where the majority of our 'teaching' work actually takes place. Whether you're teaching Basic, Mainstream, Plus or Advanced, the "plan" is much the same so I'm focussing on my regular Basic & Mainstream club night.



I'm known to be somewhat of an 'organized' person, and as such I rely on various references, many I've created myself (& some from CALLERLAB), to assemble my plan, while at the same time 'checking' on my progress to ensure that I reach the goal(s) that I've set for 'that' night.

*These reference items include :-*

- My weekly Dance Program Sheet (example on Page 5)
- My weekly Dance Level Checklist (B & MS) [examples on Page 6&7]
- CALLERLAB Suggested Teaching Order List
- CALLERLAB Definitions (B & MS)
- CALLERLAB Checklists (B & MS) -> *same idea as my dance level checklist.*

Having the items above 'on hand', EACH WEEK, I take the following steps for each of the Basic & Mainstream programs, in planning for the dance coming up -

- Review last week's progress (unless it's the very first week of course!)
- Identify weaknesses that need work (from my notes jotted down during the previous dance) & plan that in my first tip (for that group), we'll work on those calls.
- Referring to my teaching order, I will review the calls to be taught that night.
- For those new calls, I will then review the definitions of those calls to ensure that I will be teaching the call correctly. (definitions can & do change!)
- Once I've decided which calls will be taught, I will then plan the program for that night, taking into account the time required for announcements etc. In a 2 hour dance period, I will endeavour to get all 'teaching' done before the 90 minute mark so the dancers have time to 'practise' what they've just learned.
- **I do not plan any teaching on "party" nights**, however I still decide on any 'focussed' calls to reinforce what the dancers already know. Certainly no teaching, but yes, lots of practise!

***Now I have my PLAN figured out, what comes next?***

- Create/Review PATTER choreography to focus on the new calls as well as exercise the calls they've already been taught.
- Similarly, Create/Review SINGER choreography.
- Confirm that the choreography works! (ie: push your dolls or whatever means you use!)
- **SELECT YOUR MUSIC** - I use Digital Music Magician (DMM), so I create a new 'Playlist' for every dance night, with the playlist arranged by tip (patter/singer).
  - Choose your Patter(s) watching tempo, particularly for the 'teach' tip. (easy does it!)
  - Choose your Singer(s) - same rationale as Patter
  - Have a 'spare' Patter & Singer on hand - just in case!
  - NOW - Play all your music selections to ensure that -
    - It does play ok - tempo, loop backs, pitch etc.
    - You know where 'phrase changes' take place, particularly for Singers so that you can 'adjust on the fly' if required.
    - For the Singers, does your choreo work smoothly? (timing & phrase)
    - Review the words of the song, so that 'looking at the screen' is minimized or eliminated. (must watch the dancers - nothing worse than a floor breakdown & you're not even aware!)
    - **PRACTISE** your songs beforehand, especially if it is a relatively new piece of music!



## WORK YOUR PLAN

### **Now you're at your dance - what now?**

- Work through each tip (as you planned), keeping your 'checklist' handy (for quick glances) to ensure you cover the moves, both for the 'review' tips and for the 'teach' tips.
- At the end of each tip, then 'check-off' the moves you've done and note which ones still need to be covered.
- As you're teaching any 'new' move, observe how the floor is reacting & be prepared to modify your 'plan' on the fly if the teaching process needs more work. Don't "charge ahead" for the sake of 'getting 5 moves done tonight' if the dancers are not learning "this move" well enough to move along. Your plan must remain flexible so that the dancers win!! If you only get 1 or 2 done, then fine, adjust your plan for next week!
- At the end of your 'teach' tip, makes notes as appropriate to help you with your planning for the following tip, or following week.
- At the end of the night, & before you 'pack up', make any last 'notes' for 'next time'!!

### AFTER THE PLAN (ie: back home)



- While it's still fresh in your mind, update your teaching checklist(s) to reflect your accomplishments that week - **Reviewed/Taught/Xdanced**.
- Modify your planned teaching cycle if needed & review to see if you're "on track" to the goals you've laid out.
- And then..... start planning for next week!!



### Some "General" things to keep in mind.

- Check your equipment for "function" at least weekly. Never assume all is well because you can get 'caught'!! (yes, I have been!)
- Always have 'spares' available (in the car?) - eg: mike cable; mike element; speaker cable; mini-cable (PC to amp) etc. Those 'critical' items that you may need at a moments notice. (I keep a toolbox in my car with all that stuff which also includes cable extensions & a collection of adapters for different amps [eg: RCA to mini etc])
- For larger events (eg: major dance) I'll also carry a spare amp, speaker & power cords and even a 'backup' PC (or equivalent) loaded with music. "You never know when...."

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WEEK: 10 DATE: *Nov 19, 2018* GRENVILLE GREMLINS WEEKLY DANCE PROGRAM 2018-19

		BASIC	MAINSTREAM	NOTES
7:30 to 7:42	B 1	<i>Review</i>		<i>1/2 SASKAY; BACKTRACK, DOPASO; CHAIN DT LINE</i>
7:47 to 8:00	MS 1		<i>R - HINGE; CTRS IN; CAST 3/4 T - SLIDE THRU T - START ON SPIN THE TOP</i>	
8:05 to 8:17	B 2	<i>T - WALK AR. T - SEE SAW T - CIRCLE TO LINE</i>		
8:22 to 8:34	MS 2		<i>FULL MS →</i>	<i>FOCUS ON 3/4 TURNS VIA SPIN TOP, SPIN &amp; etc. WORK - DIXIE STYLE</i>
~ 10 minute BREAK - ANNOUNCEMENTS				
8:44 to 8:56	B 3	<i>RT - MOVES FROM B2 START ON SQ. THRU IF REVIEW IS GOOD?</i>		
9:01 to 9:13	MS 3		<i>RT - SLIDE &amp; RT - SPIN TOP</i>	
9:18 to 9:30	B 4	<i>DANCE</i>		<i>WINDUP FOR ALL</i>
~9:35 to 9:45	P	<i>PLUS TIP</i>		

\* NEXT WEEK IS BARN DANCE - NO TEACH.

### **BASICS Checklist - Gremlins - Taught to Date**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ <b>CIRCLE L/R</b></li><li>○ <b>FORWARD &amp; BACK</b></li><li>○ <b>DOSADO</b></li><li>○ <b>SWING</b></li><li><b>COUPLES PROM</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ <b>FULL</b></li><li>○ <b>HALF</b></li></ul></li><li>○ <b>ALLEMANDE LEFT</b></li><li>○ <b>R+ L GRAND</b></li><li>○ <b>RH / LH STARS</b></li><li>○ <b>STAR PROMENADE</b></li><li>○ <b>LADIES IN-MEN SASHAY</b></li><li>○ <b>U-Turn BACK</b></li><li>○ <b>COURTESY TURN</b></li><li>○ <b>2L CHAIN ½</b></li><li>○ <b>4L CHAIN ½</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ <b>Chain ¾</b></li></ul></li><li>○ <b>SINGLE FILE PROM</b></li><li>○ <b>(RIGHT) ARM TURN</b></li><li>○ <b>WEAVE RING</b></li><li>○ <b>PASS THRU</b></li><li>○ <b>R + L THRU</b></li><li>○ <b>CALIFORNIA TWIRL</b></li><li>○ <b>GRAND SQUARE</b></li><li>○ <b>STAR THRU</b></li><li>○ <b>ROLLAWAY</b></li><li>○ <b>SEPARATE R1/R2 -</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ <b>TO MIDDLE</b></li><li>○ <b>TO LINES</b></li></ul></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ <b>SPLIT 2</b></li><li>○ <b>LEAD RIGHT</b></li><li>○ <b>VEER LEFT / RIGHT</b></li><li>○ <b>BEND THE LINE</b></li><li>○ <b>(named) CIRCULATE</b></li><li>○ <b>CPLS CIRCULATE</b></li></ul> <hr/> <p>*** <b><u>LAST TIME</u></b> ***</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ <b>HALF SASHAY</b></li><li>○ <b>BACKTRACK</b></li><li>○ <b>DO PASO</b></li><li>○ <b>CHAIN DOWN LINE</b></li></ul> <p>*** <b><u>THIS WEEK</u></b> ***</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ <b>WALK AROUND</b></li><li>○ <b>CNR</b></li><li>○ <b>SEE SAW</b></li><li>○ <b>CIRCLE TO LINE</b></li></ul>
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## **MAINSTREAM Checklist - Gremlins - Taught to Date**

- **TURN THRU**
- **CLOVERLEAF**
- **8 CHAIN FAMILY**
- **PASS TO CENTER**

### **THAR FAMILY**

- **ALLE. THAR**
- **AL TO ALTHAR**
- **WW THAR**
  
- **SHOOT THE STAR**
- **SLIP THE CLUTCH**
- **WALK & DODGE**

### **LAST TIME**

- **SINGLE HINGE**
- **CENTERS IN**
- **CAST OFF  $\frac{3}{4}$**

### **THIS WEEK**

- **SLIDE THRU**
- **SPIN THE TOP**

### **YET TO GO.....**

- **SPIN CHAIN THRU**
- **TAG FAMILY**
  - **TAG THE LINE**
  - **$\frac{1}{4}$  TAG**
  - **$\frac{1}{2}$  TAG**
  - **$\frac{3}{4}$  TAG**
- **SCOOT BACK**
- **RECYCLE**