

Self Coaching (Using tapes)

One of the most frightening things a singer can experience is to hear the sound of his/her own voice on tape. Often your first instinct is to pack it in or take up bowling! Have faith; we all have felt the same way.

The use of tapes is an excellent tool to help us improve as a singer. You are able to hear what you are, and are not doing and fix it instantly. If you will make this a habit, you will improve your own singing dramatically. We rarely hear what others hear and what we are doing wrong until we listen to ourselves on tape.

During your weekly self-coaching sessions, you should be aware of the following things:

	Am I singing with good quality? Do I like what I hear? What can I improve?	
	Am I breathing correctly? In the right places according to the plan?	
	Am I singing through the phrases and making a good flow of sound?	
	Am I singing and sustaining target vowels? Articulating diphthongs? Singable and hard consonants?	
	Do I energize phrase endings?	
	Am I singing the planned volume dynamics?	
	Do I hear tension in my voice?	
	Do I hear resonance in my voice?	
	Am I producing a well-supported, clean sound?	
	Do I hear any garbled, hard, raspy or other unpleasant sounds?	
	If I try different things, can I produce a sound I like better or consider appealing?	
	Do I know my notes and words perfectly?	
	Am I singing in tune consistently?	
	Am I maintaining the tonal center? (Leads)	
	Am I tuning to the melody line? (Harmony parts)	
	Knowing what I have been taught, what else can I do better?	

To use your self taping/coaching session to your best advantage, use the following process:

1. Tape each rehearsal night.
2. Listen to your tape as soon as you can in a quiet place so you can make notes.
3. Using a copy of the words to the song (use a fresh sheet each week), circle problem areas and make a note of the correction required.
4. Practice on your own to fix the problem, (Tape again at home if it will help.)
5. Tape and listen again the following rehearsal night, checking yourself against your previous weeks result.

If you do this consistently, you should be able to make cumulative and continuous improvements in your singing. If you are having problems knowing what to do or how to fix something, please ask your Section Leader for help.