

CARE AND FEEDING OF YOUR CAPITOL STEPS SHOW

The Capitol Steps are looking for every way possible to make our show for your organization a smash hit, and we figure you are, too. Otherwise, you would have simply rented an Army Hygiene film. So here's a list of key suggestions.

BEFORE THE SHOW

Feel free to let us know ahead of time if there is anything in particular we should know about your audience. Are they all from Newark? Do they think the greatest painter of the century is Earl Scheib? Is the average age 100? Are they tree-huggers? Or Trent Lott-lovers? We can sometimes include songs of special interest to your group. And sometimes, depending on the songs of the month, we can include the name of a member of the audience or a rival group. So let us know if there's someone or something that everyone in your group would like to laugh at in a good natured way.

THE EVENT

We have found our show is less effective if it follows a eulogy. You think we're kidding, but people have actually said, "Claude died this morning. And now the Capitol Steps." It is also hard to make people laugh if they have their face down on their dessert plate because we are following a two-hour speech entitled, "Government Regulation in Financial Audit Management."

Please suspend all bar services and table service during the show. People tend to spit things when they laugh, and once, a waiter lit a flambe right in front of our Dick Cheney number, almost giving him a heart attack. Once again, you probably think we are kidding.

Seats or tables should be right in front of the stage to provide for good interaction between the audience and the performers. If you plan to have a dance floor, please place it on the opposite side of the room from the stage. If there's absolutely no way to do this, we ask that, before the show, seats be placed theater-style in front of the stage on the dance floor (and filled by audience members!)

When our crew arrives, they'll bring programs for the audience, and will ask you how you'd like distributed. These programs are important because they let the audience know that we are not a classical ballet troupe, and that it's OK -- even desirable -- to laugh.

INTRODUCTION AND START OF THE SHOW

Once, in a fit of optimism, someone introduced us forty-five minutes before the scheduled show time. Don't let this happen to you! Whoever is doing the intro should get a go-ahead from us before starting. As you'll see, we've provided a suggested introduction. You should feel free to add any additional (nice) adjectives or comments, but please do not shorten it like one introducer did once and say, "And now, a group that needs no introduction!" Our Ross Perot barely had time to glue on his ears.

If there is a podium on stage, it should be moved BEFORE the introduction. The introducer can use one of our microphones, and then the intro can go smoothly into the show.

END OF THE PERFORMANCE

Before our last number, we will cleverly cue you by saying "We're going to do one more number for you." And unlike many people who live in Washington, we mean what we say! We will take a brief bow after this number and introduce the pianist, then leave the stage. At this point, it's fine for a member of your organization to come up on stage and make any announcements or close the event however they see fit.

As our contract says, we will have our cassettes and CDs available after the show. Please be assured that this is very low-key, and that our sellers are real-live Capitol Steps, who enjoy talking with the audience and answering questions (the more personal, the better!) We find that if we DON'T do this, disappointed audience members follow us home. Some clients prefer to buy our cassettes or CDs at a wholesale price from us and distribute them as gifts for their guests.

AND FINALLY...

Remember to review our technical specifications, including the stage plot. If you have any questions at all, please call Brian Ash in our office at (703) 683-8330 or drop him an e-mail at brian@capsteps.com. We're looking forward to performing for your organization. And we want you to have us back, so let us know how we're doing. Operators are standing by.