

Get the Most Out of Your Tryouts

As I a coach, I know tryouts can be a time of high stress for both the coaches and the cheerleaders. After a week of learning material and perfecting skills, the “big day” comes and the potential cheerleader has to “perform” in a front of a panel of judges. These judges can be cheer coaches from nearby schools, instructors from national cheer companies, graduating senior cheerleaders, teachers, administrators and/or peers. This format is very intimidating and often causes performance anxiety. Also panel judging tends to take a long time. Why not re-think how you structure your tryouts and try something new.

Set up “stations” or “circuits”, often referred to as round robin format, around the room with one or 2 judges at each station: chant, jumps, cheer, band dance, stunting, and tumbling. This is very effective for larger groups allowing the whole process to be completed quickly. Divide the candidates into groups of three. Group #1 starts at the first station. When they move onto station #2, a new group starts at station #1. Each group will progress through all stations.

Each station has it’s own judging form. Sample forms are shown below

CANDIDATE #1 _____

Chants: Sharp motions, proper angles and placement

Circle score (highest is 10)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Jumps: Toe Touch, Double Toe Touch, Jump of choice

Height, flexibility, pointed toes

Circle score (highest is 10)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Dance: Timing, motions, performance, memory

Circle score (highest is 10)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Cheer with Jump: Sharp motions, proper placement, height of jump

Circle score (highest is 10)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Basic Stunt: proper technique, teamwork, form, tightness

Circle score (highest is 10)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Tumbling: proper technique, skill level

Circle score (highest is 10)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10