

## **PLATFORMING OR SINGING ON A MICROPHONE (for beginners)**

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*Congratulations! You've been asked to read announcements or sing a song during an upcoming service. For starters, you will want to practice your performance to prepare. If you have never used a microphone, here are a few pointers to help you deliver like a pro and make your experience performing with a mic more enjoyable. Many people experience microphone anxiety or think they don't need a mic (to be heard).*

***Trust me, you ALWAYS need a microphone. And if your community is livestreaming, a microphone is necessary to allow everyone to hear you.***

### **RULE 1: Rehearse:**

Practice your performance before Sunday so that you feel prepared and comfortable when it's time to share. Don't have a microphone at home? It may sound silly but rehearse in front of a mirror while holding a hairbrush (or a large spoon, or even a can of soda). Seriously. By practicing this way at home, you really will become more comfortable holding a microphone on stage.

### **RULE 2: My Friend the Sound Tech:**

Determine who the sound tech is and contact them beforehand to confirm the time that you should arrive on performance day. Note: Platform assistants, singers, etc. generally arrive early (before the service) to hold the microphone and get a sound check and a comfort level on stage. The Sound Tech sets the audio levels in the room, and the sound check will be when you get to work with the microphone and adjust the audio level in the monitors on the stage/platform where you'll be. **The Sound Tech is your friend** and wants you to sound great!

Remember, arrive early. **Don't set yourself up for a stressful morning by rushing in at the last moment.**

### **RULE 3: Is This Thing On?**

Many sound techs mute (silence) the microphone when it's not in use. Ask the technician if the microphone will be on when you appear on the stage to speak or sing. If there is an on/off switch or indication light on the microphone, make note of it because you may be asked to turn on the microphone or verify it is on before you speak/sing. **DO NOT** tap on the microphone to see if it's on. It will look much more professional to say a simple good morning to test if the microphone is on. The Sound Tech has your back and is watching to see when the microphone should be turned on.

**RULE 4: MICROPHONE HANDLING** - If you need to hold the microphone, do so with a firm but gentle grip. Avoid excessive handling or tapping of the microphone, as this can lead to distracting noise and potential damage to the sound system. Hold the

microphone by its handle or body, not the grille (the top ball), to prevent muffled sound or damage. Finally, if you are holding the mic, **do not lower the hand that holds the mic down to your side; keep it up in front of you, no lower than your waist, facing upward.** Why? Often, there are sound speakers on the stage that face performers and placing a 'live' microphone in front of those on-stage speakers (called 'monitors') can cause 'feedback,' resulting in very loud, unpleasant for everyone, and sometimes damaging sounds.

### **RULE 3: THE IMPORTANT RULE:**

To get a good, projected sound your mouth should be approximately 2 inches from the mic and the microphone should point toward your mouth. If the microphone is on a stand (to achieve the 2-inch distance rule) you may need to either:

1. Adjust the microphone stand so the microphone is 2 inches from your mouth and pointing toward your mouth, *or*
2. Take the microphone off the stand and hold it in the correct position.

Remember, If the microphone isn't positioned correctly, you may not be heard clearly, or there may be unpleasant feedback. These are things which are worked out during your sound check.

### **RULE 4: THIS IS IMPORTANT:**

**Please don't bang on the microphone (to see if it is on).** That could make a lot of noise and hurt the PA system speakers.

**Remember, please do not point the microphone in the direction of a speaker –** that could cause feedback (a noisy, horribly shrill sound).

### **RULE 5: Microphone Etiquette:**

Before you leave the stage, return the microphone to the stand. If someone else will be using the microphone after you speak/sing, you might want to leave it turned on.

**RULE 6:** Nervous? That's okay... Really. You. Are. Okay. Relax for a few minutes, embracing more fully the opportunity you have to share. You will become more comfortable each time you use a microphone.

**Congrats. You are well on your way to being a microphone expert.**