

5 Tips for Stage Presentation

by MarieAnn “Mo” Newman

Happy New Year to everyone!! What a great 2021 show season we had in the NPC and IFBB Pro League. While reminiscing over all the wonderful shows I got to judge, I noticed a common occurrence made by many on stage that I felt the need to address. It's the “Lack of Connection and Engagement” that I for one, would like to see improvement on. I do understand there is no verbal communication done on stage with the judges but....there is body language and eye contact that should take place. As a former competitor myself, I always made eye contact with each judge the whole time I was on stage. When you are on stage, the judges are the only ones who count, so don't you want to engage fully with them? Stage awareness was another important thing I focused on. Since I do feel it is my duty as a judge to share with others on how to improve, I would like to give some tips to bring to the stage for your next show.

1 While on side stage waiting your turn to enter center stage be ready to present while making eye contact with all the judges.

I like to call this, ‘Being Live At 5’.... This is the moment when butterflies are flying around in your tummy and nerves are sky high, because its just about that time for you to shine. Right before you head out to center stage, the head expeditor, will give you last minute instructions on when and where to go. Please pay attention while being fully engaged so you will know when and where to present your individual routine. This is that moment in time you worked so hard for, so be prepared!

2 When at center stage start your routine and know exactly what to deliver.

I can't tell you how many times I witness competitors walk out to the X on center stage and hesitate heavily before being instructed to go ahead and begin. To ensure that you are present in the moment, I recommend walking out with your head held high, smiling at the judges and delivering your individual routine just like you practiced time and time again. Be proud and present like a pro. This is your time to show off all the hard work you have accomplished. Make sure to present the poses that flatter your physique best and don't allow nerves to distract you from your purpose of being there. Remember, the judges are looking for flaws, the longer you're out there the more time they have to find them. Know your best poses, deliver them and then exit. Leave the judges wanting to see more of you.

3 Know where to be at all times while on stage.

Listen and pay attention to your head expeditor, he/she will make sure you are in the right place at the right time. Self awareness is always a good thing and being fully engaged while on stage will help you look your best. Unfortunately, I have seen too many athletes wander aimlessly on stage wondering where to go, since they didn't listen to instruction from the head expeditor. Help them help you with your experience on stage.

4 In the comparison rounds be aware of your competitor number and listen to instructions from the head judge.

The head judge will instruct you on where he or she wants you to be. Pay attention to their instructions and know your number since this is how they will address you on stage. Many times I have seen competitors not respond to instruction of the head judge because they are not fully engaged or present in the moment and unaware of their own competitor number. Aren't you there to show the judges how good you look? Don't be that person who has to look down on their hip to see if it's them who's being addressed instead, know your number, listen to the head judge and show them your best.

5 After being dismissed from the stage by the head judge, know if and when to return for either another class you entered and or the finals.

Numerous times, this past season, I witnessed athletes who missed their second or third class they entered because they weren't aware of where they needed to be backstage. The expeditors are backstage to ensure that everyone is in the correct line before going on stage. It's just a fact that the athletes are depleted on Day of Show, so let the expeditors help you. Check with them to make sure you are in the right place, at the right time. Be connected with what's taking place backstage and help the expeditors help you so you don't miss out on your time to shine on stage. Most importantly, make sure to know when to return for the finals. I have seen where some have missed receiving a trophy and even a pro card because they weren't where they needed to be. Very heart-breaking! Always be early and prepared, you have worked too hard and too long to miss out on this moment.

I hope these tips are helpful and I wish everyone a successful 2022 show season. I'm looking forward to seeing many of you on stage this year. Remember the key words for 2022 — engaged and connected!

“ Know your best poses, deliver them and then exit. ”