

SCHOOL RALLIES THAT ROCK & ASSEMBLIES THAT AMAZE!

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BREAK THE RULES ON PEP RALLIES!

The rule for most schools for Pep Rallies & Assemblies are: pep rally's are just for introducing sports teams while assemblies are just for musical performances or guest speakers. "BREAK THE RULES"!! Rallies and assemblies do not have to be just introducing sports teams or listening to music groups. They can be fun, have themes, and be a major event anticipated by all - no matter the size of your school! They can be a highlight of your school year ... just let your creativity get crazy!

GO BIG OR GO HOME

This was my philosophy in high school! Take rallies/assemblies very seriously as they are a huge reflection of your organization, spirit and care to the entire school. Great rallies = better perception of your abilities as leaders and increased anticipation for all other activities. Grab this opportunity! I suggest a minimum of 3 spirit rallies/assemblies a year.

How to Convince Your Administration: Do some research on what your school needs and wants. Put your ideas on paper and propose to the administration over the summer. Convince them that getting the school together several times will cause benefits to school spirit, morale, promotion of special events, and fun that outweigh class time missed! Put on paper why your rallies will have more fun, energy, and participation from others.

Key tips on establishing "GO BIG"

- Turn off the lights and use spotlights, especially in gyms! This causes people to focus on "the action" as they can't see anything else. It also causes instant excitement in the audience!
- If your sound system and music don't kick butt for quality, rent a better system! Nothing is more frustrating than having most the audience being unable to hear what's going on.
- Put rallies the same day as dances. Have the dance company come early and use their lights and sound! Make it a concert atmosphere; impress people with lights and sound! It will cost a little extra, and you have to buy the DJ's dinner, but it's worth it!
- Use skits, demonstrations, cheers, songs, music, performances & entertainment. Be crazy and creative: don't settle for rallies where it's the coach introducing each member of the team. *ZZZZZZZZ Boring!*
- Avoid numb bum! If rally is longer than 30-40 minutes, do something that gets crowd on their feet or involved. It keeps them focused! Short cheers, encouraging standing ovations, or stretch breaks all work well. As a great speaker one time told me, "The mind takes in what the bum can contain!"

EVERYONE'S A STAR

Fun and hyped assemblies and pep rallies depend on the use of two-way communication before the event happens. DO NOT rely on posters and announcements to recruit help. ASK PEOPLE!

Ask the people who have the "egos" to be the "stars" of your assemblies! You know the types... athletic stars (guys & gals!), class clowns, music and drama talents. They are in your school and are rarely ask to be involved. So approach them! By involving others besides the "leadership crowd", you give a reason for even more of your schoolmates to get excited at rallies.

The people that you "fear" when you are on stage, the jokers and "cool" people, get them on your side by getting them on stage! Okay, you will get "no's" and strange looks, but be persistent, they're just not used to being asked. Ask them when their friends do not surround them. You will find that early success will cause more people wanting to be on stage in the future.

As the student leader your roles could include: organize the rally, set deadlines, assign "parts" to people, screen the acts before they go on, act as MC; still play a role on stage, but let the creativity of others flow!

Screening the acts beforehand is important! What is "funny" to some may not be to the administration!

It is essential for the rally to be accepted and successful that the people on stage reflect all of the different clicks, styles, groups & attitudes in your school. This gives everyone a reason to come out because someone they know or like or can identify with is going to be on stage! One rally at a school featured a skateboarding demo, a shooting basketball hoops contest, a school cheer, a picture show put on by the yearbook, and an Indian drum dance! A fantastic balance of different groups was involved!

For example, our pep rally prior to our haunted house activity featured "metal head" class clowns doing a skit, sports stars leading cheers, a rock band playing a song, a singing quartet from the music department, two seniors leading a dance, a rap and dance act and finally the administration coming out as the Ghostbusters! Behind the scenes, people from AV and music help assemble equipment and lend their creativity to the layout and sound. The student council MC'd and organized the rally but it represented all of the different interests of the school. The result: a memorable event that everyone enjoyed because it was their friends who were the stars, and a huge attendance at our haunted house activity!

TIE IT ALL TOGETHER

Give the rally a theme and all skits & entertainment have something to do with it.

Examples: Welcome Back, Good-bye to the Year, Homecoming/School Pride, Water, Game Show, a Talk Show, Holiday themes - Halloween, St. Patrick's Day, Christmas & Valentines, Class/Grade Competitions

CELEBRATE!

Celebrate all of your schools accomplishments, from chess to basketball, from music to academics. CARE FAIR!

When people experience success, figure out ways to recognize them on stage that is fun and complimentary.

IDEAS, IDEAS, IDEAS

- Sports teams. Announce just the team name, running out to loud music, or quickly say the names of team members by a well-spoken staff/students - maybe just 1st names? Hold applause till the end
- Interview the team captain, "set up" something funny like a disagreement or appearance of next opponent
- "Mock games" where the real team play an opponent made up of school jokers, maybe in floor hockey, b-ball, track & field (we had nerf ball tossed into the crowd by shot putter after initially using the real balls)
- Yearbook Team, bring out the book with huge fanfare, on a pillow with "majestic" classical music. Present to the administration & editor. Show a slide show with highlights from the book. Hand out the yearbooks afterwards.
- Talk show format, guests are teams/upcoming events, spliced by skits/songs, complete with desk, couch, and band. Study the skits of Letterman, Conan, and Saturday Night Live.
- Introduce the student council through a skit, maybe with the school's jokers & jocks as hosts and narrators, show the leaders linked to everyone "popular"
- Cheers - KISS (Keep it simple smarty!) - people do not like long/complicated/high risk cheers: Ohh Ahh Orchestra. Fast Fingers, Iron 'em out, Dexterity check, split crowd in half & yell one word cheers, the wave, the rain, chanting mascot name, "We're #1!!"
- Bring out your mascot, in costume or live (if possible). It dances, it plays a sport, and it's cool!
- Rally features the "winner" of a contest, ex. A raffle to dunk a VP with water; week of team competitions and the top 2 teams meet in a final obstacle course in front of whole school.
- Skits that promote upcoming activities - a dance scene, a fund-raiser scene, a variety or fashion show, a play, lunch time contests (ex. ice cream eating) are demonstrated at the rally by volunteers.
- Demonstrate upcoming activities, pole-vaulters & shot putters strut their stuff, a song sung from an upcoming play, a short band performance, a display of dunking and shooting skills in basketball.
- Live rock bands from your school, playing music as the students enter and as teams are introduced. The song is appropriate for theme (ex. We used the "Ghostbusters" song for our Haunted House activity)
- Find out people with unique talents and get them on stage: juggle, magic, rap, dance, an instrument like fiddle, guitar, piano, or sax, solo & quartet singing. Have the choir sing a current hit song; the band/orchestra perform a hit song.
- Air bands! Probably not entire song, but 2-minute bits, costumes & loud tunes, combo of what rocks, is funky to funny ("YMCA") Create a multi-song medley!
- Academic "champions" are brought out on the shoulders of a sports team. Teams lead by students from the special needs class.
- Fine arts pep rally! Ask Bands, choirs, drama, and clubs how they want to be recognized and use the ideas that they give you. Coaches sit down with the teams beforehand, saying "they cheer for you all year, for one hour you can cheer for them."
- Create your own awards show! Give gag gifts to recognize staff and students for both funny things and unrecognized special contributions to the school (such as perfect attendance or keeping the school clean).

Class (Members of one grade vs. another grade) Competitions will INCREASE school spirit

(I highly recommend the purchase of Bob Burton's Spiritworks Book for pep rally insights & ideas: www.spiritworks.com)

- Establish a yearlong points system, with monthly, mid year, and end of the year winners.
- Grades or Classes or homerooms get points for attending rally, dressing up for rally & other days, attending plays, \$ raised for charities, going to games, how loud they cheer at rally (especially during relays, judged by staff, have every class get points), how they placed in fun competitions and relays.
- Monthly winning class/grade could have 1 to 5 names drawn from that class for prizes.

Rockin' rally relays and competitions!

- Always practice the relay ahead of time to ensure safety and fairness.
- Use staff members as judges for events & relays; for counting participation level at rallies. This minimizes controversy.
- Have the class/student council executives, with staff insight, pre pick participants in pep rally relays, ensuring they represent the diversity of the class in interest, size, sex, skill.
- If you are just going to pick rally racers from audience, have a staff member do it.
- Play upbeat music during the race, but don't drown out the crowd support.
- If the rally features the passing of an item, use funny batons like bananas!
- Other competitors: Battle of the Sexes; Faculty vs. students. A club and a sports team vs. another club & team combo.

My Favourite Pep Rally Relays (The ones that require minimal preparation and no mess!)

- Use your head. Carry ball between heads of 2 people, with hands behind back. Walk length of gym; pass on to others.
- Baton is a feather. Feather on a plate, race across floor without holding feather against arms/chest. Stop if falls.
- Pencil Blow: 4 to 6 per team, blow a pencil across the gym floor towards their teammate. They blow it back.
- Loop de Loop: First person to string rope thru belt loops of 20 people wins.
- Bum Bobsled. Four per team, scoot on bottom, hooked in bobsled fashion across gym. Cross line, 4 others go back.
- Through The Legs Race. Eight per team, single file, person at back crawls thru legs. End when last person crosses line.
- Balloon Hug. Each team made of six girls, one guy. Winner is first Guy who pops each girls balloon by giving a hug.
- Favourite Cheers & Games. Dexterity Check. Iron em out. Ohh Ahh. Hey Ho. Fast Fingers. Gotcha finger game.