

Title:

Do you have what it takes to win The X-Factor?

Word Count:

1013

Summary:

How many times have you sat at home watching X-Factor (UK) or American Idol (USA) and thought to yourself, "I could do that!"- I know I have.

Let me tell you a little about myself and give you an idea about what qualifies me to write this "How-to" article. My name is Tony West, I'm a Professional Entertainer and Cabaret Performer with in excess of 25 years performing history to my credit. I began my stage career way back in the 1980's working for various organizations as a Professional Musician, latterly as a Cabaret Artiste. Believe me, i've worked with the "Good, bad, and the damned awful!" Let's get down to business...

Keywords:

x-factor, pop idol, american idol, simon cowell, sharon osbourne

Article Body:

If you're going to stand the slightest chance of getting into an audition for The X-Factor, or American Idol, you're going to need to know a little about the tools you're going to need in order to get yourself noticed ahead of tens of thousands of other would-be pop stars.

Attitude!

Having a good, balanced attitude towards your end-objective is possibly the most important asset you can have in your quest to become wealthy and famous. Don't make the fatal mistake of getting it into your head that "you're a natural star" meaning, "you're guaranteed to succeed." If that's your attitude, then you're heading for a fall, before you even begin to become a contender.

Humility!

It's always worth remembering that there are going to be thousands of people who are much better than you. Musically they're better accomplished, Physically they look better; but what 99% of these would-be hopefully lack is "HUMILITY!" Yes, that's right. Ask yourself a question: Do YOU like people who are full of their

own self-importance?" No? well that's a good start. Nobody likes a smart-ass who thinks they are streets ahead of the competition. 9 out of 10 people who think this way are in fact hiding behind a veil that masks their insecurities. In short, it's a put-on, bravado, call it what you will. It definitely pays to be humble. So, on to the next required quality:

Understand your Capabilities and just be yourself!

Understanding your capabilities is important. There are many people whom wish to aspire to great heights, in the same way as their own pop idol, be it - Britney Spears, Barry Manilow, Justin Timberlake, Mariah Carey, Madonna, Kylie Minogue, the list is endless. What's important for you to come to terms with right now, is the fact that these already pop stars, icons, super stars, call them what you will, are doing what they're doing in a fairly unique way. In other words, "Just being themselves!" They're not pretending to be YOU when they sing; so don't you pretend to be them by emulating their style. Talent show scouts won't give you a second glance if you sound-like, or sing in the style of an already established pop figurehead. Here's something that will shed more light on what I mean.

We've all, at sometime or another been to a Karaoke evening. Right? For those of you reading this whom haven't, I will enlighten you. Karaoke is a modern-day equivalent of what was considered a recreational activity of 'singing around the Piano' a popular activity from the 1900's to approximately mid 1970's. Karaoke hailed from Japan, the idea being that anybody could get up and sing to a pre-recorded music track that had the lyrics embedded, meaning that the singer would sing along to the pre-produced karaoke tracks, reading the words displayed on a television screen to complement the vocal performance. For the better part, Karaoke is fun, it encourages people to get on their feet and sing to an assembled audience, - often in public houses, whom wouldn't normally have the courage to do so, apart from singing in the bath. However, on the one hand it's fair to say that Karaoke is a good source of musical recreation; the down-side is that Karaoke events have also become responsible for creating a plethora of "would-be pop idols" that in reality have no greater chance of becoming the pop idol they are emulating, as I have taking the Pope out to a Rave party. And this is my point. Karaoke is great for practicing your vocal technique, - But that's all. Again, you MUST be yourself!

Up to now, you have learned some important factors, which I hope will stand you well in your quest to win the x-factor, or american idol. Here's a summary:

Attitude - adopt a good attitude before you begin your quest for stardom

Humility - nobody likes a smart-ass. People warm to those who are humble about

their talent

Understand your capabilities and just be yourself - This speaks for itself!

The final chapter:

Remember, it doesn't matter whether you're overweight, wear spectacles, have spots, or even a bad hair do. What IS important at this stage, is that you have the determination to succeed. Don't expect doors to be opened for you, and things to just fall into place, because they wont.

You need to stay focussed, work hard on developing a unique style to demonstrate your vocal capability. I know I keep saying this, but DON'T try to emulate the original artiste of the song you hope to perform at your audition. If you do, all the advice i've given so far is going to be a waste of time. Pick a song that fits your personality, that says something about you. Then, practice the song time and time again until you feel totally comfortable with the vocal range of the song (the low notes and the high notes), If you find that you can't sing the low, or high notes with clarity and definition, - move on to another song. And I mean move on to another song! Ok, the song that's most suitable might not be your first, and popular choice, but it's more likely to do you justice when you need it. Ok, let's assume you've chosen the best song for you. Now, you need to be thinking about YOU, and your IMAGE.

Again, please don't fall into the trap of emulating the style and dress sense of your own pop idol. Remember: They are unique in what they do and in the manner in which they style themselves. You MUST do as they did, - create your own individual style and dress code. Slightly understated is always good. Definately nothing too O.T.T. (over the top) You want to be remembered for your Good attitude, your unique vocal ability, and your impecable styling.

I hope you are successful in your quest to get on TV and win The X-factor, or American Idol. Please let me know if the information i've given had helped you on the road to stardom.

Good Luck!

Tony West