



Island
Songwriters
Showcase

WORKSHOP GUIDELINES

Islandsongwriters.org

April 2011

HOW TO GIVE CONSTRUCTIVE FEEDBACK

DO

- Be constructive, honest and helpful.
- Be concise. The songwriter has a limited time for feedback.
- Wait to be called on by the songwriter or the workshop facilitator.
- Focus on the *songwriting*: melody, lyrics, hook, concept and/or composition.
- If you like the song, tell us why. Be specific.
- If you see room for improvement, tell us what problem(s) your solutions address.
- Take it easy on newcomers.

DON'T

- No personal comments. Respect the writer's privacy. Stick to the material in the song and don't make it personal.
- Don't give excessive, unqualified praise. Though well-intended, unqualified praise may be interpreted as insincere.
- Don't 'pile on'. Comments, one after another, without a chance for the songwriter to digest or respond, can be overwhelming.
- Avoid off-topic comments.
- Avoid comments that have already been made
- Avoid comments on the production or recording techniques.
- Avoid criticism about the writer's performance abilities. Suggestions to make the song easier to perform (or enjoy) are fine.

Need to leave early?

It's okay to leave early. We'd like to have as many participants as we can for the final song presentations, but we understand there are often practical considerations that make it difficult for everyone to stay for the entire workshop.

OUR GOAL

Our goal is to encourage each songwriter write the songs he or she wants to write, not the songs we want them to write. Ultimately, our goal is to encourage each songwriter become the songwriter *they* want to be, not the songwriter we want them to be.

HOW TO PRESENT A SONG

DO

- Present songs you have personally written or co-written.
- If you make a mistake, just keep playing.
- Call on participants you want feedback from
- If you don't want feedback, just let us know.
- Listen. Let us tell you what we hear - how your song affected us.
- Understand that anything we say is based on a single listen. Impressions often change after repeated listening.
- Let any praise you get sink in and encourage you.
- Let criticism inspire you to keep trying, work harder, or let it go.

DON'T

- Don't apologize.
- Don't worry about your performance.
- Don't explain or try to tell us what to hear or how to listen.
- Don't call on participants you don't want feedback from.
- Listen, but don't let us pile up on you. Raise your hand if you need a break.
- Don't make assumptions about comments you didn't hear.

Song Of The Month

At every workshop, we vote for the "Song(s) of the Month.

The rules are simple:

1. Vote for as many songs as your want.
2. Yes. You can vote for your own song.
3. You don't need to sign your name
4. If possible, tell us why you voted for this song

Hand in your ballot when you leave. The Winner(s) will be announced online and at the next meeting.