Comp Helps for Pro-Am Students

Early in my dancing, a visiting coach spoke to my instructor and me. He impacted us that it was important to keep things aligned between us on and off the dance floor. Our dancing might be technically perfect but it would be apparent to the judges if there was stress between us, affecting our score. Surprises often come up, but let’s take a quick look at a “CompCheck” of a few concerns for instructors and students to increase communication and understanding before, during, and after a competition.

1. Is there a printed schedule of anticipated meetings and plans in addition to the competition? (meals, outings, warm-up, where to meet, timing)
2. Are you aware of the studio team? (other students who will be competing with your instructor and other couples competing from your studio)
3. Is everyone accounted for in hotel, costs and event seating? (companions / visitors in addition to competition participants)
4. Are dance students who simply attend the competition informed that time is focused on the paying members of the team?
5. Is there a planned follow-up after the competition between instructor and student, for lessons learned? (to improve for next event)

**Remember**: An instructor probably has multiple experiences of what a student may be challenged with for the very first time. No question is a dumb question. No one is perfect and the concern may be something that was simply (not intentionally) overlooked.

I met my current instructor for the first time in Manhattan, New York, USA. After 14 years of dancing, contacting him and waiting 3 more months, flying nearly 1000 miles (1609 Kilometers), and finally meeting the gentleman, he spent the first 10 minutes talking about the importance of communication. I had my shoes on, music was playing, others practicing, and I said, “Let’s dance and talk later.” He calmly responded, “Communication is most important in any dance relationship. We’ll talk now.”

***Continuous open communication between professional and amateur is key to being ready for a stellar performance!***