Developing Student Leaders

Session Presenter: Diane Orlofsky

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Developing Leadership in the Ensemble Classroom: Music educators have a unique opportunity to help their students become sensitive thinkers and leaders

Eric Shieh

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What is This?
Ten years from now, I don’t just want my orchestra students to be able to perform Aaron Joy Kernis’s Second Symphony with flawless technique—I want each one of them to take part in shaping the world.

We are teaching in an age where the responsibility of educators to impart a sense of social and global consciousness is overwhelming. Ours is an age marked by domestic and global confrontation, a media explosion, and the increasing influence of market-driven values. Whether our young people will grow into passive consumers or active citizens has become a question fundamental to education in the twenty-first century, and it is essential that we as educators develop the capacity of our students to reflect critically and take action. Even as music educators—and perhaps especially as music educators—we must foster in our students the courage to call forth authentic action in themselves and others: to lead.

Leadership development in education has frequently been the province of various outdoor and experiential programs, such as those run by Outward Bound or the American Youth Foundation. These programs immerse students in various challenges such as ropes courses, wilderness trips, or service work, and ask students to process those experiences, making generalizations that expand beyond the immediate tasks. Two central characteristics of these programs are shared by the music ensemble classroom: experiential learning (learning by doing) and group development. As music educators, we return again and again to both the hands-on, application aspect of our work as well as to the importance of community in our classrooms when promoting our music programs and defending their value in our schools.

The foundation is set for us as music educators to help students develop leadership in ways most classroom teachers cannot. But the existence of this foundation is not enough. As both a public school music teacher and a programs coordinator with the American Youth Foundation, I argue that three more things are necessary. To develop leadership in the ensemble classroom, we must (1) foster an environment where the expression of diversity is promoted, (2) develop a flexible leadership style for encouraging development, and (3) give students opportunities to exercise leadership. The

Music educators have a unique opportunity to help their students become sensitive thinkers and leaders.

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Encourage the Expression of Diversity

One of the events my students look forward to every year is a Valentine’s Day “Symphony Serenades” fund-raiser for the orchestra in which students are paid by those who have placed special orders to play a variety of popular songs. While the popular music and pressure of delivering serenades usually keep students focused during rehearsals, this year was different: one of my best students, Marcus, was goofing around. When I spoke with him after class, he angrily told me how much he hated the activity and how it was his least favorite part of class. I listened, replied that I understood his position, and asked him to think of what else he might do to contribute to the fund-raiser if he wasn’t going to play serenades. The next day he came to class and told me he was going to join the class in delivering serenades.

After the final serenade was delivered, we came together as a group to process the experience, and I asked every student to contribute a word that described how they felt about the fund-raiser. While most students used words such as “exhilarating,” “fun,” or “challenging,” Marcus contributed a noncommittal grunt. I asked him if he would elaborate, and he said to the group: “This wasn’t one of my favorite things to do, but I know that it’s important to the orchestra, and I did it.” One of the students, Tara, who had previously put him down for his behavior, thanked him and noted how hard it must have been to admit that.

I am convinced that Marcus’s initial behavior was an attempt to create space for a dissenting opinion—an individual difference. As soon as he could give voice to that point of view and have it validated, he felt much more comfortable with the activity and was able to determine his role in it. In a similar manner, leadership development cannot take place where individual differences are not validated and encouraged. If people feel the need to fit into a mold or suppress their individuality in order to function, they cannot take an active part in creating their own selfhood or developing self-esteem—an important first step toward leadership. The class or I could easily have pressured Marcus into doing his part, but in doing so, it would have sent the message that individual differences would not be tolerated.

To create an environment where diverse personalities—not to mention diverse experiences—are respected and welcomed, a teacher must first build a relationship with each student individually. For example, after students have begun to settle into the routine at the beginning of the year, I find it important to meet with each student to talk about the student’s goals and expectations in conjunction with his or her playing assessments/auditions. Learning the different reasons students express for joining the ensemble and their individual goals enables me to begin building a positive relationship with each student. Certainly it is critical at this time for the teacher to assure students that their different reasons for being in the group and various strengths and weaknesses are of benefit to the group.

“The ability of group members to increase their self-esteem,” writes outdoor educator Denise Mitten, “is often dependent on the leader’s ability to establish healthy relationships with group members.” Establishing
these relationships is crucial at the outset, since many students placed in an unfamiliar setting or with unfamiliar people at the beginning of the year will attempt to minimize their differences and conform to some predetermined idea of what is socially “normal.” This is especially dangerous for students with obvious differences in appearance, ability, personality, or culture, who may feel their identities threatened by what they perceive as the presence of a group mold they cannot fit into.

A teacher must also model openness to diversity and create a group norm of sharing and celebrating differences. For example, I have had to remind students at times not to make assumptions about who is in the group or what “everyone” will want. Once, when a number of students requested Christmas-themed decorations for a December concert, not thinking about the non-Christians in the room, a statement from me was all it took to begin a larger discussion on the point. At other times, using the word “guardian” or “grandparent” instead of “parent,” or substituting the pronoun “he” when discussing something usually associated with girls or women (and vice versa) can help students recognize and acknowledge people in circumstances that many students may not be familiar with. A teacher can also actively seek out differences of opinion and encourage dialogue in the classroom. In my experience, students will open up and feel more comfortable presenting their differences if I am open about the ways I am different from the perceived norms of society.

Sometimes while attempting to keep control of a group or maintain order, teachers will suppress diverse perspectives either by ignoring them or dismissing them. Group members may respond by rebellious behavior, such as refusing to play or deliberately playing things wrong, or—even worse—may submit, and “learn” unconsciously that their perspective is not valuable. When this happens, the process of developing leadership has been blocked before it can begin.

**Facilitate Group Development**

Leadership involves not only a conviction about one’s own ideas and a willingness to consider the ideas of others, but also the capacity to work with others and take responsibility within a group. Countless musicians and music educators have spoken about the creation of community in the act of making music. In his article “The School Ensemble: A Culture of Our Own,” Steven Morrison writes about the ensemble not as a class, but as a culture where students from different “social divisions … [share] experiences and goals,” where older students mentor less-experienced students, and where individuals “take ownership of the ensemble experience in a unique and personal way.”

It would be incorrect, however, to assume that every community we create is one that will foster leadership, or that the ideal community of interdependence and mutual cooperation will automatically arise. For example, a teacher can easily stifle the development of this kind of community through a dictatorial approach to classroom activities. While in this instance good music may result and students may enjoy the process of creating the music, the lack of student

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**Figure 1. Stages of Group Development for the Music Classroom**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STAGE</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
<th>TEACHERS CONCERN FOR TASK VS. RELATIONSHIP</th>
<th>LEADERSHIP STYLE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Forming</td>
<td>Students are generally timid, dependent on teacher and accept task</td>
<td>High vs. Low</td>
<td>Autocratic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Storming</td>
<td>Students become more comfortable with each other and task and have disagreements with each other and with the teacher</td>
<td>High vs. Low</td>
<td>Democratic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norming</td>
<td>Students form group norms and values</td>
<td>Low vs. High</td>
<td>Abdicratic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performing</td>
<td>Students take ownership and responsibility, work interdependently, and concentrate on tasks at hand</td>
<td>Low vs. Low</td>
<td>Democratic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjourning</td>
<td>Students are anxious with absence of task and dependent on teacher for closure</td>
<td>High vs. Low</td>
<td>Autocratic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The five stages of group development described in this figure are derived from the work of Bruce Tuckman and Mary Ann Jenson, “Stages of Small Group Development Revisited,” *Organizational Studies* 2, no. 4 (1977), pp. 419–27. Appropriate leadership styles for each stage were proposed by Simon Priest and Aram Attarian in “The Conditional Theory of Outdoor Leadership Style: An Exercise in Flexibility,” *Journal of Adventure Education and Outdoor Leadership* 11, no. 3 (1994), pp. 13–19.
responsibility or decision-making will preclude the possibility of leadership or group cohesion. Here, everyone in the group is entirely dependent on and compliant with the teacher rather than interdependent with other members of the ensemble and active in the music-making process. Likewise, a director may force the creation of a community through the “crisis” of an impending concert, resulting in a community entirely focused on the task at hand but shallow in its relationships and weak in its capacity to work cooperatively.

In both negative cases described in the previous paragraph, a group’s ability to reach its full potential is squelched before the ensemble becomes a community where members are capable of taking responsibility and making cooperative decisions. Forming a truly interdependent ensemble—an effective community— involves certain prerequisites. It is important to view this creation of a trusting community as a stage in a group’s development, often referred to by the outdoor education community as the performing stage, one of five stages in the widely accepted model of group development created by Bruce Tuckman and Mary Ann Jensen. Outdoor educators Simon Priest and Aram Attarian have also proposed an appropriate style for each stage that a leader should adopt in facilitating the group’s development, and which I have adapted for music teachers in Figure 1.

The first stage in group development, according to Tuckman and Jensen’s model, is called the forming stage, in which a group comes together for the first time. In the music classroom, students are sometimes timid, anxious, and reluctant to discuss personal views and opinions, and their relationships can be quite superficial. Students are often dependent on the teacher at this point and will accept their task of making music even though they have not yet taken ownership of it.

Attarian and Priest argue that the autocratic teaching style is most appropriate at this stage, with a teacher making most of the decisions for the group. The leader must go over procedures, invest students in their tasks, orient members of the ensemble to their new roles, and set clear expectations and goals. As students become more comfortable in the class and with each other, this “honeymoon” stage ends, and power struggles can ensue as students begin to exercise their own desires and attempt to influence each other. At this point, many music teachers tighten down on the class, refusing to relinquish an autocratic style of teaching in an effort to bring the class into line. This action, however, will prevent students from moving forward toward a more cohesive community. In this stage, they have formed a group, but not yet a true community.

The second stage of group development is the storming stage, marked by conflict as students begin to express their individuality, and interpersonal issues come to the forefront. Students often confront each other with concerns over their status in the ensemble, their abilities, and the group’s values. Students may also rebel against the teacher, questioning aspects of the program such as music choice, difficulty of works, assigned roles, level of responsibility, need to practice, or the rehearsal process. At this stage, a teacher needs to recognize that this is a natural part of the group process, and that the expression of individuality is beneficial and necessary for deeper relationships to form. With the help of the teacher, the group can move on toward greater cohesiveness.

At the storming stage, a democratic style is most appropriate, in which the leader shares responsibilities with the students, allowing members to express grievances, and whenever possible, change issues that are important to them. At this stage, it is key that the teacher structure activities to increase the expression of the students and not intercede unless necessary. I have come to anticipate this stage, though it never ceases to surprise me what arises as an issue of contention. At varying points in my career, I have scratched a piece of music from the program (only to add it again later in the year with no objections), taught vibrato earlier in the year, redefined the roles of my section leaders, and even amended my restroom policy. It goes without saying that a teacher must be careful with these changes: they should always be made to allow students to feel responsibility for the program. I have usually made them in the latter part of the storming stage, when students have started to accept their differences and have found ways to bring their focus back to the task. Indeed, during this stage students often lose sight of the music-making task, and reminders of that task can help move a group forward.

Depending on a number of factors, including the group’s maturity, students’ individual experiences working with groups, and the teacher’s facilitation skill, it may take days or months for a group to move beyond the storming stage. At the high school level, due to the maturity of the students and the fact that much of the group remains constant from year to year, often the forming and storming stages take place in the span of a single month. Of course, the challenge at this level is to ensure that new students have time and space to make their voices heard and to interact with the existing group.

At the middle school level, the forming stage may stretch for several weeks, and I have even had a group of seventh-grade students storm and sort through differences well into February, but then arrive the next year as eighth graders ready to develop norms by the third week. In any case, a teacher—and especially a new teacher who will bring new vision—needs to be prepared with everlasting patience and unflagging dedication.

Following the storming stage is the norming stage, characterized by a comfortable calm and cohesiveness within the class from the development of group norms that stabilize the group’s internal dynamics. Attarian and Priest observe “renewed hope” at this stage as the group “conforms to newly created ground rules.” In the music classroom, students become more positive, visibly enjoy their work, and identify as members of the group. Furthermore, they more readily accept the group’s goals and decisions, having taken a part in shaping them, and they have a low tolerance for disagreement.

The most appropriate style for a teacher to adopt at this stage is what
Priest and Attarian call an abdicratic one (combining abdicate and cratic, from the Greek for “rule”); that is, one should step back and simply support group members in their efforts to create norms. The focus should be on facilitating discussion in making group decisions and ensuring that the decisions students make are fair and beneficial for the class.

Finally, after norms have been decided on and students feel comfortable and responsible for the roles they have created, the group enters the performing stage. Students’ concern for the musical tasks and for putting together their best work returns, and productivity skyrockets. Students are able to reflect on good and bad rehearsals and conduct sectionals, and many who have not developed consistent practice habits begin to do so. Here is where the teacher calls for students to “step it up” and increase their initiative and responsibility, giving them opportunities for leadership.

As students take on leadership roles, the teacher will wish to adopt a democratic style again, serving as a resource and allowing students to take as much a part as possible in the rehearsal process. Once a class hits the performing stage, students are able to generally sustain this level of behavior with a little encouragement and direction from a teacher, although with changes in the program, such as new students, new music, or new events to prepare for, a group may return to one of the earlier stages to redefine norms and reestablish roles. Certainly this is often the case when a marching band makes the change to concert band and when any ensemble finishes its first big concert and must learn new music and set new goals.

The fifth stage of group development is the adjourning stage, which usually begins after a group’s final concert. Students often display a degree of anxiety and lack of direction and lose the intense focus they had formerly brought to bear in the performing stage. At this time, the teacher once again takes the helm by adopting an autocratic style to focus students on evaluating what they have learned in both musical and nonmusical areas and on finding ways to transfer this knowledge to situations outside the classroom. It is interesting to note that groups that have not stormed and developed the high degree of initiative and individual responsibility found in the performing stage will not need this stage in group development.

The key to a group’s development is the teacher’s capacity to adopt a flexible leadership style, moving easily between autocratic, democratic, and abdicratic modes of teaching as the situation calls for them. In the Conditional Theory of Outdoor Leadership proposed by Simon Priest and Robert Chase,6 the authors warn that at each stage a teacher must be prepared to move toward an autocratic style if the initiative and responsibility of the students decreases, or the nature of the situation—such as an impending concert—demands it. Conversely, if students show a greater desire to take leadership, the abdicratic style becomes more appropriate. With younger students, especially elementary-school students, a group is often not developmentally ready to function with complete interdependence, and a teacher will lean toward an autocratic style while departing from it as much as possible to encourage teamwork and responsibility.

Create Leadership Opportunities

When I defined leadership at the beginning of this article, I called it “the courage to call forth authentic action in oneself and others.” The term authentic action comes from ethicist Robert Terry7 and has also been called reflective action by educator-activist Paulo Freire.8 It is simply a person’s capacity to reflect on a situation and act to make it better in a means consistent with her or his conception of what is good and just. Consequently, in order to foster leadership, a teacher must provide opportunities both for this kind of reflection and for action.

For a student to act authentically, he or she must be aware of a personal concept of what is good as well as how this perception relates to the situation at hand. The situation may involve both the relationships within the group and the task of making music in the classroom. A teacher encourages awareness of self and allows for self-discovery by promoting diversity in the classroom and expression of various viewpoints. A teacher fosters awareness of the situation by asking students to reflect on the group process and the musical process, both of which are important in any ensemble’s development.

These reflections typically take place in the norming and performing
stages of a group's development, when individuals in the group are ready to take responsibility for themselves and for the ensemble as a whole. They may take the form of questions such as “What can we do to start rehearsal quicker?” “What can we do to have a more efficient rehearsal?” or simply “What did you hear?” “How did that make you feel?” and “How can we make that better?” Often students will find it easier initially to discuss these questions in small groups or reflect on them in writing before they are brought up in a large-group setting. This kind of processing can take place both informally within the daily class and more formally after any major performance or activity. In my experience, students have made significant revelations about themselves and the group’s needs in the formal processing meeting I hold after each performance.

Authentic action also requires the capacity to act, and it is up to us as teachers to give students the means to do so and to encourage action. We can do this by encouraging students to take risks and by ensuring that they are prepared to take them. This may include students demonstrating specific techniques, rhythms, or passages in front of the class, mentoring other students, contributing solutions to musical problems, volunteering answers, or taking on logistical responsibilities for a concert or event. Small-group and sectional work often afford students opportunities to take leadership and can be very empowering when students are given adequate preparation and guidance. Students should have a choice in determining their level of participation and action, though there is no limit to the amount of encouragement a teacher can give. While the teacher may offer insights and conduct the group, he or she should be careful never to co-opt the group process or take responsibility away from group members who have shown that initiative.

Finally, to develop as leaders, students must begin thinking in terms of a larger picture, and making that transfer from the classroom to their lives outside school and to the larger society. Although it needs to take place specifically during the adjourning stage of a group’s development, this kind of reflection and transfer can take place throughout the year. Students may be asked to reflect on how the musical process can be similar to other group or creative processes in their lives. Certainly the connections between a music ensemble and the larger society are infinite, and a teacher shouldn’t shy away from bringing domestic and global issues into the classroom for students to talk about.

Changing the World

In the music classroom, a student takes on a leadership role when he or she feels important and respected enough to do so, desires to do so, and knows how to do so. A student feels respected when his or her individual abilities are valued and recognized and when diversity is encouraged in the classroom. A student wants to take responsibility for the group when the teacher adopts a flexible leadership style that allows the group to develop to its full potential. Finally, a student can take on leadership roles only when the opportunities exist and the necessary requirements are outlined.

A student becomes a leader both inside and outside the classroom when she or he reflects upon a series of authentic actions and begins to generalize them into a way of living actively in the world.

Certainly this process requires some degree of self-awareness and maturity, and it is easiest for older and more experienced students to take the initiative and responsibility called for in this kind of leadership education. With musical skills, however, leadership in the music classroom can be built on year by year. Middle schoolers, and especially eighth graders, can also achieve a high level of personal and social responsibility and begin the process of thinking about their individual values and their influence on the group.

Recently, as I was walking through my high school’s common area, I saw two students yelling at each other in a heated argument that appeared to be escalating toward a fight. As I began moving toward them to address the situation, I was surprised to see one of my students, Jasmine, run up to the two students and tell them to stop: “Just stop—this isn’t getting you anywhere! You both need to calm down.” At this point, I reached the students and pulled one of them aside, intending to speak with each in turn. As I did this, Jasmine began speaking with the other. After the situation had been diffused, I turned to Jasmine, let her know how proud I was of her, and asked what moved her to get involved. She said she found the courage from three years of cheerleading and four years of orchestra. Immediately I thought about the experiential nature and shared concern for group development in both those activities. In the end, even if Jasmine never learns to play Aaron Jay Kernis’s Second Symphony—or any orchestra masterwork, for that matter—I’ll always consider her to be one of my best students.

Notes

5. Ibid., 16.
Dear Frustrated and Frightened
Diane N. DeNicola
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>> Version of Record - Apr 1, 1992
What is This?
Your first year as a music educator can be overwhelming. Diane N. DeNicola answers some questions often posed by novice teachers—questions about dealing with students, parents, and the community.

Dear Frustrated:

I am a recent college graduate, the proud recipient of a degree in music education, and, beginning last month, a member of the working class. Here is my problem. For the past four years, I have been solely responsible for myself. I have had to get myself to class on time, learn my music, work part-time to help with tuition...those sorts of things. I was partly responsible for the learning outcomes of pupils during my student teaching experience, but even then I had the safety net of my cooperating teacher and university supervisor. In retrospect, I realize the responsibilities were more perceived than real. Now it seems that my signature on an employment contract has made me responsible to and for everyone; the list includes students, parents, colleagues, administrators, the board of education, and the community at large.

I am overwhelmed. How am I supposed to relate to all these groups when each one seems to have a separate agenda? How can I promote a program that seems to be so multidimensional? My newly inherited program has so many working parts that it reminds me of one of those intricate fugues we studied in music theory. One month into my job and I have to plan and publicize the fall concert, deal with fund-raising projects, and handle incoming requests for holiday season performances. I've never had to relate to the public on such a large scale and I'm not sure I am up for the task.

Signed,
Frustrated and Frightened
First-Year Music Teacher

Dear Frustrated and Frightened:

Educational theorist James Mursell once said that "every teacher should be conscious that his work is conducted in, and indeed made possible by a nexus of personal and social relationships." Your letter indicates that you are already acutely aware of the dynamics involved in public relations, both within your organization (in-house or internal public relations) and in the efforts to promote your organization (external public relations). You seem, however, to lack confidence in your ability to manage the public relations demands of your new position. So let's start with you.

One definition of public relations is the efforts of a corporation to promote goodwill between itself and the public. Try thinking of your situation in these terms: the corporation is your music program and you are, in essence, the Chief Executive Officer. Most first-year teachers find this position of authority overwhelming at first, so having a firm grasp of the inner workings of your "corporate" structure is essential.

First of all, a successful CEO is responsible for the welfare of the personnel who make up the corporation. In your case, the members of the corporation are your students. Nothing else will function effectively if you do not have a pleasant working relationship with them. I won't spend a great deal of time on this topic because your college methods courses should have equipped you to handle the unique learning styles of your particular student population. But I will remind you that you are there for the students.

- Give cheerfully of your time, even if it requires you to extend yourself beyond the confines of the normal school day.
- Give of your talents, which will require you to stay abreast of the developments in your field and to remain proficient on your instrument.
- Give the students your genuine interest and attention and remember that it needs to go out to all of them and not just to the cream of the crop.
- Give them support in their efforts: show and tell them that they are valued as individuals, respected as musicians, appreciated for their contributions to your program, and loved as special human beings.

Another of your responsibilities as CEO is to communicate with the "stockholders," the support system of your firm. In your letter, you have already identified these groups, and you seem to realize that the stockholders who own the greatest number of shares in your corporation are the parents of your students. As a music educator, you are already convinced of your corporation's ability to yield substantial dividends to the "workforce" (your students), but you must communicate that conviction to your

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and Frightened:

by Diane N. DeNicola

investors. The lines of communication between you and the parents need to be used consistently. Keep them informed year-round of the children's progress. Don't merely tell them about upcoming performances; invite them to view the daily operations of your program at any time. Keep the parents involved by using their strengths: a mother with an artistic flair might design your program covers, or a father who owns a local business might assist you in fundraising or in arranging sponsors for your program.

As CEO, you will have to exercise diplomacy with these investors. Maximize your positive contact with them and minimize confrontation. Be firm, fair, consistent, and genuinely interested in your students' welfare. As long as you have a solid grasp of the present operation and future direction of your program, the parents will take you seriously. And a word to the wise—avoid getting overly involved in your students' family life; you could jeopardize your neutrality and your overall effectiveness as a leader.

It is also important that you maintain a congenial working relationship with other CEOs. Your colleagues can be a vital support system for you and your music program. You should, of course, nurture professional associations within the music field through active participation in professional organizations. But what about the colleagues in other subject areas with whom you work daily? You cannot afford to isolate yourself from them by acting as if your program is the only one that matters. Remember, they are the CEOs of their own programs and you share similar goals and desires. Support their programs with kind words, attendance at their events, and offers of help. You will soon find them reciprocating with similar support for your program. When you can, find ways to work together: bring your choir to the Spanish room during "fiesta" to sing a Spanish folk song, or offer to provide a pep band for a spring sport. These cooperative efforts require a little time and thought but they will yield substantial dividends that far outweigh the work involved. Above all, be flexible with the use of shared facilities and equipment, such as the gymnasium, auditorium, fields, buses, and even folding chairs. This sort of mutual support among colleagues will go far toward creating pleasant and productive daily operations.

Treat your principal as you would the chairperson of a board of trustees. You are responsible to him or her, but the principal is also your colleague and deserves the same respect, congeniality, and support as do your other peers. If students, parents, and your colleagues are "buying shares" in your program, the principal will too. Do your job efficiently and enthusiastically. Stay well informed, which includes finding the best prices for equipment and supplies and preparing a realistic and manageable budget. Ask for suggestions as to how to improve the image and outreach of your program, which will in turn, benefit the system.

So far the discussion has centered on in-house public relations efforts and with good reason. Once your establishment is in order, then you can begin to promote your "product" to the community (which includes the board of education). Do not let the details or logistics of external public relations bewilder you. As with other aspects of your program, develop a plan and then implement it consistently.

Decide upon the types of media you wish to use for publicity. Consider all the possibilities, but in this world of electronic media, don't overlook the effectiveness of the print media. Get to know a local reporter or news editor—occasional feature articles about your program will go further in informing the public of the true mission of your program than will a ten-second spot announcing the time and date of your next performance. Sometimes a single photograph is great publicity if the reporter is busy with other assignments.

Do not hesitate to involve students in your public relations efforts. You may want to recruit journalism students to write copy, art students to make promotional materials, or business students to help structure fundraising efforts.

No corporation ever flourishes without cooperation. Don't feel that you have to "go it alone." Establish yourself as a leader with a plan and implement that plan with the cooperation of your support system. Mursell said it best when he referred to the building of a successful music program: "This is not done merely by publicity, although publicity of various sorts may help. Chiefly it means organizing a program with real human interest and appeal, a program which matters, a program with a high sales potential."2 I wish you success!

Notes
Three Characteristics of Effective Teachers
Natalie A. Steele

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What is This?
Three Characteristics of Effective Teachers

Natalie A. Steele

Abstract
This article discusses three characteristics that are often associated with successful music educators. The three characteristics discussed include nonverbal communication, teacher self-efficacy, and servant leadership. Although there is no magical combination of characteristics that will produce an effective music teacher, these three attributes have been shown to positively affect the effectiveness of the teacher and may provide current and future music educators some ideas and information that may be applied to their own teaching.

Keywords
characteristics, effective teachers, nonverbal communication, self-efficacy, servant leadership

In 2001 the U.S. House of Representatives passed Public Law 107-110, also known as No Child Left Behind. The intention of this law was to improve the performance of U.S. primary and secondary schools by increasing the standards of accountability. One of the main objectives was to provide a “highly qualified” teacher for every classroom. The law defines a highly qualified teacher as “one who has (1) fulfilled the state’s certification and licensing requirements, (2) obtained at least a bachelor’s degree and (3) demonstrated subject matter expertise” (U.S. Department of Education, n.d.). Most educators would define a “highly qualified” teacher in a different manner. According to the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education’s (n.d.) Summary Data on Teacher Effectiveness, Teacher Quality, and Teacher Qualifications, “teacher quality—knowledge and effectiveness—is the number one school based factor in student achievement.”

The question of what makes an effective teacher has no clear answer. Each teacher brings with him or her certain natural traits as well as learned behaviors and characteristics. Cruickshank, Jenkins, and Metcalf (2003) defined effective teachers as “caring, supportive, concerned about the welfare of students, knowledgeable about their subject matter, able to get along with others . . . and genuinely excited about the work that they do. . . . Effective teachers are able to help students learn” (p. 329). According to their research, teachers must also have high self-efficacy, good verbal and nonverbal communication skills, and strong leadership ability. All of these characteristics contribute to effective teaching and learning.

The characteristics of effective teachers have been extensively discussed, making the compilation of a comprehensive list of traits very difficult. For every good teacher there is a unique list of personal characteristics; however, there are some that frequently recur. This article discusses three of the characteristics that are important for effective teaching: nonverbal communication, self-efficacy, and servant leadership.

Nonverbal Communication
Nonverbal communication is a key factor in effective teaching for all subject areas. Until the 1970s, educational research focused almost entirely on verbal communication patterns, whereas the importance of nonverbal communication in the classroom had not been systematically studied (Galloway, 1974; Grant & Hennings, 1977; Woolfolk & Brooks, 1983). Since then, educational researchers have been able to identify relationships between nonverbal teaching behaviors and communication skills of classroom teachers with students’ academic achievement and attitudes toward school (Hughes, 1981). In addition, according to Woolfolk and Brooks (1983), an ongoing, reciprocal process of nonverbal communication regularly occurs between teachers and students during normal classroom activities.

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Nonverbal behavior can be very powerful because almost all nonverbal actions are potentially communicative and create distinct meanings (Rashotte, 2002; Woolfolk & Brooks, 1983). Nonverbal behaviors generally fall into four categories: proxemics, coverbial behavior, paralanguage, and appearance (Brooks & Wilson, 1978; Hennings, 1977; Lyons, 1977; Rashotte, 2002; Woolfolk & Brooks, 1983). Proxemics includes space and distance. Coverbial behavior includes elements of physical gestures, facial expression, body movement, and eye contact. Paralanguage include the behaviors accompanying speech such as tone of voice, pitch, volume, rhythm, and speech rate. Appearance includes attractiveness, grooming, and dress. These nonverbal behaviors can reveal a great deal about teachers and how they perceive the students.

The nonverbal behaviors utilized by teachers compose a complex form of communication. They can have very specific purposes and meanings yet may also be influenced by context. Particular nonverbal behaviors can serve a wide range of functions such as demonstrating attitudes about student achievement (Hughes, 1981), teacher friendliness (Lyons, 1977), caring (Brooks & Wilson, 1978), and credibility (Karr & Beatty, 1979; Woolfolk & Brooks, 1983). To teach effectively, educators “must appreciate the capacity of body and voice to express meanings and must feel free to express themselves completely using arms, eyes, legs, fingers, feet, face, torso, and voice” (Hennings, 1977, p. 184).

Nonverbal communication has been studied for many years as a vital part of human interaction (Hennings, 1977; Love & Roderick, 1971; Woolfolk & Brooks, 1983). Love and Roderick (1971) wrote that “communication theorists have long believed that words were not the only message sent between people, and that nonverbal cues accompanying verbal statements could reinforce or deny the meaning of the words” (p. 295). Nonverbal communication has also been a common field of study in the areas of advertising and acting, where “what is ‘said’ nonverbally oftentimes communicates with greater impact than what is said with words and that nonverbal language is a fundamental component of the communication process” (Hennings, 1977, p. 183).

Research in nonverbal communication includes supplementing, reinforcing, or regulating verbal exchanges (Ekman & Friesen, 1969), demonstrating emotions (Ekman & Friesen, 1975), indicating liking or disliking of individuals, situations, or ideas (Mehrabian, 1972), being persuasive (Albert & Dabbs, 1970), and influencing the performance of others (Hennings, 1977).

Only in recent years, has there been a widespread realization within the educational community of the significance of nonverbal language in speaking and listening and realization that nonverbal clues can be used as purposefully to create an impression in everyday conversations as they are in the world of advertising. (Hennings, 1977, p. 183)

It is more difficult to study nonverbal communication than verbal communication because “nonverbal stimuli occur all at once—the face, eyes, hands, movement” (Galloway, 1974, p. 305). Methods of studying nonverbal communication in the classroom have varied substantially. Methodologies have included high- and low-inference methods, laboratory settings, Likert-type scales, classroom interaction analysis, and observation methods (Woolfolk & Brooks, 1983). Different methods must be used to study nonverbal communication than have been used to study verbal communication. Galloway (1974) stated that if “one wants to determine the effect and weight of nonverbal influence, one has to cut out the talking, otherwise, one has no valid measurement of the nonverbal” (p. 306).

Love and Roderick (1971) created an instrument to record teacher nonverbal behavior including 10 categories of nonverbal teacher behavior and the teachers’ associated actions. Once the basic instrument for recording teacher nonverbal behavior had been developed, a unit for developing teachers’ awareness of their own nonverbal behavior was constructed, including a series of activities beginning with reading about nonverbal behavior, observing nonverbal behavior in general and specific ways, live practice, and concluding with using the recording instrument (Love & Roderick, 1971).

In the study conducted by Love and Roderick (1971), they found that by creating an awareness of nonverbal behaviors, “a majority of teachers exhibited a change” (p. 298).

Bringing the nonverbal communication of teachers to the level of conscious awareness could make possible the analysis and understanding of the nonverbal dimension in classroom communication... to make valid judgments about the effectiveness of their nonverbal behavior, teachers must be aware of their use of nonverbal behavior and have some idea of the repertoire of possible nonverbal behaviors. (Love & Roderick, 1971, p. 295)

Teachers need to understand nonverbal communication and behaviors as well as the power and influence they can have over others (Hennings, 1977; Woolfolk & Brooks, 1983). In addition, there is also a need to “raise the level of conscious awareness so they may be able to identify, analyze, and, if necessary, modify their own nonverbal behavior” (Love & Roderick, 1971, p. 299).
Nonverbal skills can be taught and learned (Hennings, 1977; Hughes, 1981; Izard & Izard, 1977; Koch, 1971). Through instruction and practice, skills can be developed in physical expression, vocal expression, and interpretational skills (Hennings, 1977). To refine these skills, a "vocabulary of nonverbal expression" (Hennings, 1977, p. 185) must be developed. This can be accomplished through many activities including photo analysis where individuals study photos to identify nonverbal messages and clues. Firsthand observations are also useful in raising awareness and interpretation of meanings. Some of the most useful means of developing nonverbal skills are through the use of role-playing, story sharing, pantomime, and dramatization (Hennings, 1977; Hughes, 1981; Izard & Izard, 1977; Koch, 1971).

Development of nonverbal communication skills may be especially important for music educators. According to Balzer (1969), 75% of a teacher’s classroom management direction is nonverbal. In any music class, the teacher can effectively and quietly stop unwanted behavior by making eye contact with the offender, a shake of the head, or walking over and standing near the source of the problem. A music teacher can also give positive reinforcement nonverbally by smiling, nodding the head, leaning toward the students, and maintaining eye contact (Woolfolk & Brooks, 1985). In every type of music class, from elementary general music to academic courses and to secondary performance ensembles, nonverbal communications including eye contact, facial expressions, gestures, and body motion and posture can contribute to environments that are conducive to positive learning experiences and happy students (Battersby, 2009). In addition to classroom control, nonverbal instruction through modeling has been found to be more effective than verbal instruction in instrumental music classes (Dickey, 1991).

Ensemble directors intentionally incorporate nonverbal communication and behaviors into their teaching on a regular basis through conducting. Conductors with advanced nonverbal communication skills have been found to be viewed as more effective and were preferred by student performers (Byo, 1990; Price & Winter, 1991; Yarbrough, 1975). The use of expressive conducting gestures has also been shown to produce positive outcomes in performance as well as positive student opinions of the music and the conductor (Price, 1985; Price & Winter, 1991). Gestures, physical appearance, eye contact, facial expression, and posture have been factors considered in evaluating a conductor’s nonverbal effectiveness (VanWeelden, 2002). Julian (1989) found that the perception of the conductor may be formed based on nonverbal behaviors on and off the podium. Nonverbal communication between a student and teacher is a constant and powerful force in any classroom but is particularly apparent between a conductor and ensemble.

Nonverbal messages are sent between people constantly. Effective teachers must be aware of the messages they send to the students. The teacher must also be adept at reading the nonverbal communication being received from the students. This requires a greater awareness of self and others for often the nonverbal and verbal messages will conflict. These nonverbal interactions are both an influential and a persuasive form of communication between teachers and students. This type of communication is constant and reciprocal in every human relationship. To be highly effective as an educator, each teacher should work to develop an awareness and useful vocabulary of nonverbal communication. According to Reece and Brandt (2008), “The important thing in communication is to hear what isn’t being said” (p. 35).

Self-Efficacy

High self-efficacy is another important characteristic for effective music teachers. Self-efficacy is the set of beliefs a person holds regarding his or her own capabilities to produce desired outcomes and influence events that affect his or her life (Bandura, 1986). These beliefs affect how people think and behave, the choices they make, the goals they set, and the courses of action they pursue. Self-efficacy beliefs help to ascertain the influences of self-motivation, expenditure of effort on an activity, and level of perseverance when faced with difficulties or obstacles. Perceived self-efficacy determines levels of confidence and emotional health as well as which factors are attributed to success and failure (Bandura, 1986, 1997).

In addition to individual efficacy, teacher efficacy is also central to effective teaching. Teacher efficacy is the set of beliefs a teacher holds regarding his or her own abilities and competencies to teach and influence student behavior and achievement regardless of outside influences or obstacles. It is the teacher’s perception of his or her own competence as well as the ability of teaching as a professional discipline to shape students’ knowledge, values, and behavior (Ashton & Webb, 1986; Guskey & Passaro, 1994; Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001). It is a task-specific measure and not a global personality trait and has been identified as a factor that relates most consistently to teaching and learning (Soodak & Podell, 1996; Woolfolk, Rosoff, & Hoy, 1990).

A teacher’s sense of efficacy can be an influence in many ways. It has been shown to influence many types of student outcomes including academic achievement (Ashton & Webb, 1986; Ross, 1992), motivation (Woolfolk et al., 1990), and the student’s own sense of self-efficacy (Anderson, Greene, & Loewen, 1988).
music research, self-efficacy has been shown to influence music performance (McPherson & McCormick, 2003, 2006), practice skills (Nielsen, 2004), and performance anxiety (Petrovich, 1989).

Teacher efficacy has also been shown to relate to teachers’ classroom behaviors such as the effort they put into planning and organization (Allinder, 1994), setting attainable goals (Ross, 1994), levels of aspiration, use of time (Soodak & Podell, 1996), classroom management strategy (Ashton & Webb, 1986; Emmer & Hickman, 1991), willingness to experiment with new methods to better meet the needs of their students (Guskey, 1988), and questioning techniques (Gibson & Dembo, 1984; Woolfolk et al., 1990). Efficacy has been found to influence teachers’ persistence when things are difficult and increase resiliency when there are setbacks (Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk Hoy, & Hoy, 1998). Highly efficacious teachers have been found to be less critical of students when they make mistakes (Ashton & Webb, 1986), to be more willing to work longer with students who are struggling (Gibson & Dembo, 1984), and to be less inclined to refer a difficult student to special education (Podell & Soodak, 1993). These teachers have also been found to have a greater commitment to teaching (Coladarci, 1992) and greater enthusiasm for teaching and are more likely to remain in teaching (Allinder, 1994; Guskey, 1984). The studies in teacher efficacy have revealed much information as to the expanse, influence, and effects of the construct as well as the importance of future study. As Frymier (1987) wrote, “In any attempt to improve education, teachers are central” (p. 9).

To develop high self- or teacher efficacy, one must understand where these beliefs originate. People’s beliefs about self-efficacy develop from four primary sources (Bandura, 1977, 1986, 1997). The first and most influential is through mastery experiences, which serve as indicators of capability. Success then builds belief in one’s capabilities and raises self-efficacy. To cultivate a strong sense of self-efficacy, individuals must have positive experiences in overcoming obstacles. These experiences teach that success usually requires hard work and perseverance. In music teacher education, it is very important that preservice teachers have opportunities to experience positive teaching experiences through peer teaching, conducting ensembles, and student teaching. As a teacher gains experience, if he or she feels successful, the self-efficacy will continue to increase. Once people believe they can be successful, they will persist in the face of difficulty and quickly recover from obstacles in the classroom or rehearsal.

Vicarious, or observational, learning, is the second mode of developing and strengthening self-efficacy. People assess their abilities in relation to the accomplishments of others (Bandura, 1986). The impact made on an individual’s self-efficacy through modeling largely depends on the perceived likeness to the model; the greater the perceived similarity, the greater the influence on efficacy beliefs. Seeing or visualizing similar people successfully perform can raise self-efficacy in the observers, believing that they too possess the abilities to master similar activities (Bandura, Adams, Hardy, & Howells, 1980). Incorporating peer teaching and conducting in teacher education programs as well as opportunities to observe young teachers can contribute to increasing preservice music teachers’ self-efficacy. In-service teachers can also benefit from observing peers in the schools and in special situations such as conference presentations, concerts, and so on. Vicarious experiences are generally weaker than mastery experiences; however, “they can produce significant, enduring changes through their effects on performance” (Bandura, 1986, p. 400).

The third means of increasing self-efficacy is through social persuasion, which is a means of increasing people’s beliefs that they possess the capabilities to accomplish their goals. “People are led, through suggestion, into believing they can cope successfully with what has overwhelmed them in the past” (Bandura, 1977, p. 198). People can be convinced to try harder to succeed and therefore enable skill attainment and successful performance that results in heightened efficacy beliefs. The positive reinforcement offered by faculty, mentors, supervisors, and peers can contribute to higher teacher efficacy. Self-efficacy expectations created in this manner may be weaker than those created from mastery experiences because they do not originate from actual accomplishments.

Self-efficacy beliefs are also derived from physiological and emotional states. People rely on information conveyed through these states to judge their capabilities. Extreme emotional or physiological reactions can be debilitating and often indicate to people a lack of ability or an indicator of poor performance. Self-efficacy can be raised through reducing both stress reactions and the misinterpretation of physical reactions. It is the interpretation, not the magnitude of the emotional or physiological states, that is important. Coping strategies can be learned to overcome negative perceptions and raise both performance and efficacy levels (Bandura, 1997).

Self-efficacy is a powerful force in many human activities, including teaching music. People tend to be only as successful and effective as they believe they are. As Bandura (n.d.) stated, “People who regard themselves as highly efficacious act, think, and feel differently from those who perceive themselves as inefficacious. They produce their own future, rather than simply foretell it.”
**Servant Leadership**

Leadership is an important skill needed by teachers. Teachers provide leadership in the classroom, the school, and the community (Armstrong & Armstrong, 1996; Battisti, 1999; Bowman, 2005; Colwell, 1992; Wis, 2002). Battisti (1999) stated that it is the teacher’s responsibility to lead his or her students to achieve their potential and to lead the parents in being active supporters through effective modeling. As Napoleon Bonaparte once said, “The art of choosing men is not nearly as difficult as the art of enabling those one has chosen to attain their full worth” (as cited in Koestenbaum, 2002, p. 55).

One form of leadership that has been shown to be very effective in the classroom is servant leadership. The concept of servant leadership has existed for a long time and can be seen in the actions and teachings of many historical leaders. The term **servant leadership** was not utilized until the 1970s, when it was coined by Robert Greenleaf (1977) in an essay titled “The Servant as Leader.” He wrote,

> A servant leader is servant first. . . . It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. That person is sharply different from one who is leader first, perhaps because of the need to assuage an unusual power drive or to acquire material possessions. For such, it will be a later choice to serve-after leadership is established. . . . The difference manifests itself in the care taken by the servant leader to make sure that other people’s highest priority needs are being served. The best test, and difficult to administer, is: Do those served grow as persons? Do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants? (pp. 13-14)

A servant leader is one who is focused on others rather than himself or herself and puts the needs of the organization first (Greenleaf, 1977, 1998; Herman & Marlowe, 2005; Jennings & Stahl-Wert, 2003; Keith, 1994; Shugart, 1997). Other traits demonstrated by servant leaders include humility, honesty, trust (Bowman, 2005), compassion, understanding, selflessness (Keith, 1994), openness, stewardship (Bennett, 2001), passion, responsibility, and vision (Wis, 2002). Behaviors exhibited by servant leaders include caring, open communication, empathy, autonomy, an appreciation of cultural differences, enhanced self-awareness, equitable decision making, and faithful service (Brendel, Kolbert, & Foster, 2002; Herman & Marlowe, 2005). In 1998, Larry Spears, CEO of the nonprofit Robert K. Greenleaf Center for Servant Leadership, presented 10 characteristics of servant leadership formulated by the center. They included the ability to listen, heal, persuade, conceptualize, develop, dream, trust and build, communicate, evolve, and promote (Spears, 1998). Although the description of servant leadership characteristics can be extensive, servant leadership is primarily about “focusing on people, principles and the ‘big picture’” (Wis, 2002, p. 22).

All of these traits and behaviors demonstrate the usefulness of servant leadership by teachers in the classroom. “Servant leadership in the classroom speaks to the universal human longing to be known, to care, and to be cared for in pursuit of the common good” (Bowman, 2005, p. 257). Teachers as servant leaders create a classroom environment of trust, service, and community (Bowman, 2005; Greenleaf, 1977, 1998; Jennings & Stahl-Wert, 2003; Keith, 1994; Pinchot, 1998; Shugart, 1997). These leaders also work to empower the group or team (Brody, 1995) and give time and consideration to students’ other interests and ideas (Bowman, 2005). According to Covey (1990), servant leadership is primarily focused on the students. Wis (2002) wrote, “If the teacher always asks ‘what is best for the students?’ he or she is leading by serving the students before considering personal needs and desires” (p. 20). It is a goal of servant leader teachers to create a “community of caring” (Herman & Marlowe, 2005, p. 175). The teacher as servant leader models desirable attitudes, behaviors, and skills to the students and sets high standards for all (Bowman, 2005; Wis, 2002). They “help others discover latent, unformed interests” and remove “obstacles that thwart students’ discovery and development of their talents” (Bowman, 2005, p. 258).

According to Jennings and Stahl-Wert (2003), there are five basic principles for being an effective servant leader in the classroom. The first is that the teachers “run to great purpose” (p. 100) or have a significant purpose in mind. Second, the teacher as servant leader “unleashes the strengths, talents, and passions of those he or she serves” (p. 14). The third principle involves setting high standards of performance and modeling the skills and attitudes they teach. “They function as the very leaders of character that they wish to find in the world” (Bowman, 2005, p. 258). Fourth is “to address your weaknesses, build on your strengths” (Jennings & Stahl-Wert, 2003, p. 102). The final principle is to “put oneself at the bottom of the pyramid so that one can focus on unleashing the energy, excitement, and talents of those being served” (Jennings & Stahl-Wert, 2003, p. 102). This requires that teachers focus on the developmental needs of all the learners as well as examine their own teaching styles (Bowman, 2005, p. 259). Servant leadership has the potential to bring out the best in the teacher and the students. As Keith (1994) wrote, “Servant leadership has the potential to bring out the best in the teacher and the students.”
leadership is the best kind of leadership for both the leader and the led” (p. 12). This style of leadership can be successfully utilized in any situation that requires strong leadership.

Renowned conductor and music educator Frank Battisti (1999) wrote that “effective teachers must be strong leaders” (p. 40) and that “leadership is a necessary quality for music educators if music education is to thrive” (p. 38). A music classroom is a unique environment in which a teacher’s effective leadership and modeling can incite motivation, excitement, and passion. Leonard Bernstein (1963) wrote,

The conductor must not only make the orchestra play, he must make them want to play. . . . He must exalt them, lift them, start their adrenaline pouring . . . he must make the orchestra love the music as he loves it. It is not so much imposing his will on them like a dictator, it is more like projecting his feelings around him so that they reach the last man in the second violin section. (p. 150)

Traits associated with strong leadership in music education include enthusiasm for leading, ability to motivate others, compassion (Armstrong & Armstrong, 1996), passion for music, vision, public relations skills, vitality, commitment, a sense of responsibility, confidence, courage, sense of community, communication skills, positive attitude, self-discipline, desire for excellence, fairness, respect, and ability to delegate (Battisti, 1999). Although these traits describe an effective leader in music education, they also share many commonalities with servant leadership.

Servant leadership may also be an ideal form of leadership for music educators and teacher–conductors. This style of leadership allows for the development of a community atmosphere in the classroom or rehearsal in which everyone is striving for improvement by working together. Wis (2002) wrote,

This kind of conductor rejects the notion that leaders must be autocratic and trusts that all the musical goals will be reached if the focus is on serving, the musicians and the music. Thus, serving involves using ones gifts in ways that add value to others’ gifts. (p. 20)

Although the objective of the music classroom is to teach music, the teacher as servant leader focuses first on the students and their abilities, ideas, and desires. The music educator or teacher–conductor as servant leader displays certain characteristics, including service, vision, responsiveness, trust, the ability to persuade, and strong character (Wis, 2002). According to Covey (1990), servant leaders work to improve “from the inside out” (p. 34). The music educator as servant leader has a unique power to influence lives through service and music with the hope of inspiring some of the students to do the same. According to Lippmann, “The final test of a leader is that he leaves behind him in other men the conviction and the will to carry on” (quoted in Bartlett, 1980, p. 813).

Effective leadership in the classroom is a necessity for effective teaching. Servant leadership is a style of leadership with great benefits for the students and the teacher. The teacher never stops learning and improving, and the students are the center of attention, with their needs being placed first. Servant leadership is one style of leadership that might be effective in education. As Goodstein (1987) stated, “A more thorough understanding of teacher leadership behavior will help educators improve teacher effectiveness” (p. 13).

Conclusion

Effective schools need effective teachers; however, there is no definite formula for what makes an effective teacher. These individuals display a myriad of characteristics and behaviors. This article has discussed three characteristics often displayed by effective teachers. First, nonverbal communication, including proxemics, coverbal behaviors, and paralanguage, can easily, quietly, and effectively be used for classroom management, relating and giving feedback to students, and music instruction through modeling and conducting. Second, teacher self-efficacy, the beliefs a teacher holds regarding his or her own teaching ability, has a direct impact on teacher effectiveness and student outcomes in the classroom and rehearsal. A music teacher with high teacher self-efficacy will usually put more effort into planning and setting goals, have better classroom management, be more flexible in instructional methods, be less critical of students when they make mistakes, and have greater commitment and enthusiasm for teaching. Third, a music teacher as servant leader is focused on the students and their abilities, ideas, potential, and desires, on building a caring, learning community, on setting high standards, and on displaying great passion and enthusiasm for music teaching. Each of these three characteristics is a valuable tool for music educators and can help teachers to create healthy, excited, motivated, and musical classrooms. Adams (1973) wrote, “A teacher affects eternity: he can never tell where his influence stops” (p. 300). For this reason, effective teachers are a necessity, and the study of the related characteristics needs to be continued.

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Several years ago, an elementary school principal decided to organize a school-wide spring event. The project suffered setback after setback. Finally, a first-year music teacher volunteered to take over the project. The principal was skeptical. He told the young woman that although he appreciated her interest, he wondered whether she was qualified to put together a project of this magnitude. Undaunted, the teacher replied that she had participated in many conferences and workshops as part of her leadership role in her collegiate MENC chapter, and as a result, she had every confidence she could manage this activity. The principal agreed to let the teacher try. She took over the project and managed it so effectively that the principal publicly recognized her and those responsible for her leadership training.

Bill McCloud, a professor of music education at Appalachian State University in Boone, North Carolina, told this story to illustrate how student leaders in MENC collegiate chapters can go on to become leaders as teachers. "I believe that every teacher and especially every music teacher must be a leader," he said. "The continued success of our profession depends on it."

That said, how can MENC collegiate members learn to be leaders? It begins with the adviser—he or she must model the leadership skills that students are expected to develop.

Harriet Hair, a music education professor at the University of Georgia in Athens, Georgia, and a collegiate chapter adviser for more than twenty years, says that a good collegiate adviser should be an active MENC member, knowledgeable about the MENC Collegiate Chapter Handbook, and committed to accept the responsibility of the adviser position. "As Alia Lawson, a former teacher, once told me, success in teaching consists of the three B's—not Bach, Beethoven, and Brahms—but being on time, being prepared, and being there for the students," said Hair.

A collegiate chapter adviser must also be creative, enthusiastic, and willing to take the initiative, according to Diane DeNicola Orlofsky, an associate professor of music education at Troy State University in Troy, Alabama, and a collegiate chapter adviser for ten years. "You must take the initiative in getting students started as leaders of their collegiate chapters," she said. Although she is not serving as chapter adviser this year, in the past DeNicola Orlofsky held a get-together at her home every spring after the new officers had been elected for the following year. This brainstorming session would result in a skeletal outline for the following year. DeNicola Orlofsky would then send each student a letter over the summer, reviewing what had been discussed at the meeting, and the
fall semester would begin with each student fully aware of his or her responsibilities.

Russell Robinson, a professor of music education at the University of Florida in Gainesville, Florida, and president of the Florida Music Educators Association, also stresses the importance of modeling. "Just as with an ensemble, the morale and organization of a group will be the reflection of the adviser," he said.

The next step in developing student leaders is to turn the reins of leadership over to the students themselves. "On occasion, we invite leadership specialists to speak at our weekly chapter meetings, and we also sponsor a two-day leadership training workshop each September," said McCloud, who is in his thirtieth year as chapter adviser. "In addition, students are assigned to develop and chair weekly programs, special projects, and activities. It's very important to closely monitor and nurture students' progress during their first attempts at leadership and to help them understand that there are effective and ineffective leadership styles."

Robinson, who serves as director of the University of Florida Invitational Choral Festival, appoints one of his collegiate chapter members as assistant director and has the entire chapter run the festival. He said that advisers who do not offer their students leadership opportunities would be amazed at how well students perform if given the chance. "When students are treated like adults and are allowed to run with a project, they develop their own leadership style and learn to negotiate with other members of a group," he said. "They start to feel like professionals and not just mere students."

Nurturing student leaders takes time, according to Hair. "The adviser needs to set regular appointments with the student officers to discuss the progress of plans for meetings, membership concerns, and ideas for motivating members," she emphasizes. "Developing a good rapport with the officers gives them a model for establishing a good rapport with other chapter members."

Some students are natural leaders, but others need extra encouragement. Often this can be given simply by talking with the student. DeNicola Orlofsky says: "If I see a student with leadership potential who seems a little reluctant to use it, I will speak to the student. I might use the old standby 'A leadership position in your collegiate MENC chapter looks good on your vita.' It does!"

Effective student leaders must also be aware of what's currently happening in their profession. This means attending conferences and workshops, learning about the National Standards, and reading their state and national professional journals. Advisers must be prepared to update students on the bad, as well as the good, developments in the music education profession. For instance, the governor of Alabama recently made an attempt to return all the money the state had received from the federal government under the Goals 2000 legislation, saying that he wanted nothing to do with it. "I think you need to inform students of current trends and issues," said DeNicola Orlofsky. "Sometimes I think we shelter the kids, telling them that everything will be all right. Well, things might not be all right unless they roll up their sleeves and do something about it."

The bottom line, according to Robinson, is that these collegiate members are the future of MENC and of the profession. "Make students a part of the process now, and the profession will carry on with informed and active professionals," he urges. "Talk with students, not down to them. Work with them; don't have them work for you. Give them guidance, but let them run the organization. All of us in MENC must realize that one-fifth of our membership is the students in collegiate MENC chapters. We must treat them as colleagues now, not wait until they graduate."

Editor's note: Bill McCloud, Harriet Hair, Diane DeNicola Orlofsky, and Russell Robinson are all past national chairs of MENC Collegiate Membership.

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Music Advocacy and Student Leadership: Key Components of Every Successful Music Program
Roberta Volkmann
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What is This?

Praxial Music Education: Reflections and Dialogues is a collection of essays on the praxial philosophy of music and music education set forth by David J. Elliott in Music Matters: A New Philosophy of Music Education (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995). Although familiarity with the previous book will enhance understanding, it is not a prerequisite for appreciation or enjoyment of Praxial Music Education.

Essays in this new book, written by a diverse group of internationally renowned music education scholars on a wide variety of contemporary music education topics, are carefully reasoned and well written. However, the real beauty of this collection of writings can be found in the diversity of perspectives and opinions presented. Elliott courageously includes authors who do not agree with him on all philosophical matters, and he obviously believes strongly that "critical thinking, constructive debate, and dialogues are the lifeblood of music education" (p. 4). Consequently, he sets an impressive example for all of us by initiating and participating in real and meaningful dialogues among music educators in his book and accompanying Web site.

Elliott begins Praxial Music Education with a concise overview of praxial philosophy—a multidimensional philosophy that focuses primarily on music making and musicianship, about which "verbal knowledge about music is secondary to procedural knowledge in music education" (p. 11). Elliott's summary will be an excellent review for readers who are familiar with Music Matters, as well as a clear and concise introduction for those who are not. In each of the sixteen chapters in Praxial Music Education, a variety of authors offers their unique perspectives on the praxial philosophy.

These essays contain a wealth of compelling and thought-provoking information and ideas. For example, Marie McCarthy and Scott Goble's essay, "The Praxial Philosophy in Historical Perspective," is the best overview of modern music education's philosophical evolution that I have ever read. It should be required reading for all undergraduate and graduate music education students. Also particularly noteworthy are Constantijn Koopman's essay, "The Nature of Music and Musical Works," in which, among other things, he challenges Elliott's "claim to universality" for the praxial philosophy (p. 94), and Patricia O'Toole's engaging and personal essay, "Why Don't I Feel Included in These Musics, or Matters?" which considers music education philosophy from a variety of contexts that are not often included in discussions of music education philosophy.

Elliott's book, in combination with the accompanying Praxial Music Education (PME) Web site (http://education .nyu.edu/music/musicmat), is "an effort to contribute to critical thinking about the foundations of music education" (PME Web site). Although the chapters of the book do not necessarily fall neatly into categories, Elliott has organized the Web site by the following topics: Foundational Issues, Musicing and Listening, Values and Affect, Body-Mind, Multicultural Music Education, Musical Creativity, Music and Identity, and Curriculum. His personal responses to each of the essays can be found on the Web site. As he receives feedback from the book's authors and other "interested readers and colleagues" (p. 5), this Web site may very well become a space in which music education philosophy can live and grow.

There is something for everyone in this book—those who identify with music education as aesthetic education, those who connect more closely with praxial philosophy, and those who may not have yet given formal music education philosophy a single thought. I thoroughly enjoyed Praxial Music Education: Reflections and Dialogues, and I highly recommend it to any music educator. We are all invited and empowered to join the conversation.

—Joelle L. Lien, assistant professor of music education at the University of Utah in Salt Lake City, can be reached at joelle.lien@music.utah.edu.


Music Advocacy and Student Leadership is a collection of short essays by Tim Lautzenheiser that covers four topics: advocacy for music educators, advocacy for music education, the selection and development of effective student leaders, and the band director as a leader.

In the five essays in part 1, "Advocacy for Music Educators," Lautzenheiser addresses the current shortage of music teachers by describing how and why experienced music educators can be role models who inspire others to follow in their career. Part 2, "Advocacy for Music Education," offers nine chapters with strategies for generating support for music programs. This section provides a dramatic illustration of how quickly music education advocacy issues change.
Although the book has a copyright of 2005, no suggestions are made for confronting a current challenge for many music programs—the ramifications of the No Child Left Behind Act. Furthermore, some of the research the author cites for support in advocacy efforts has been refuted in recent years.

While all music educators may find useful information in the first two parts of Music Advocacy and Student Leadership, the last two sections address issues relevant primarily to teachers of performing ensembles. As the title “The Selection and Development of Effective Student Leaders” suggests, part 3 includes six essays that describe qualities of ideal student leaders. Examples of traits possessed by the author’s model student include selflessness, persistence, consistency, affability, honesty, faithfulness, loyalty, independence, and cooperativeness. Readers who are experienced ensemble directors will undoubtedly question the likelihood of identifying an individual middle or high school student who exhibits most of the qualities the author suggests.

The last section, “The Band Director as Leader,” speaks to band directors only. The nine chapters cover such diverse topics as positive competition, professional cooperation, and personal qualities of a successful band director. Readers who are not band directors may feel they have intruded on a private world when they read such passages as “as we all know, Mr. Paynter never missed a ‘teaching opportunity’” (p. 126).

Many of the essays have been adapted from columns the author has written for trade journals, and they maintain the brevity and simplicity of periodical articles. Some are fewer than two pages long. With a profusion of white space and twenty-five of the 138 pages devoted to introductory and biographical material, the thin volume is a quick read. Bulleted lists and catchy acronyms organize the pithy informational and inspirational advice. The overall format of the book is evocative of the Chicken Soup books and similar self-help books that are so popular today.

—Roberta Volkman, an arts education consultant in Springfield, Illinois, can be reached at ArtsEducation@aol.com.


As stated on the back cover, this book is a “comprehensive guide to teaching vocal technique through designing an efficient choral warm-up that gives the choir ‘tools’ to sing and hear better.” It includes such topics as alignment and body mapping, inhalation, exhalation, support, resonance, vowel colors, leaps, range extension, crescendo/decrescendo, martellato, staccato, diction, rhythm and tempo, and intonation.

Conductors of all kinds of choirs (e.g., amateur, professional, children’s, educational, church, or community) will benefit from this book. It contains many useful charts, diagrams, photographs, and drawings that clearly illustrate the materials presented, an area where other books on choral technique fall short. Many of these valuable illustrations can be taken into the rehearsal room to assist conductors and students.

One helpful chapter in the book depicts the six points of alignment and the practice of body mapping, a process based on the Alexander Technique. Chapter 15 includes physical gestures to reinforce choral warm-up and produce immediate results in improving the sound of the choir.

In addition to a chapter dedicated to how to propel a musical line based on the work of Rudolf von Laban (a noted Hungarian choreographer), Jordan also discusses strategies for teaching rhythm. The author states that a choir must experience rhythm on three distinct levels: macrobeats, microbeats, and melodic rhythm.

Some choral conductors will enjoy the troubleshooting chart containing thirteen pages of problems, symptoms, and solutions. These pages, taken from Jordan’s vast experience as a choral conductor and educator, will be beneficial for conductors who know what the problem is but are uncertain how to fix it.

Marilyn Shenkenberger contributes to the text by providing carefully planned choral warm-up exercises with thumbnail sketches, piano accompaniments, and even modulations to assist the conductor. These accompaniments are both written and presented on a CD included with the book.

The author, James Jordan, is recognized as one of the nation’s preeminent conductors, writers, and innovators in choral teaching. Throughout the book, references are made to many of his other well-written books, including The Musician’s Soul, The Musician’s Spirit, Evoking Sound: Fundamentals of Choral Conducting and Rehearsing, and Choral Ensemble Intonation: Method, Ensemble, and Exercises.

I would recommend this book to all choral conductors who wish to enrich the sound and musical understanding of the choirs they conduct.

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Motivation and the Master Music Teacher
Tim Lautzenheiser
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Motivation and the Master

by Tim Lautzenheiser

While the rest of society is in a race, demanding instant gratification and doing everything at high speed, master music teachers avoid this well-worn path. They know there are no shortcuts to success. Only through musicianship, hard work, perseverance, and, above all, a masterful understanding of motivation are they able to get students excited about their classes and bring a sense of positive unity to their groups.

Tim Lautzenheiser, a clinician and speaker, is the founder of Attitude Concepts for Today, through which he conducts workshops and seminars for students and teachers.

Understanding motivation

Many teachers believe they must “motivate the students.” It sounds so simple, so clear, so neatly packaged. Yet, as master music teachers know, that very statement contains a lie: we cannot motivate another individual, certainly in any intrinsic way, which is real motivation. We can coerce, manipulate, bribe, coax, threaten, but in every situation the individual is ultimately responsible for the choice to move in a given direction. The only true form of motivation is self-motivation! This is solely the choice of the person in question. Master music teachers do not waste energy dwelling on what cannot be done; they look at what can be done to insure that students will want to motivate themselves to seek excellence in the development of their musical talents and skills. Above all, master music teachers know that they cannot understand others’ motivational habits until they understand their own.

Haven’t we all enviably watched the master teacher and inwardly thought, “He (or she) is so fortunate to have such an abundance of personal motivation!” We all know that fellow teacher who is always organized, has taken time to create a five-year plan, manages to practice an hour each day, directs the church choir, has a weed-
less garden, and serves as the president of the state music educators association, while administrating a massive music program at both the public school and the community levels! Of course, this same person has four model children and teaches sixteen private lessons per week while chairing the faculty negotiating committee. Certainly this individual is enjoying the positive rewards of a tremendous level of personal motivation. This is not just luck, by any stretch of the imagination. Self-motivation is the result of developing a set of controlled habits that will lead to a desired set of goals. Success at this level is available to everyone—no exceptions!

It sounds easy, doesn’t it? All we need to do is set some goals, outline some success patterns, add a few tons of self-discipline, and abracadabra: music wonderment forevermore! The obvious question is, if this is so easy and the information is so available, why can’t all music teachers achieve this level of motivation?

Obstacles to motivation

The first line of M. Scott Peck’s wonderful book The Road Less Traveled is “Life is tough.” Peck explains why people fail and where we predictably stumble along our journey. He concludes that the human is basically a lazy creature. As a result, we are always trying to get organized, constantly fighting our own desire to give up, quit, blame, avoid, sidestep, and take all the other actions that basically represent the easy way out. Simply put, “We find it more natural to choose tension-relieving over goal-achieving.” The self-discipline needed to reverse this trend is a “learned habit,” not something we simply have or don’t have as a result of our genetic makeup. That sounds dismal at first, but it is really quite the opposite.

Like all high achievers, the master music teacher has learned habits for success by skillfully and pragmatically choosing goal-achieving actions. The results of these efforts produce task completion, which serves as fuel, or motivation, for future tasks.

According to some research, the subconscious mind cannot discriminate between fact and fiction. If we program our subconscious mind for goal attainment and are willing to fuel it, we will literally become what we think we are. Abraham Maslow, the renowned psychologist, says this is the greatest discovery of the twentieth century: “We have the choice to become whatever we want to be.” In colloquial terms, whether we think we can or we think we can’t, we’re always right. In reality, a person’s motivational pattern is self-determined.

Delaying gratification

The number one reason people fail to succeed, or succeed in failing, centers on the inability to delay gratification. When this becomes a habit, it reinforces itself through day-to-day behavior, forming a solid belief system that the mind will protect at all costs. To alter these patterns, the master music teacher creates new positive habits and consciously brings them into reality. You simply cannot quit a habit—it must be replaced by another behavior.

Understanding the roadblocks to creating positive habits of self-motivation may be the most effective way of insuring success. Brian Tracy, a consultant in the area of high achievement and motivation, spotlights these human characteristics, or roadblocks, in all of us. He is quick to add that these are not “good or bad,” but simply things we have within us to deal with at all times.

• We are always looking for the easiest way to get the job done.
• We always want to get more for less. We’re bargain-oriented. “Can you give me a deal so I won’t have to pay the going rate?”
• We are always seeking ways to better our present circumstances. Every action has a personal benefit to the human.
• We are self-centered, and our point of view is protected at all costs. Remember, survival is the bottom level of Maslow’s “hierarchy of needs.”
• We are all incompetent in many areas and base all of our decisions on incomplete data.
• We are vain. We all believe
nobody understands as we do.

Motivated master music teachers have all of these characteristics, too, but they choose to use them in a positive fashion that often requires delayed gratification; rather than throwing up their arms in frustration and allowing their circumstances to control their lives, their chosen lives control their circumstances.

Some positive habits

Master music teachers have these characteristics:

- **They have a clear sense of purpose.** The mind is like a homing pigeon. Without goals, it will drift aimlessly or be directed by the inflicted goals of another. The motivated person has clearly defined, specifically timed goals. The more detailed they are, the greater the chance of attainment. Goals create a need for self-motivation. Notice how a group will rehearse with more intensity the closer they get to the concert date. The goal is becoming more discernible! It is difficult to hit a target you cannot see.

- **They are consistently persistent.** Master music teachers methodically go about problem-solving each day. The “tortoise and hare” story comes into play, with the faithful turtle winning once again. Master music teachers do what needs to be done, when it needs to be done, whether they want to do it or not.

- **Self-analysis is a way of life for them.** Weaknesses and strengths are constantly being evaluated, supported, improved. Master music teachers understand that self-discovery is a lifelong journey and that true understanding comes when they admit their shortcomings and insecurities, then take on the task of self-improvement. Since they understand that they cannot give away what they do not have, they are committed to bringing new insights to their lives. They do this by avoiding negative patterns while taking calculated risks.

- **They are perpetual seekers and learners.** Master music teachers spend little, if any, effort on pre-judgment, blame, or revenge. They would rather use the effort and energy for a greater understanding and awareness of another’s opinion. They continue to open their minds to new thoughts while making careful distinctions in their forward progress. They represent the epitome of the one-brick-at-a-time building process.

- **They exude a high level of emotional maturity.** Master music teachers always begin by accepting the present circumstances; they allow people to be who they are, without conditions. They express their thoughts and emotions without cynicism and sarcasm, in a constructive fashion, always allowing the other person to maintain dignity regardless of the situation.

- **They are not afraid to fail.** In fact, many master music teachers almost invite failure, because the knowledge it brings means one less obstacle on the path to success. They understand and use failure to their advantage in accomplishing their given task. They are also quick to encourage others when they fail, and they refuse to play the game of one-upmanship.

- **They fuel their motivation with self-discipline.** Master music teachers know if they do not commit to excellence, they will be doomed to mediocrity, and they are acutely aware of the enemies of self-discipline: complacency, entropy/laziness, and satisfaction with being just average. And they know this path of excellence is the journey, not the destination. Everyone uses different techniques to motivate themselves. If these motivating techniques are built on a positive value system, then the habits are imprinted in the subconscious mind accordingly.

Reading this article won’t motivate you, but it might provoke some thought that will encourage you to create some positive habits. Master music teachers have developed such habits to reach their goals. Remember, the success that master music teachers have attained is available to you if you are persistent and self-motivated.

The formula for success that master music teachers use in their lives is clear:

*Thoughts lead to actions, which create habits that determine our character, which brings about our destiny.*
From the Editor
Diane Persellin
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What is This?
From the Editor

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ually this space is used to review the contents of the issue of General Music Today. This time, however, I have chosen to call your attention to a book that I reread this summer and found to be most intriguing both personally and professionally. Reading for pleasure can be a luxury, but if you have time to read only one book this fall, I recommend The Art of Possibility: Transforming Professional and Personal Life. This book was written by Benjamin Zander, the conductor of the Boston Philharmonic Orchestra and professor at the New England Conservatory of Music, and his wife, Rosamund Stone Zander, a psychotherapist.

A successful orchestra conductor, teacher, and speaker, Benjamin Zander is sought after to give his unique and passionate presentations on leadership and creativity to managers and executives around the world. Rosamund Zander works within her private family therapy practice to address issues and conflicts of people in various settings. Together, they have written a book that synthesizes the diverse worlds of music and psychology.

This book is more than a feel-good, pop psychology book. The Art of Possibility guides you to see the events in your life as possibilities rather than problems. Here is a story illustrating that how you think about an event can make a difference:

A shoe factory sent two marketing scouts to a region of Africa to study the prospects for expanding business. One sent back a telegram saying, “SITUATION HOPELESS STOP NO ONE WEARS SHOES.” The other wrote back triumphantly, “GLORIOUS BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY STOP THEY HAVE NO SHOES” (p. 9).

While the first scout saw only a hopeless situation, the second saw the same situation as one of great possibility. How many times do we look at an event and size it up as hopeless without seeing the possibility of an opportunity? As music educators, we are daily invited to create our own interpretations of situations. There may be a new curricular challenge that we must meet, an unusual schedule for our classes or performances, or some other new situation in our lives that we must handle.

The Zanders present ways to shift our perspective on these events through what they term “a series of practices.” While these practices are simple, they are not easy. Each chapter illustrates one of these practices, which include “Leading from Any Chair,” “Being a Contribution,” and “Giving an A.” Parables and anecdotes from the authors’ experiences are used to illustrate these practices. Many stories deal with Mr. Zander’s experiences teaching children and conducting professional musicians, which make this book especially relevant to music educators.

In the chapter “Giving an A,” for example, Mr. Zander shares a classroom technique that allows his students to envision their own futures. At the beginning of the term, students in his class will all receive an A if they write him a postdated letter describing what they will have accomplished by the end of the term to justify this grade. The letters by his students describing their success—and then their hard work to achieve this success—are remarkable.

In another scenario, Mr. Zander asked middle and high school students to write about the similarities between their lives with music and the NASA program. He then shared these letters with NASA employees. One fourteen-year-old wrote: “The world counts on you to open up new possibilities and discover what we humans can do … The only time when music or space has boundaries is when humans create them. Thank you for keeping the possibilities alive.” A sixteen-year-old wrote: “You have the responsibility
to push thinking and ideas beyond limits, into the ethers, through the nothing into the something. … Music is similar to space, it is an exploration, a responsibility to push through the confines of pages of music, to go as far and as fast as the mind will work” (p. 176). Ultimately, letters such as these were placed on a CD-ROM and are now circling the Earth on the International Space Station. The letters will continue to inspire the builders and inhabitants of the Space Station during the long periods of isolation when they face their greatest challenges in space.

Mr. Zander’s experience of creating a residency with the Philharmonia of London and then collaborating with an inner-city school was also memorable. The eleven hundred children were obviously restless and unruly during the first concert. But some of these children were fascinated by this music and the concert experience. Additional children became intrigued as Mr. Zander and the orchestral musicians continued to involve them in some of the musical decision making both before and during the concerts. By the third interactive concert, BBC filmed a captivated audience of enthusiastic students who had been transformed by this residency. This was a wonderful testimony to the power of music and good teaching.

The Art of Possibility is a book that encourages us to become passionate communicators, leaders, teachers, and performers in the world. It’s available in both hardcover and paperback. You will be challenged, inspired, and perhaps even transformed. Let me know what you think.


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Redefining Teacher Education: The Theories of Jerome Bruner and the Practice of Training Teachers

Alice M. Hammel

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What is This?

This thought-provoking book is an excellent bridge between the theories of Jerome Bruner and the realities of teacher education. Diane Orlofsky writes in a conversational, yet scholarly tone, as she uses her own experiences as student, educator, and researcher to create a resource that commends educators while challenging the profession to make thoughtful transformations in curricula, classroom and field experience structure, and the continuing development of music educators.

Orlofsky leads us through a series of essays and reflections that provide vivid examples of the teacher education profession and the current state of undergraduate education. With a refreshingly honest, yet positive approach, Orlofsky gently asks the reader to examine philosophy and theory-to-practice connections made in individual classrooms. These connections are then examined in light of the theories of Bruner and other educators who ask us to reflect upon our own experiences and continue to improve our teaching.

While many sources advocate sweeping changes in university-wide practices and national delivery models, Orlofsky asks us to seek to improve the practices and delivery models in our individual classrooms—one student at a time. Her approach places the responsibility for quality teacher education on the teacher educators: a startling, yet exhilarating paradigm shift. Her vignettes and examples congratulate teacher educators on their successes and strengths, as well as challenge us to continually seek to improve upon our methods, materials, and delivery systems as we prepare music educators.

The book has one minor weakness from the perspective of a music educator. Many of the examples used in the book are nonmusical. It is sometimes difficult for those beginning to “teach for transfer” to transfer nonmusical examples to musical situations. While the book can be used by both music and nonmusic teachers, the music educator might benefit from an increased emphasis on situations specific to music education. This small point, however, does not detract from the overall effectiveness of the book as an excellent teaching and learning tool.

This source is unique in that it can be used as a text, particularly in a graduate-level course designed to prepare future teacher educators, and it can also be used by teacher educators as part of a continued reflection on our own teaching philosophy and practice. As teacher educators, we often seek materials to sate our intellectual curiosity and stimulate the continuing development of our teaching and thinking skills. Orlofsky provides us with an excellent resource that invites us to reflect on the relationship between our philosophy and practice. She then challenges us to actively demonstrate this relationship as part of our daily communication with our students and colleagues as we create an environment of mutual trust, classrooms infused with true enthusiasm for teaching and learning, and honest discourse between teachers, colleagues, and students.

—Alice M. Hammel, Director of Educational Programs, Musicate, can be reached at hammelab@erols.com.


The third edition of Bennett Reimer's A Philosophy of Music Education: Advancing the Vision does exactly what the title says: it refocuses the author's philosophy of aesthetic education from the earlier editions of the book to meet the needs and conditions of current times. The philosophy is now framed in the light of a society that has evolved significantly during the last few decades. Reimer writes: “Aesthetic education, as I conceive it ... is changeable and flexible, attempting to capture the best thinking about music and to apply it to practices of music education” (p. 10). Specifically, Reimer describes music education philosophy in the context of the National Standards for Music Education. He was a member of the prestigious committee that wrote the Standards.

A theme that runs through the book is the need for conciliation and synergistic resolutions to opposing philosophical positions, rather than antagonistic standoffs. Reimer states:

Synergism is compatible with pluralism but goes beyond it. A pluralistic stance ... recognizes that there are likely to be diverse positions. ... But it does little more, simply accepting, and attempting to live with the diversity. ... [Synergism] makes something of diversity, attempting to do what philosophical work should do, probing beneath the surface of differing positions for what makes them tick and how they might, in ways not always obvious, be less antagonistic toward each other than a surface view of them would reveal. Synergism is a thoughtful, probing, analytical form of pluralism. (p. 33)

One of the especially impressive sections is the description of postmodernism and its role in setting the stage for the development of an education
The Conductor as Servant-Leader

By Ramona M. Wis

The conductor of an ensemble is, by definition, a leader. With a gesture or move of the baton, conductors decide when the sound starts and stops. They make the large-scale decisions regarding choice of repertoire, curriculum, and program design, as well as the day-to-day decisions focusing on the methodology used in rehearsal. In preparation for this role, aspiring conductors complete undergraduate programs covering conducting technique, vocal and instrumental pedagogy, rehearsal methods, and how to be “in control” of the class—all designed to develop their ability to lead from the podium.

Yet something is missing. All these courses, techniques, and skills help music education majors become efficient and technically proficient, but do these things prepare them for the leadership role of conductor?

Where and when do conductors learn to lead? How do they develop leadership abilities, and from whom do they learn how to lead? What is the role of leadership as it relates to conductors, and how can their approach to leadership provide for the optimal ensemble experience?

The “servant-leader” paradigm applied to conductors provides a model for leadership that empowers ensemble members through positive influence, goals, and a vision for success.

Ramona M. Wis is the Mimi Rolland distinguished professor in the fine arts at North Central College in Naperville, Illinois, and visiting associate professor of music at Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois.
Roots of Leadership: The Development of a Personal Philosophy

Like so much of what is learned, an individual's approach to leadership can often be an amalgam of the styles of individual teachers and conductors to which one has been exposed over the years. Philosophies are absorbed, consciously or unconsciously, by experiencing each teacher's particular method of providing leadership. But to become a leader, each conductor must question the nature of those experiences (and the philosophies that underlie those experiences) to test if they reflect who the conductor is and what he or she believes. If inherited philosophies and, by extension, inherited approaches to leadership are not examined, conductors may simply imitate their teachers and may find themselves, sooner or later, teaching "through someone else's skin"—feeling unrewarded, uncomfortable, and dispassionate, not because they chose the wrong profession, but because they have no real understanding of the conductor's role.

The first step toward becoming a leader is to consciously examine one's beliefs about music—its nature, role, and power—and about teaching. Reading, reflecting on, and debating the writings of philosophers and educators in the field, especially within the context of a well-taught philosophy of music education course, can be life-changing. Without a consciously developed personal philosophy, there is little foundation on which to build personal leadership.

The second step toward becoming a leader is to purposefully study leadership. Though often aimed at the corporate environment, the field of leadership studies is fast-growing and offers much insight to the conductor who wishes to pursue excellence in leadership, as well as in artistry. The principles and practices found in the wealth of materials on this topic can easily be adapted and applied to the conductor's role as a leader (see the Resources on Leadership sidebar).

Leading vs. Managing

Before going further, it is important to define what is meant here by "leadership." Perhaps the best way to do this is to contrast leadership with management. While managers maintain a certain course, leaders have the ability to change course. Managers are focused on efficiency, whereas leaders are focused on effectiveness. Managers can get things done, but leaders have the ability to create a vision and inspire the momentum needed to move things forward. As Steven Covey says in Principle-Centered Leadership, we "manage things, but lead people."2

A new view of leadership from the podium is required if the ensemble is to grow and if its members are to function as artists rather than artisans.

As critical as they are to one's success, clean conducting, good diagnostic/prescriptive techniques, and the ability to keep the ensemble attentive are only the means to a much greater end. Without a larger goal for the ensemble experience, the conductor relying solely on these tools is, at best, a skillful manager of the musical experience. The major shortcoming of the skillful manager model is that it perpetuates the notion that the ensemble experience is the conductor's experience, that the artistic decision-making is, in the words of Bennett Reimer, the "sole prerogative"3 of the conductor. "When performance group directors ... are directing the music making of students but make all the decisions for them, ... those directors are creating, but their students are surely not," observes Reimer.4 With this model, the musical growth and aesthetic experience also belong primarily to the conductor, clearly making the ensemble experience only tangentially educational for the ensemble and leaving little room for individual or collective growth.

Conductors must be skilled, and their role indisputably charges them with many management tasks. But those skills and managerial abilities must be subordinated to the role of leader. At the optimal level, the ensemble experience should provide students with the opportunity to develop a part of themselves—their aesthetic sensitivity and artistic intelligence—in a unique and empowering way. If approached as music education through performance, instead of performance education through music, the ensemble experience can be the venue through which students learn how to perceive what is going on in the music, how to make artistic and creative decisions, and how to sing or play expressively. For this to happen, however, the conductor must go beyond traditional notions of leadership to a different approach in which the needs of the students, as well as the art, are served.

A new view of leadership from the podium is required if the ensemble is to grow and if its members are to function as artists rather than artisans. The conductor who desires optimal growth for the individual and the group strives to serve the ensemble in all aspects of the job, from programmatic decisions to day-to-day methods used in rehearsal.

An Alternative View from the Podium: The Servant-Leader Approach

Though not a contemporary concept, the idea of servant leadership has recently been brought to prominence by Robert K. Greenleaf. In his seminal essay “The Servant as Leader,” Greenleaf describes the essence of the servant-leader:

The servant-leader is servant first. ... It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. That person is sharply different from one who is leader first, perhaps because of the need to assuage an unusual power drive or to acquire material possessions. For such, it will be a later choice to serve—after leadership is established. ... The best test, and difficult to administer, is: Do those served...
Resources on Leadership


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grow as persons? Do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants?5

Initially, it may be difficult to fully understand what servant leadership really means because the term “servant” can conjure up several negative images. For some, “servant” can imply someone who is weak, unskilled, unable to lead, incapable, or without freedom or creativity. Isn’t serving the opposite of leading? How can these two terms go together? And what about all those courses and books on classroom management that say things like “don’t smile until after Thanksgiving,” demanding the immediate establishment of “authority” (read “autocracy”) and control? How does all that match up with the notion of servant leadership?

While such confusion is understandable, serving and leading are really two sides of the same coin. If the leader (in this case, the conductor) always asks, “What is best for the students?”—he or she is leading by serving the students before considering personal needs and desires. This kind of conductor rejects the notion that leaders must be autocratic and trusts that all the musical goals will be reached if the focus is on serving the musicians and the music.

Thus, serving involves using one’s gifts in ways that add value to others’ gifts. In Leadership from the Inside Out, Kevin Cashman discusses the relationship between purpose and service:

Purpose always serves—it is the manner in which we use our gifts to make a difference in the world. Purpose is not purpose without adding value to others. It is not self-expression for its own sake; it is self-expression that creates value for those around you. Therefore, key into your gifts, but don’t stop there. Focus on expressing your gifts to improve the lives of everyone and everything you touch.6

Servant-leaders are not focused on displaying their gifts; rather, they use gifts to make a difference, to create positive change. In this way, they serve rather than impose; they empower rather than control.

Conductors as Servant-Leaders

“Leadership focuses more on people than on things; on the long term rather than the short term; on developing relationships rather than on methods, techniques, and speed,” observes Covey.7 In developing these priorities, one must understand that servant leadership is not an exact model; there is no prescribed “to-do list” that, when completed, qualifies one as a servant-leader. Rather, what is important is an approach to leadership that focuses on people, principles, and the “big picture.” Servant-leaders are recognized by several characteristics.

Service. Servant-leaders are primarily motivated by a desire to serve and to “see life as a mission, not as a career.”8 They have a passion for their work, seeing it as a kind of calling. They understand and accept that they have a responsibility to others, and they see their gifts and endeavors as contributing to a larger whole, much greater than themselves.

As a conductor, the servant-leader demonstrates a passion for every aspect of the experience: the music, rehearsals, musicians, and audience. Such conductors see their role as facilitating the student’s entire musical experience, one that extends beyond the bounds of technical knowledge and skill. They realize that they stand between the music and the student’s experience, and they consciously strive to be a doorway rather than a wall. Often these conductors, as students, were “servants”: they spent time during lunch or after school helping their band or choir director plan a tour, organize the music library, or run sectional rehearsals.
they did it because they wanted to help, to make things better—to serve.

Vision. Servant-leaders are, according to Greenleaf, "better than most at pointing the direction."9 They have vision:

The leader needs two intellectual abilities that are usually not formally assessed in an academic way: he needs to have a sense for the unknowable and be able to foresee the unforeseeable. Leaders know some things and foresee some things which those they are presuming to lead do not know or foresee as clearly.10

This ability to have vision is one of the most telling differences between the conductor who is a leader and one who is only a manager. Vision implies forward motion and growth, exploration, and risk, while managing tends to focus on efficiently maintaining the status quo.

For the conductor, vision is rooted in philosophy: What kind of program is this going to be? What are the musical and educational goals? How do these fit into the bigger picture (the school district, the community, or state and national standards)? What unique gifts do I have that can move this program forward? Answers to questions like these help the conductor shape a plan for the future and provide a sense of forward momentum at all times.

Vision is also responsible for everyday managerial and pedagogical decisions. From choosing repertoire to scheduling performances to deciding how to tier multiple ensembles within a program, the conductor with vision understands how these decisions relate to and impact everything and everyone, from the larger goals to each individual musician who walks through the doors.

For example, consider the issue of determining the number, size, and makeup of ensembles within a program. While there is no one "right" way to design a program, the conductor’s driving question should be "What will best serve the students?" Common practice may point toward a "bigger-is-better" mentality, but the servant-leader may opt for smaller ensembles to ensure that each student’s individual contribution can be felt and each student’s educational needs can be better met.

Another common issue has to do with seniority: tradition may dictate that seniority, rather than ability, is the main determinant for moving students to upper-level ensembles. The servant-leader, however, understands the challenges presented by teaching varying ability levels in the same group—challenges of selecting repertoire and managing students’ boredom or frustration—and may opt for ability-level grouping. In these examples, the common thread is not the decision itself, but the conductor’s conscious choice to look beyond “what has always been done” to what may be best for given students at a given time in order to reach unified goals.

Conductors who are servant-leaders cultivate a forward-looking atmosphere in rehearsal even if problems arise.

Perhaps the most artistic manifestation of the conductor’s vision relates to the music itself. When choosing repertoire, the conductor asks, “What will the ensemble learn from this piece? How will it help them grow individually and collectively?” When rehearsing, the question is “How can I help students understand the music more fully?” Focusing on these questions, the conductor strives to choose music that is expressive but not trite, challenging but not a mere exercise in technical skill. In rehearsal, the conductor resists an autocratic approach, involving students in creative decision making by asking questions rather than providing all the answers. “When students are being involved in creating art, they must be involved in making artistic decisions,” says Reimer.11 The National Standards support this approach by calling for students to listen to, analyze, describe, and evaluate the music that they perform, in addition to mastering the necessary technical skills.12

In every case, the conductor’s vision involves risk-taking by dealing with the “unknowable and unforeseeable.” Conductors without vision are less likely to provide opportunities for aesthetic growth because they usually function on automatic pilot. Such managers tend to see only the obvious and do the expected, an approach that can seem bereft of vitality. This lack of energy will, sadly, be reflected in the music itself.

Responsiveness. Servant-leaders listen carefully to those they serve and accept responsibility for the situation:

The usual leader in the face of a difficulty tends to react by trying to find someone else on whom to pin the problem, rather than by automatically responding: “I have a problem. What is it? What can I do about my problem?”13

Conductors who are servant-leaders will understand that virtually every problem can in some way be tracked back to them. Without becoming paranoid or unrealistic, these conductors recognize their responsibility for creating the learning environment and the overall atmosphere, as well as the actual curriculum and the day’s rehearsal plan. If students are supposed to work out a weak spot in the music before the next rehearsal and they do not, then the students are responsible. But the servant-leader realizes that, at a greater level of responsibility, he or she may have failed to set up clear expectations or manage the rehearsal schedule well; or may have set a task before the ensemble in a coercive, rather than persuasive, way. This kind of awareness is necessary if conductors are to assume full responsibility.

Trust. Servant-leaders set great standards of excellence by believing in other people. They trust others:

Truly, believing is seeing. We

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the unseen potential. This creates a climate for growth and opportunity. Self-centered people believe that the key lies in them, in their techniques, in doing "their thing" to others. This works only temporarily. If you believe it's "in" them, not "in" you, you relax, accept, affirm, and let it happen. Either way, it's a self-fulfilling prophecy.14

This characteristic is one of the most important for servant-leaders. In dealing with those whom they serve, they must trust: trust that individuals can accomplish the goal, that they possess untapped potential, and that, if they are shown where they can go, they will want to go there. For this atmosphere of trust to exist, conductors themselves must be trustworthy—they must be consistent and reliable in their daily attitudes, preparation, procedures, and methods of dealing with people. An ensemble will have difficulty trusting the conductor who is a different person from day to day or situation to situation.

Once trust is established, accountability can legitimately take place. The ensemble that does not meet the conductor's high standards and clear expectations should be held accountable in a professional way. This means honestly telling students: "This is not your best work. We could accept it, but you and I know it's not your best. You deserve to do better, and I'm here to help you get there. What do we need to do to make this better?"

Conductors who are servant-leaders cultivate a forward-looking atmosphere in rehearsal even if problems arise, because they always expect growth. They do not view rehearsal as a process in which the ensemble has something done to it; rather, they look at rehearsal as the drawing out of the ensemble's potential. When there is always the expectation of growth, students remain excited about setting standards of excellence. When they achieve their goals (whether an excellent performance, a trophy, the mastery of a difficult passage, or a Division 1 rating), they realize that these accomplishments are the result of regular, consistent, daily work, not the goal of that work. As Cashman says, "Achievements come as natural by-products of our connection to our purpose."15

**Persuasion.** Servant-leaders have a healthy perspective on power; they understand their potential influence and use it in persuasive, rather than coercive, ways:

You can't have empowerment without first having trust. If you don't trust the people you are working with, then you must use control rather than empowerment.16

While on some level it may be true that titles create leaders and positions create power, the essence of authentic power is influence. Conductors, because their role is an especially visible one, must recognize this power to influence and use it in a positive way.

The ensemble that does not meet the conductor's high standards and clear expectations should be held accountable in a professional way.

Autocratic leadership views power as coercion: "You will do this because I say so." Servant leadership views power as persuasion: "You will want to do this when you understand why." Coercive power can take subtle forms—guilt trips, sarcasm, or musical punishment (extra rehearsals)—or can be more obvious (threats and displays of temper or frustration). Unfortunately, conductors are not only excused but sometimes defied when they exhibit these behaviors. Historically, conductors' fits and tantrums have been viewed as evidence of great artistic ability and passion. In reality, coercion has no place at the podium. The power of the music, strength of teaching, and quality of trust between the ensemble and conductor are the elements that work together to move the ensemble in the right direction.

Coercive power may appear to have the same or even better results, but these results tend to be short-lived and achieved at a greater cost. Greenleaf explains it in this way: "The trouble with coercive power is that it only strengthens resistance. And, if successful, its controlling effect lasts only as long as the force is strong. It is not organic."17 Covey observes:

Coercive power is based on fear in both the leader and the follower. Leaders tend to lean on coercive power when they are afraid they won't get compliance. It is the "big stick" approach. It is an approach that few publicly support but may use, either because it seems justified in the face of other, bigger threats hovering over the leader or it is the expedient thing to do and seems to work at the time. But its effectiveness is an illusion.18

But what about students who do not choose to follow the leader, do not respond positively to the conductor, or challenge authority? How does the servant-leader handle this situation? The guiding question in this approach is "What will best serve the students?" not "What do the students want?" With this critical clarification in mind, the conductor understands that structure, clear expectations, and consistent consequences combine to form a foundation for serving the needs of the ensemble. When this foundation is accompanied by solid teaching methods, high-quality repertoire, and an authentic passion for the students and their experience, the conductor focuses on the music, not on managing the students. When challenges present themselves, they must be dealt with individually and immediately; broad labeling of all students in an ensemble is ineffective, creating barriers between the conductor and the ensemble and leading to low morale. Students who choose to be disruptive and uncooperative must understand that they will be dealt with in an appropriate manner. These interactions are best done outside rehearsal and without showing anger or degrading the individual in any way. Even in these situations, professionalism and respect for the stu-
dent must be maintained.

Character. Servant-leaders understand that character counts for everything. They work to improve "from the inside out." They "radiate positive energy." Cashman observes: "Managers control by virtue of their doing. Leaders lead by virtue of their being."20

Character, one of the most humbling and difficult of attributes, involves wrestling with the realization that who we are off the podium is who we are on the podium. Although some conductors seem to have different personalities in different settings, their essential qualities—whether they are passionate, compassionate, detail-oriented, lackluster, angry, underconfident, or otherwise—will come out intentionally or unintentionally. Servant-leaders tend to be people whom others enjoy being around—they are attractive not because of charisma but because of purpose. Everyone wants to be a part of something purposeful and significant. Servant-leaders bring people to action because their internal compass is set for true north; people instinctively want to come along on the journey.

The Road to Servant Leadership

Leadership is many things: responsibility, influence, passion, and service. Leadership involves multiple spheres of influence, including, for music educators, the ensemble. While the realization of the many facets of leadership can be daunting, the conductor wishing to grow as a leader should take heart in one very important fact: leadership can be learned.

The lifelong pursuit of excellence in leadership, as well as attempts to grow as a servant-leader on the podium, can be fueled by specific actions. First, conductors must continue their own development as musicians. Though musical skill alone will not ensure leadership ability, a positive correlation exists between effectiveness as a leader and basic musical knowledge and ability. Without a solid musical foundation, conductors cannot offer students what they deserve. Leaders must, as part of their growth, "master the context" by remaining lifelong students of music, fully available to students and fully prepared to guide their learning.

Secondly, conductors must continue to work on refining their management skills, whether as managers of tasks or monitors of the atmosphere in the rehearsal room. In the quest for excellence in leadership, good management techniques and managerial skills alone are not sufficient, but they are necessary to provide structure and consistency. Nothing can be accomplished in a chaotic, confused, or indecisive atmosphere. Leaders realize what the managerial needs are and find ways to take care of the details.

Finally, as conductors strive to be servant-leaders, they must prepare "from the inside out"—observing, interviewing, reading, and reflecting. The focus needs to be more on the who than on the what, a message that, though not often verbalized, comes across clearly from the podium. When mistakes are made, they need to be admitted, learned from, and used to change direction. As Cashman concludes,

Ultimately, a leader is not judged so much by how well he or she leads, but by how well he or she serves. All value and contribution are achieved through service. Do we have any other purpose in life but to serve? As leaders, we may think we’re "leading," but in reality we’re serving.21

George Bernard Shaw also gave food for thought in these observations about service:

This is the true joy in life—that of being used for a purpose recognized by yourself as a mighty one, that of being a force of nature instead of a feverish, selfish little clod of ailments and grievances complaining that the world will not devote itself to making you happy. I am of the opinion that my life belongs to the whole community and, as I live, it is my privilege to do it whatever I can. I want to be thoroughly used up when I die.

For the harder I work, the more I live. I rejoice in life for its own sake. Life is no brief candle to me. It is a sort of splendid torch which I've got to hold up for the moment and I want to make it burn as brightly as possible before handing it on to future generations.22

Notes


4. Ibid., 69.


7. Covey, Principle-Centered Leadership, 270.

8. Ibid., 34.


10. Ibid., 21-22.


14. Covey, Principle-Centered Leadership, 35.

15. Cashman, Leadership from the Inside Out, 76.


17. Greenleaf, Servant Leadership, 42.

18. Covey, Principle-Centered Leadership, 103.

19. Ibid., 34.

20. Cashman, Leadership from the Inside Out, 47.

21. Ibid., 126.

Dance All Night: Motivation in Education
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Dance All Night
Motivation in Education

Abstract: One of the biggest challenges that teachers of adolescents face is the necessity to motivate them. This article begins with an overview of motivational theories and then focuses on process theory and its application in the middle school and high school classrooms. An effective teacher can create motivation in students by forming relationships with them and stimulating the affective domain. Included in the article are suggestions for classroom application.

Keywords: band, high school, middle school, motivation

Running on the treadmill has never been Jennifer’s favorite aerobic activity, but tonight it seems as though there are lead weights on her thighs. Determined to finish her workout, she inwardly groans as she looks at the clock and realizes that she has jogged for only three minutes. As she adjusts the volume in her headphones, a favorite rock song begins. Coincidentally, the driving thump of the bass is the same tempo as her footsteps! Suddenly, Jennifer finds that there are no longer any weights dragging her down. She falls into the rhythm of the song and begins to feel light and energized as she effortlessly jogs and hums along. A connection with the music and the rhythm is a stimulus that provides momentum, and it enables Jennifer to complete her workout more enthusiastically.

Many factors besides a rock song with a strong beat can be used as motivators. Some of Jennifer’s extrinsic rewards might include compliments about the weight she is losing, or the new blue jeans she is promising herself when she is ten pounds lighter. However, she knows that the intrinsic rewards of pride in her achievement and the feeling of physical well-being are longer lasting and ultimately are more powerful motivators. She is also aware of the importance of interpersonal relationships and emotions as motivators. She is reminded of a country dance, in that no matter how physically exhausted the participants are, when the band strikes up a polka, everyone enthusiastically joins in. Social relationships and sharing make the polka an exhilarating celebration rather than an aerobic exercise. Being motivated is like finding a strong beat and a great partner and being able to dance all night.

The ability to create motivation within students is one of the most important and challenging responsibilities of any teacher. In the music room, facilitating the enthusiasm within students to encourage them to take part in singing or playing an instrument is analogous to inviting the students into a partner dance where the music director leads, the rhythm enhances energy, and young musicians willingly follow.

What Is Motivation?

It might not have surprised Jennifer to find out that the word motivation is a derivative of the Latin verb movere, meaning “to move.” Indeed, when people are inspired, they feel the drive to initiate, to continue, or to complete tasks. Motivation requires some form

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of action or motion, whether it is physical or mental. In the music room during rehearsals, the director cannot do the dance alone; he or she must persuade students to become partners and help fill the dance floor. When more people participate, there is more enjoyment, and more learning.

Creating successful social citizens requires that teachers foster the development of students’ potential and help them cultivate their personal qualities. A teacher must be a resource for the nurturing of independence and resiliency. This is not only a huge responsibility, but also an extraordinary opportunity to have a positive impact and long-lasting influence. Although curriculum and methods, new technology, and challenging students are constant priorities for teachers, the capability to inspire and motivate pupils must take precedence for instructors in their classrooms. Without the ability to create motivation, teachers would be ineffective. “Both purpose and direction are essential to convey concepts to students, but without motivation, purpose and direction cannot be effective. Teachers’ motivation provides students with the drive and the will to accomplish the tasks teachers give them,” says Alberta Teaching Association president Frank Brusker. Having the latest technology, the best musical instruments, the brightest and best-equipped classroom, and the most recent musical compositions will mean nothing without the inspiration of a skilled teacher or coach.

In studies of motivation, three categories of research are evident: reinforcement theories, content theories, and process theories. The concept in education has evolved in accordance with these three schools of thought.

Reinforcement Theories

The reinforcement theory, popular until the 1960s, “would have us believe that motivation is not in the person, it is in the environment.” This theory is based on the premise that behavior is determined by its consequences. It suggests that learning can be manipulated by a program of rewards and punishments. B. F. Skinner developed a complex system called “operant conditioning” in which new behaviors were created step by step to eventually lead to complex sequences. Animal trainers have used these techniques successfully in circuses and aquariums for decades. Skinner’s theories emphasize controlling and manipulating learners, and they attribute learning to external stimuli and extrinsic rewards. A teacher uses the reinforcement theory in the classroom by giving tangible, marketable, or commercially valued prizes, such as stickers or candies for work completed. An incentive is a reward that has no material value, but its purpose for reinforcing or motivating is the same. Incentives might include assigning bonus marks or free time, or making deals with students to earn special privileges. Reinforcement focuses on observable behavior but ignores the emotional or cognitive aspects of the child.

There have been several problems associated with the use of reinforcements as motivators. Research has shown that “when extrinsic rewards are used as payoffs, intrinsic rewards are reduced . . . intrinsic and extrinsic motivators are not independent of each other.” If extrinsic reinforcers are overused, students do not feel control of their own behavior, and they may feel manipulated. Allocating extrinsic rewards for behavior that had been previously intrinsically rewarding tends to decrease motivation, so it can be counterproductive. For example, if a music teacher promises the band class that she will reward students with a prize if they can play a scale up to a prescribed speed, he or she may have success the first few times. However, the next time that students are expected to play a scale, they will expect a reward again. Furthermore, the teacher may have trouble finding a reward that will effectively motivate everyone in the class. An additional problem he or she may encounter is that the levels of ability among the students may be so different that they are not on a level playing field. Some students work very hard to achieve mediocre results, for example, while others are able to perform without preparation. The fairness and timing of the reward may create difficulties among the students and actually generate an atmosphere of competition, the opposite of what is required in a music class.

Using extrinsic rewards as reinforcers risks demeaning and dehumanizing students, possibly limiting their potential. Using the reinforcement theory on its own ignores the inner state of the individual and “the feelings, attitudes, expectations, and cognitive variables, known to affect behaviour.” According to Stephen R. Covey, “motivation is a fire from within. If someone else tries to light that fire under you, chances are it will burn very briefly.”

Content Theories

Theories of reinforcement concentrate on factors external to the learner and the assumption that changing the extrinsic rewards will change behavior. Content theories focus on human needs and on identifying why people behave in certain ways. The premise of content theories is that people will respond in desirable ways when their needs are met. The assumption is that if a teacher can effectively meet the needs of his or her students, they will learn. Several theorists, most notably Abraham Maslow, Clayton Alderfer, David McClelland, Frederick Herzberg, and John Atkinson, developed ways of identifying and prioritizing human needs.

To motivate a student, Maslow would recommend that the teacher understand the student’s level on the hierarchy or the pyramid of human needs. If a student is not working in class, and his or her homework is incomplete, the insinuation is that one of his or her needs is not being met. Once the teacher identifies the need and takes steps to fulfill it, the student will be motivated to achieve the next level, leading ultimately to self-actualization, which is a “drive to become what one is capable of becoming . . . [and] achieving one’s potential, and self-fulfillment.” Rather than encouraging managers or teachers to be proactive, Maslow’s theories invite teachers to be reactive to needs that are not being met. This negative approach of looking for physiological or psychological deficiencies, with a focus on being
reactive to problems rather than looking for the positive attributes of students, has met with much criticism.

McClelland and Herzberg both devised methods of matching personality types and individual needs to work preferences. Again, these theories focus on adjusting a work environment in reaction to a perceived personality type, linking job satisfaction to working conditions. Being satisfied with one’s working environment, however, is not the same as being motivated. Most public school teachers work with students who are in early stages of development, in terms of personality traits. Therefore, one of the problems of applying content theories to teaching is that students’ personalities have not stabilized, and their development is incomplete during their middle school or even high school years. Basic motivation techniques on personality types is not the most effective method of finding a stimulus, or of creating that invitation to the dance. Those who work in middle school might contend that there are days when physical needs, driven by hormonal changes in teenagers, are primary for their age and maturity. The need for belonging to a social group is another example of an aspect of maturation that is unbalanced until a later age. Content theories seem to apply more directly to adults in the workforce than to young students, as the needs of adolescents are constantly evolving. Teachers who are effective with this age-group can assess these shifting priorities and adapt the dance from a polka one day to a waltz on another.

Process Theories

Process theories focus on the cognitive processes that influence behavior. According to Dennis McInerney, process theories contend that motivation lies in the intrinsic desire to improve personally, to solve problems, and to gain understanding. Motivation is less focused on needs and more attentive to mental processes and perception as well as the personal interpretation of experiences. One of the important premises of process theory is that people value self-respect and self-satisfaction more highly than they value material rewards. The implication is that the ability to sing or play a piece of music beautifully, and the self-satisfaction that results, is more valuable than a paycheck or a tangible prize. Human emotional responses are activated when individuals examine the importance of a learning activity and judge their expectations to succeed. They judge the task on the basis of personal relevancy, and because emotion is the strongest force in the brain, overall motivation is affected. The application for education is that if teachers can appeal to the values and the emotional responses of the pupils, motivation is more likely. This is especially relevant to music teachers, whose job is to reach the affective domain in order to create expressive melodies and exciting rhythms. Instructors who are skilled at motivating their students might be expected to make learning personally relevant to the children and to persuade them that their expectations for success should be high. Their students feel motivated if classroom activities encourage their feelings of autonomy and self-direction, and they feel respected and trusted. Music students want to feel a sense of ownership and pride in their performances.

Process Theory in the Classroom

Six aspects of process theory are evident in the study of motivational psychology: expectancy, equity, attribution, self-efficacy, goal setting, and autonomy.

Expectancy

Part of process theory has to do with people’s expectations about the results of their behaviors. Behavior is affected when people interpret events and develop expectations about intrinsic or extrinsic reinforcement. “What matters is what a person believes will happen in the future, not what has happened in the past.” Expectancy theory concerns the judgments people make about their capabilities to perform successfully and the beliefs they have about why they might engage in a task. For students, this means that expectancy goes beyond their self-perceptions of competence and focuses on the perceived value of academic success. Both the value of a task and the individual’s expectation of success or failure are subject to variation and influence by a skilled teacher or coach. For example, a band director might demonstrate the importance of the third trombone part by having students listen to a performance of the score without the crucial third trombone notes in the chord structure, showing the value of the student’s task. Then, by focusing on small segments of the music, the teacher can prove to the child that success is possible and expected. If a teacher can encourage students to have constructive self-perceptions of their competence, and optimistic expectancies of success, students will perform better, be more engaged, exert more effort, persist longer, and be more successful. Appealing to the affective domain will yield positive, engaged students. It is important for teachers to help students raise their expectations of themselves. Even reluctant or shy students can be encouraged to take small steps, perhaps to increase their vocal ranges by one semitone at a time, for instance. Atkinson identified two types of students: the high-need achiever, for whom challenge is motivating, and the low-need achiever. Low-need achievers find challenging situations difficult, so they often choose tasks that are too demanding, and therefore, they think that their failure can be excused. “Some students do not know the true boundaries of their competencies because they never test them.” Clever teachers are able to help students match their abilities and expectancies, and help them to choose tasks and criteria for assessment that are right for them, to increase their potential. It is important for young students to play or sing at least some selections that are easily accessible, to develop confidence. In the words of Norman Vincent Peale, “people become really quite remarkable when they start thinking that they can do things. When they believe in themselves, they have the first secret of success.”
Motivating Students in the Classroom

- **Appeal to the values and the emotional responses of the pupils.** Make learning personally relevant. Relate classroom content to their own lives and build connections between curriculum and reality, so that they can apply their own emotions and become engaged personally.

- **Expectancy:**
  - Persuade students that their expectations for success should be high.
  - Help the child to believe that he or she can do well, and success will follow.

- **Equity:**
  - Help students feel respected and trusted.
  - Help students to realize that tasks, and the stress and fear of the unknown, are manageable.
  - Ensure that fair treatment is the model in the classroom.
  - Respect students, ask for permission to help them, listen for feelings beneath the surface, and watch for body language and group dynamics.

- **Self-Efficacy:**
  - Encourage students to have constructive self-perceptions of their competence.
  - Help students match their abilities and expectancies, and help them to choose tasks and criteria for assessment that are right for them.
  - Help students to learn from each other.

- **Goals:**
  - Help students to choose goals that are personally relevant, challenging, clear, and compelling.
  - Teach students that reaching goals is not magic; it takes a series of baby steps.

- **Attribution:**
  - Help students see that their success can be attributed to their skill and their efforts and not to good luck.
  - Help to clarify the relationship between actions and consequences.
  - Encourage students to believe that competence is a controllable aspect of their development and that their abilities will change and expand over time.

- **Autonomy:**
  - Encourage feelings of autonomy and self-direction.
  - Help the child to feel safe enough to take risks in the classroom. Create a nurturing and trusting environment.
  - Teach students that they are in control of the results of their actions and that failure is temporary and instructional.
  - Facilitate the ability for a person to be self-determining and to have a part in decisions and choices that affect him or her.
  - Help students feel empowered, and self-esteem and expectancy will be raised.
  - Invite students to have input into their own assessments, and they will be more willing to accept responsibility.

Pupils should be encouraged to push beyond the boundaries of their previous expectations, to relate classroom content to their own lives and build connections between curriculum and reality so that they can apply their own emotions and become engaged personally. For a child to feel safe enough to take risks in the classroom, and increase expectancy for success, a nurturing and trusting environment is recommended. Music teachers can frequently remind their students that it is acceptable to make mistakes while learning something new. A musician will be unable to correct a mistake if he or she cannot hear it. When administering performance tests, a director may find it useful to allow a student to repeat the test on another day for an improved mark. By allowing the students to acknowledge mistakes and by giving them a chance to practice and improve, a teacher can increase the comfort level in the classroom. Students who are too nervous to try new music will find it very difficult to achieve it. Like shy dancers, they will feel as though they each have “two left feet.” The instructor needs to help students realize that tasks, and the stress and fear of the unknown, are manageable. The first goal when dancing with a new partner is putting that partner at ease and helping him or her relax.

**Equity**

Equity theory is based on the idea that people are motivated by social comparison and that they will act to eliminate any perceived unfairness. People are concerned not with the size of a reward but with the relationship of it to what others receive; and they make judgments as to the perceived input compared to the outcome received by themselves and others. When students or employees believe that a process is fair, then trust and commitment will follow. The inference is that changing the way students are treated may be more motivational than the way they are marked or otherwise rewarded. Teachers must always be aware of the way their actions are perceived to ensure that fair treatment is the model in their classrooms. Encouraging competition between students is not recommended by educators. Most teachers would rather reduce social comparison, avoid public evaluation, and emphasize success in terms of personal improvement comparisons. However, one of the positive aspects of equity theory is the way it can be used for vicarious learning. Students are inclined to “replicate behavior of peers, if behavior is instrumental in achieving goals and they feel like they are modelling competency.” Instrumental or vocal music classes are often more successful when they are larger. There is strength in numbers. When a few young students playing recorder can demonstrate a correct melody or rhythm, the rest of the class begins to imitate the model. More proficient students are proud to exhibit their skill, and their friends want to rise to the standard presented. No one wants to be the only one on the dance floor, or the only one on the sidelines. Peer influence can be a powerful force, especially in group settings, such as teams or performing organizations. Indeed, students often learn efficiently from each other. Observing a peer often can give students a greater sense of efficacy.
Attribution

Closely related to expectancy theories is the theory of attribution. It deals with the perceived cause of an outcome. When a student receives a grade on an assignment, to what does he or she attribute success or failure? This cognitive theory of motivation is based on the idea that people are rational and that they are motivated to understand and master the environment.  
Humans are constantly seeking to explain their behaviors or the behaviors of others. For example, a student and his or her teacher will both seek to understand why a performance was a success or why it fell flat. The key question for motivational theorists is, “Why?” Precedence is given to an individual’s beliefs, which may or may not reflect reality accurately. It is the personal belief that influences a student’s motivation, and “accuracy is not necessary for the attribution to have psychological and behavioural consequences.”  
Precise and unbiased teacher feedback is critical to “help students link their successes to something they did to contribute to the success . . . to develop self-efficacy and the confidence that they have the power to be successful.” When an orchestra performs beautifully, the director can help the participants understand that their hard work, their focus, and their attention to detail were the reasons for their success. Sometimes students have the mistaken impression that a great performance is due to fate or luck. Students should be encouraged to believe that competence is a controllable aspect of their development and that their abilities will change and expand over time. If a teacher can help students see that their success can be attributed to their skill and their efforts, and not to good luck, then self-efficacy is enhanced.  
Young people need to be taught that they are in control of the results of their actions and that failure is temporary and instructional. By debriefing after a concert, the music director can relate strong or weak parts of the presentation to the students’ efforts. Teachers can help to clarify the relationship between actions and consequences by analyzing a recent performance and making a connection between the rehearsal and the end results. When students make these connections, they are motivated to learn and to apply their learning to the next recital or concert.

Self-Efficacy

Self-efficacy is a perception of performance capability, a belief that one can achieve, and the confidence to respond positively to feedback even if it is negative. This aspect of process theory focuses on “the extent to which individuals believe that they have the resources, ability or power to change a situation, based on past experiences.” Success breeds success. Teacher feedback that is specific is crucial in the building of self-efficacy. If a child believes he or she can do well, then success will follow. If the teacher also believes that a child can succeed, he or she can be an influential motivator. There are many examples of self-fulfilling prophecy, where one’s beliefs influence either accomplishment or failure. “He is able who thinks he is able.”  
The attitude “I can do that” is a powerful stimulator. A singing teacher once told me that I was a soprano, even though all of my previous singing experience had been in the alto section. He used some clever tricks to improve my breathing, thereby increasing my range by five or six notes. When I had succeeded, even just one time, I developed the positive attitude that I could repeat my newfound soprano voice. A music teacher should try to “catch” the student successfully playing something new, and make a positive comment. Even a “thumbs-up” hand signal can be important to a student trying something he or she has never done before.

Goal Setting

In motivational research, and in process theory, “goals or intentions play a central role. . . . One way to influence people is to influence their goals.” The intention to work toward a goal is a major source of motivation. Specific and challenging goals result in better performance, and outcome-oriented goals give focus and energy.  
A middle school teacher can have a discussion, even with very young students, about what the finished product will be like. The students can provide visions of what the audience might hear or see, how the musicians will sing or play, and how their parts in the show are important. When goals are public, and when the individual has an active role in developing the goals, they are most likely to be reached. My high school band class hosts a “coffeehouse” every spring. They begin by brainstorming about their intended result, and I find that once they develop a direction, they need very little intervention from me to carry out the entire production. Goal setting is an activity that is especially effective in dealing with groups of students. In an effort to build an effective team, a teacher might gather the participants together and have them all help create team goals. For our annual coffeehouse, students develop a theme together, and then they get excited about decorations, concession, entertainers, lighting, sound, and all other aspects of the show. If all teammates are working with the same goals in mind, success is attainable. This will be more successful if the teacher or coach can help students to choose goals that are personally relevant, challenging, clear, and compelling. Students also need to be taught that reaching goals is not magic, that it takes a series of baby steps to win a gold medal, for example. The director can also remind the musicians that it takes every musician doing his or her best to reach the intended end result. No one can pull off a waltz alone.

Autonomy

The last factor in process theory is the locus of control of an individual, or the ability for a person to be self-determining and to have a part in decisions and choices that affect him or her. Students will feel more motivated if they “have a voice in their own learning and a stake in their own assessment.” Students can be more proactive in their own learning if they feel they have responsibility and selection. If they determine their own goals, they will become more accountable and take ownership of learning activities.  
In our school division, there is a focus on “assessment for learning” as opposed to “assessment of learning.” This system promotes the idea that assessment is a part of the learning process rather
than the evaluation of it. One of the recommendations to teachers is that students take part in the evaluative process by creating rubrics, selecting exam material, or providing assessments of each other. Autonomy is the factor that ties everything else together. If students feel empowered, self-esteem and expectancy will be raised, and a sense of accomplishment will be a motivating intrinsic reward. Students mature emotionally as they realize they have the power to make choices in their own learning. Experienced musicians assess their own playing constantly, determining what needs more practice or what rudiments are weak. Students can be taught to monitor their playing by having them create rubrics for assessment, listen to recordings of themselves, and identify techniques or skills that are not up to standard. This can be done formally or informally. I employ a very simple form of self-assessment with my first-year players. I ask them to show me, by holding up their fingers, how well they think they played on a scale of one to five. This technique often results in more focus. Teachers who respect their students, who ask for permission to help them, who listen for feelings beneath the surface, and who watch for body language and group dynamics are teachers who communicate a sense of empowerment to them. Students who are invited to have input into their own assessments are “more willing to accept responsibility and this motivates them to do their best to meet their own goals... They don’t view grades as gifts or punishments.” Teachers who are less controlling may be more effective in that they are able to provide opportunity and a safe and trusting environment for students to experience self-expression and to develop their initiative.

A Respectful Relationship

As one can learn from motivational psychology, many factors play roles in the motivation of students in the classroom. No one technique will work for every teacher, or for every class, every time. However, it seems that recent research leads teachers to the affective domain and to reaching to touch students emotionally. In the music classroom, this is especially true, as students who are able to access their emotions are able to play or sing with more passion. Even on the dance floor, a certain amount of passion and personal connection is necessary to move with energy and commitment. There is a story, frequently told, of an educational psychologist who visited SeaWorld in Orlando, Florida, to watch the trained dolphins perform. He was amazed at the intricate patterns the dolphins were able to achieve, and he approached the trainer to compliment him. Interested in the methods used, he questioned the trainer about reinforcement techniques. “Yes,” the trainer replied, “we use reinforcement. But first, we get in the water with them. They will learn nothing until they know that we mean them no harm.” The same could be said for people. “Instead of asking, ‘How can I motivate students?’ a better question would be, ‘In what ways is the brain naturally motivated from within?’” Students who are willing to display empathy or sentimentality are putting themselves in a position of vulnerability. They need to feel safe in order to expose this inner sensitivity. Humans are creatures of emotion. If they feel respected, valued, and in control, they will be motivated. They need to feel as though they are not alone, that they have a partner who can lead. Teachers are more likely to successfully motivate students if they form a personal relationship with them: invite them to a dance, become a supportive partner, and then “dance all night.”

**Notes**

8. Ibid.
27. Ibid., 54.
30. Ibid., 83.
38. Ibid., 13.
39. Ibid., 14.
40. Ibid., 44.
Have you ever found yourself just barrel-ing through a rehearsal to “get the music learned,” feeling technically effective but artistically unfulfilled? Or have you had an opportunity to enjoy a real “teaching moment,” a time to share interesting and creative ideas with your singers, only to feel guilty that perhaps you are taking too much time away from “learning the music?”

One of the greatest challenges for the choral music educator is to find ways of balancing the short-term goal of preparing music for performance with the long-term goal of developing thinking, feeling musicians—to find techniques that serve both purposes simultaneously within the rehearsal. There are four fundamental rehearsal techniques or approaches that, when regularly employed, can make a significant, positive impact on the choral rehearsal. Each of these techniques will invite, inspire, and instruct singers in the process of preparing music for performance and will encourage their long-term development as creative, capable musicians.

Not a new idea, the Whole/Part/Whole (WPW) approach is critical to the success of the rehearsal. In this approach, the piece or a significant portion of a piece is experienced first, before working out any details. This gives the singers and director a starting point from which to work and reminds everyone of the context in which the musical details occur. This first “whole” can be accomplished by singing through the piece (or a section, or the melody) or by listening to a recording of the work.

Once given a context, the detail work can begin. This is the “part” of the WPW formula. Short segments or phrases are rehearsed, discoveries are made about the piece, intonation is adjusted, and phrases are built. This is when directors are at their most creative, developing technique and artistry, voices and minds. The majority of rehearsal time is spent on this kind of activity.

Before moving to the next piece or ending the rehearsal, it is critical for the singers and the director, once again, to put the details back into a context and experience the music. So many performances, clean though they may be, sound as though they are the conglomeration of musical details, devoid of any music (in other words, the sum of the parts falls short of the whole). The final “whole” provides a reward for the work done and allows the director to assess the learning that took place. It brings closure to the piece and provides a basis from which the director and ensemble can discuss what needs to be done in future rehearsals. Most of all, it ensures the rehearsal will always function under an aesthetic umbrella, with a focus on the ensemble’s broader musical goals rather than technique.

If, because of time limitations or personal preference, one element of the WPW formula is to be eliminated, it is best to drop or condense the first “whole.” Without the “part,” no
improvements are made; without the final "whole," there is no sense of closure or accomplishment.

**Discovering Relationships**

Discovering relationships is another fundamental rehearsal technique. What the director does after the first read-through of the piece (the first "whole") determines the entire atmosphere of the rehearsal, the effectiveness of the rehearsal, and ultimately the type of choral musician being shaped. There are basically two options. The first is to go to the beginning of the piece, repeat each voice part several times for the purpose of "learning the notes and rhythms," and, at a later time, attempt to turn these well-learned parts into music. The other option is to take an approach that accomplishes the note-learning goal within a broader musical context and encourages the singers to discover much about the way the music is constructed as part of the process.

The director using the second approach is likely to ask the ensemble numerous questions about the kinds of relationships that exist within the piece. What is the form of the piece? Who has the melody? Do any sections sing the same part? What is the most obvious rhythmic characteristic of the piece? How would the singers describe the overall feel or rhythmic flow of the piece? Where is the point of arrival for this phrase? How does the composer set the text to portray its meaning? With each answer comes a natural follow-up activity: sing this passage and experience what was just discovered by studying the score. Now singers go about their rehearsal business with a focused awareness and with their creative minds fully engaged.

For example, if the singers discover that the melody is passed from one voice to another, they might rehearse only the melody as it occurs in each successive voice. If they need to repeat this step once or twice to ensure that the flow from one part to the other is smooth, they are not only "learning the notes and rhythms," but they are also learning them in a musical context. Much of the difficulty in finding the correct pitches, for example, is because the singers are not led to be aware of the relationship of those pitches to something else: to tonic, to the preceding note, to other voice parts, to pitches in the piano (how often is the bass part doubled in the accompaniment?), to their placement in the chord (root? third?), to a previous melody, and so forth. If there is no context, there is no meaning.

Rehearsals can become tedious, and music that appears to be "learned" today is often forgotten tomorrow. Worst of all, singers may become accustomed to having this technical information provided for them each time the score is opened. As musicianship and creativity decrease, frustration and boredom increase.

Is there ever a time to simply "find the notes?" Yes, but the creative director can turn even these brief incidents into musical experiences by providing some broader context or goal. If a singer asks, "Can we just hear our part alone?" the director might reply, "Why do you
think you're having trouble finding that leap?" Rehearsing the leap on
solfège or relating the interval to
another event in the music raises an
otherwise mundane activity to the lev-
el of musical learning.

**Repetition with meaning**

**Repetition with meaning** is another effective approach. If the
focus in rehearsal is to be on musician-
ship, artistry, creativity, and under-
standing, then a rote-drill approach to
"get the notes first" is rarely the most
effective avenue. A "notes first"
approach may seem to be more logical
or efficient, but remember—every
time an activity is repeated, singers are
memorizing the sound and the feel of
that activity. If singers are allowed to
repeat a phrase over and over without
correct dynamics, phrasing, or proper
intonation, then they are being taught
to memorize these poor performance
habits. Undoing them later is always
painful, if not impossible, and leads to
a great deal of frustration in the criti-
cal rehearsals preceding performance.

When used as a layering of ideas,
instead of as simple drill, repetition
can be exciting, rewarding, and effec-
tive. In rehearsal, a dialogue between
the director and the ensemble might sound something like this:

**Director:** Good, you've noticed
that there is a recurring melody
that appears in every voice part
at one time or another. Who
has it first?

**Ensemble:** The soprano.

**Director:** Then who?

**Ensemble:** The altos, tenors,
basses. In that order.

**Director:** Good. Let's have
everyone sing the melody
together once, looking at the
soprano part (Repetition #1).
Good! What can we do to
shape the phrase?

**Ensemble:** Well, it seems like it
should crescendo when the
melody goes up in pitch and
decrescendo when it goes
down.... That would go along
with the natural emphasis of
the words, too.

**Director:** All right, let's try that
idea. Everyone remain on the
soprano part for now and
shape the phrase as we just
described it (Repetition #2).
Much better! Now, sing your
melody in the order that it
occurs in the music (Repetition
#3). Good. I noticed that there
was some difficulty on the
entrances of the altos, tenors,
and basses. Any idea why?

**Ensemble:** Well, the melodies
sort of overlap; one starts
before the other is finished.

**Director:** Right! This time, sing
the line and just be aware of
the timing of your entrance
(Repetition #4).

This type of repetition is very dif-
fferent from the kind where correctness
of pitches and rhythms is the focus. In
the scenario above, singers are study-
ing the score, making decisions (some-
times resulting in interesting debates),
trying out ideas and reworking them
as necessary, and taking an active role
in their learning. They are unaware of
the amount of time spent on a particu-
lar passage because, with each repeat,
a new goal is placed before them and,
with each performance, they sound
better and better. They are becoming
thinking musicians, creative artists,
whether members of fifth-grade
beginning chorus, the church choir, or
the select collegiate ensemble. Does
this approach take more effort and
more time than the traditional "diag-
nostic-prescriptive" method many
music educators were trained in?
Probably. But the rewards—in terms
of long-term musical learning and
artistic development—are more than
worth the investment. Rather than
starting from zero with each new
piece, the director using this approach
enjoys an increasingly sophisticated
ensemble, one that readily takes
responsibility for shaping the music at
the outset. In this approach, the trans-
fer of learning is great.

**Gesture-based activities** can be
helpful when directors find that no
matter how clearly they explain or
describe an idea about line, tone color,
or articulation, a gap still exists
between the idea and the sound the
ensemble produces. In these instances,
it may be effective to accompany or
replace the verbal imagery and
metaphor with "physical metaphor"—
any kind of gesture that seems to physi-
cally create the musical quality or idea
in question. "Throwing a ball" to pro-
ject the voice, "drawing" an arch to
create a line, "throwing a dart" for a
precise attack, or forming vowels with
the hands are all examples of these
kinds of activities. Students become
physically and mentally involved in
shaping the music and experiencing,
kinesthetically, that which is often an
abstract and elusive concept. Directors
can freely design gestures that make
use of everyday activities (virtually any
sport can help here) or common ideas
(shapes, direction, speed of move-
ment) and invite singers to join them
in singing the phrase while illustrating
the gesture. Though the initial reac-
tion may be one of surprise or skepti-
cism ("Mr. Jones, did you go to anoth-
er music conference?") most students
will quickly see the connection
between the physical and mental
approaches and may even begin to
employ these rehearsal devices without
being asked.

For example, if the ensemble
sings a string of eighth notes in a
choppy, "all-notes are-created-
equal" manner, the director can ask
them to "spin a lasso"—make larg-
er and larger circles that finally
release to create momentum and
arrival of the phrase. This helps
them achieve their performance
goal of singing a musical line as
well as teaching them to look for
the point of arrival in a phrase. Or
if molto legato is desired, try having
them "pull" a thick, heavy imagi-
nary rope to "feel" the resistance
and weight and then transfer this
awareness to the phrase. A con-
ductor needs only to remind the
ensemble, with scaled-down ges-
tures, of these kinesthetic activities
for them to be recalled and re-
experienced later.

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