

# Say What You Mean, Mean What You Say

Purposeful Gestural and Verbal  
Communication in Ensemble Settings

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# How Will This Help?

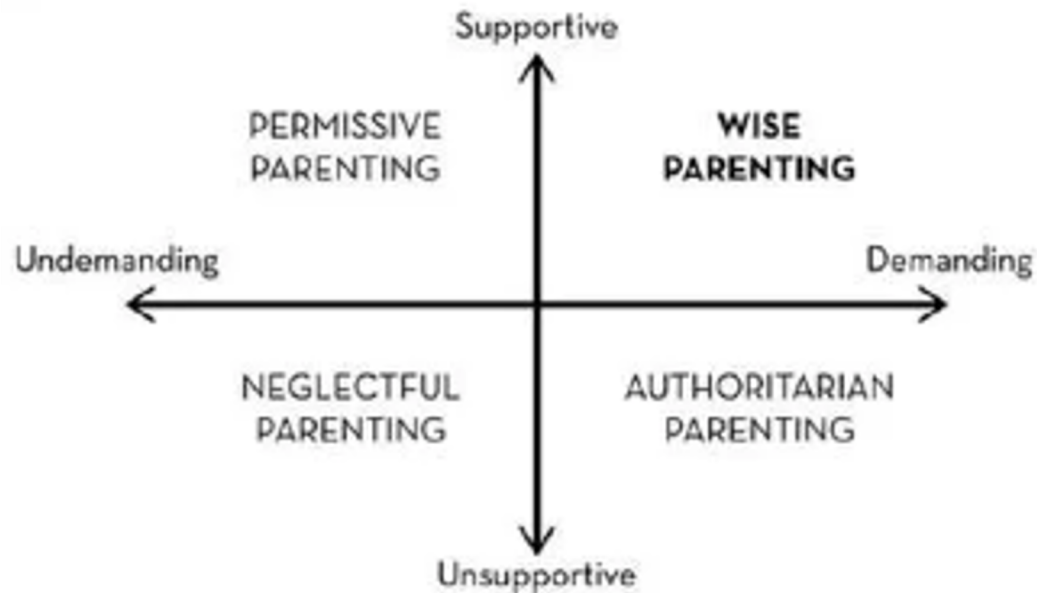
- Eliminate contradictory gestures and messaging
- Purposeful communication creates an immersive rehearsal environment
- Maximize limited rehearsal time
  - More engaging rehearsals
  - More intentional music-making

# Rehearsal Atmosphere

- EVERYTHING you do carries a message!
  - Be present and engaged for every moment of the rehearsal
  - Wear clothing that promotes communication
- Structure rehearsals intentionally
  - Where to put announcements/logistics?
- Prioritize gestural communication
- Service leadership requires collaborative language
  - Change “I/me” to “we/us” (eliminate “I want”)
  - Focus on students and music
- Goal-oriented, encouraging, and positive
  - Listen for what is right
  - Focus on how to improve
  - Praise growth and improvement (over “getting it right”)
  - Praise work ethic (over “talent”)

# Rehearsal Atmosphere

- Be a “psychologically wise” teacher
  - Both demanding and supportive (warm, respectful, encouraging)



Duckworth, Angela: *Grit: the Power of Passion and Perseverance*

# Have Something to Say

- Score study and research
  - Understand the composer's intent
  - Develop your informed interpretation

# Have Something to Say

The image displays a two-page spread of a musical score for the song "Have Something to Say". The score is written for a large ensemble, including vocal parts (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) and instrumental parts (Piano, Guitar, Bass, Drums, and various woodwinds and brass instruments). The notation is dense, with many notes and rests. The left page is numbered 150 and the right page is numbered 151. The score is written in a standard musical notation with a key signature of one flat and a time signature of 4/4. The right page features a large red arrow pointing to a specific measure in the bass line.

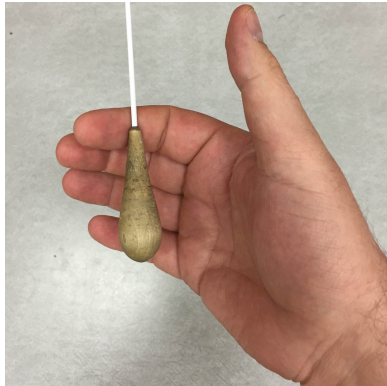
# Non-verbal Communication

- Review conducting basics often (they *really* matter!)
- Prioritize engaging and connecting
  - Eye contact (variable plane)
  - Facial expression
- Create an “energy field” in front of you
  - Posture
  - Torso/chest (the source of all your energy!)
  - Arm/hand position
- Affect the energy field to change sound
  - Use shared human experience
  - Connect gestures to breath
  - Tactile sensations (space objects and substance)



# Clarity of the Message

- Baton grip



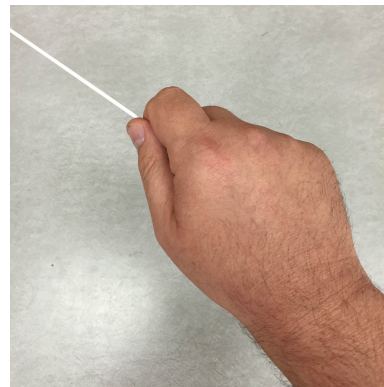
Step 1: Balance baton  
at 1<sup>st</sup> knuckle



Step 2: Place thumb  
over baton



Step 3: Wrap fingers  
lightly over handle



Step 4: Turn palm  
downwards



# Clarity of the Message

- Baton grip
- The three planes (what does each change)
- Hinges (which hinge matches the music)
  - Isolate hinges (if elbow moves, how much should wrist resonate?)
- Articulation and weight
- Dynamics and intensity
  - Speed/size
  - Breath/core
- Beats and beat patterns

# Verbal Communication

- Reinforce gestures with language
- Expand your vocabulary
- Talk with your hands
- Make sound effects (onomatopoeia)
- Sing!
- Avoid repetitive speech mannerisms
- After verbal direction, reinforce language with gesture

# Conclusion

- Constantly evaluate your communication
- To create art, we must communicate artistically

# Questions? Comments?

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