

There is Life After College!
Navigating Interviews, Accepting Your First “Big Kid” Job and Thriving in Your First Few Years of Teaching!

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This session is for collegiate music education students and new educators- all about how to ace those job interviews and strategies for a successful start to your career!

- I. Roadmap- What to Do Before Graduation
 - A. Prepare that Resume!
 - B. Obtain the necessary paperwork- recommendation letters, certification paperwork, clearances.
 - C. Find opportunities for networking!
 - D. Get familiar with where to find out about job postings- websites, social media, etc.
 - E. Have application packets/digital portfolios ready to go!

- II. The Job Search
 - A. It will feel like a full time job!
 - B. Be open minded to positions that may not be your “dream job”.
 - C. Cross your T’s and dot your I’s- you don’t want to be looked over because of a simple error on an application.

- III. The Interview Process- the DO’s
 - A. Research the school/district before you go, you are interviewing as an employee of THAT district.
 - B. What makes you stand out from the rest? Sell yourself!
 - C. BE PASSIONATE ABOUT KIDS- an interview committee will be able to tell if you are not 100% genuine.
 - D. The 5 year Question- How to answer it? Remember 3 things: if the 1. SCHOOL, the 2. PROGRAM, and 3. MYSELF are continuing to grow, there is no reason to leave!

- IV. The Interview Process- the DON'Ts
 - A. Be late!
 - B. Be missing any information in regards to your resume, certification, etc...
 - C. Name Drop!
 - D. Dress informally.
 - E. Be afraid to let your personality shine through- the committee needs to see who you really are and why you’ll be a great fit for their school!

V. Before the First Day!

- A. Set up a meeting with the building administrator or department chair if possible.
- B. Things to find out: what does the schedule look like? Is there an existing curriculum that you need to follow? What are the expectations of me in this role or of the program? Is there a booster organization or parent group?

VI. Your First Year!

- A. Be prepared for a quick reality check!
- B. Be prepared to prioritize things in the following order: 1. Kids, 2. Adults, 3. Curriculum
- C. Be passionate about your content- but be more passionate about kids.
- D. Remember- they don't care how much you know until they know how much you care!
- E. Students are incredibly perceptive- if you're not 100% "in it", they will see this and respond accordingly.

VII. Your Teaching Philosophy and Your Why

- A. Who are you as a person?
- B. Why do you want to teach?
- C. Do you truly believe that every child can learn and improve?
- D. How will you create an environment that ensures success?

VIII. Common Feelings/Phases/Moods of New Teachers

- A. Beginning: Excitement! I'm totally prepared! I'm going to set the world on fire!
- B. Reality Check: I have no idea what I'm doing! I'm so overwhelmed! Why don't all of my students love music as much as I do?
- C. Funks: Did I choose the right profession? Am I even making a difference? Can't I just go back to college?

IX. Combating Those Feelings and Avoiding Burnout

- A. Don't try to change too much in year #1, especially if you are replacing someone that was in the position for a long time and/or was well liked.
- B. Don't try to be someone else- find your own voice!
- C. Get involved- don't isolate yourself.
- D. Keep detailed notes and reflect regularly.
- E. Having friends outside of music and teaching helps with perspective!
- F. It's not all about you- look at the bigger picture!

X. Beware of Social Media and Energy Vampires

- A. Education is not 100% of what you see on Tiktok and Instagram- for better or worse.
- B. Be mindful of what you post- nothing ever goes away on the internet.
- C. Seek out mentors that make you want to be the best educator you can be- avoid the “noise” that drags you down.

And most importantly, remember:

“Do you want to experience your first year of teaching 30 times, or to measure your career in one 30 year story?”

It is an honor and privilege to teach music- treat every day and year as an opportunity for growth to be the best that you can be!