

Unhelpful Conducting Habits Learned from “Helping” Students

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I. Introduction

- A. Conducting as primary instrument
 - 1. college coursework/practice
 - 2. feedback & continued development
- B. Responsibilities of the conductor
 - 1. make the ensemble sound good
 - 2. lead
- C. Challenges of conducting young bands
 - 1. responsibilities/time
 - 2. training musicians
- D. Common ways we “help” our students
 - 1. “Mr. Obvious” actions
 - 2. Working harder, but not necessarily smarter
 - 3. Sensory overload

II. “Mr. Obvious”

- A. Count-offs
 - 1. the extended count-off
 - 2. the obligatory count-off
- B. Conducting rhythms
- C. Time beating

III. Working Harder, but Not Necessarily Smarter

- A. “Parking the jet”
- B. Subdivision mania
- C. Larger = faster??
- D. Leaning, reaching, bobbing, & nodding

IV. Sensory Overload (aka Everything, All the Time)

V. Ensemble as an Organism

- A. Organisms require nourishment & nurturing for growth.
 - 1. good literature & variety
 - 2. independence is the goal
 - 3. sensitization to responsibilities
 - a. conductor as provider or conductor as guide
 - b. musician as passive recipient or active participant
 - 4. ignoring redundancies
 - a. “Don’t tell me what I already know.”
 - b. “Don’t give away the ending.”

- B. Organisms will avoid being hurt.
 - 1. natural instinct
 - 2. learning to trust or mistrust

VI. Changing for the Better

- A. Determine what your students need.
 - 1. score study
 - 2. know your students
 - 3. assessment
 - 4. feedback
- B. Less is more
- C. Continue to practice and seek feedback
 - 1. symposia and workshops
 - 2. conferences
 - 3. lessons
 - 4. peer feedback

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