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Teaching 101

Essential Tips and Suggestions for Indoor Percussion

How to be a Successful and Effective Teacher

Many of today's instructors come from the unique school of "past experience." Some bring a wonderful sense of work ethics, personal sensitivity, and technical knowledge. Some carry harsh and difficult mannerisms and a lack of organization or focus. They are all the products of their own learning experiences and have only their own teachers after whom they can pattern their style. Many are young graduates who don't have the maturity or experience helpful in any teaching situation.

With the tremendous growth of indoor percussion within the scholastic arena we now find the added responsibility of being in tune with the various attitudes, chains of command, budgetary and time limitations, involvement of parents, and the list goes on and on. The following information is intended to assist the instructor in understanding those areas which could make their lives easier and lead them and their students to more rapid and higher success.

What are the Qualifications of a Good Instructor

- Fully competent to teach all techniques involved in the area for which they are hired whether it is program design, instruction, music, technique, or movement
- Completely understand their moral and ethical responsibilities relative to the students
- Uses appropriate language—profanity is unacceptable
- Does not fraternize with students (inappropriate), especially in scholastic situations
- Does not make rude or insulting remarks which diminish the student's self esteem
- Possesses a sense of responsibility and a work ethic that is consistent and timely
- Is always punctual to rehearsals
- Arrives prepared with lesson plans
- Possesses great productivity and time management skills
- Is accountable to director, students, staff, and parents
- Possesses strong communication skills relative to dealing with:
 - o Administration
 - o Students
 - o Parents
 - o Other Staff
 - o Circuits and Competition administrators



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- Is enthusiastic with a strong sense of commitment
- Has a balanced personality
- Understands the importance of team effort, team building, and compromise where necessary
- Establishes attainable goals and the means to achieve them
- Knows how to laugh, puts competition into perspective, turns learning into fun, and motivates students to discover their greatest potential

Time Management

Work Less-Produce More-Have Fun

In every work situation time is of the essence. The person who plans his/her time and details the tangible aspects of the job will find themselves far and ahead of those who fly by the seat of their pants. The indoor program plan is no exception. Developing this kind of time planning will not only serve you well, it will impress every other individual with whom you work. Everyone, including your students, have lives they must attend to outside of this activity. They will support you best when they can know your needs well in advance.

The Master Calendar

The master calendar is for everyone connected with the production of your ensemble. On your master calendar, enter established dates for performances, trips, exams, proms, school breaks, or any other dates that will impact your production schedule. Working backwards from the first show, figure out how many rehearsals you will need to teach the show. Note the start of production, showing all rehearsals. Then work backwards from when you will begin teaching the show to determine how many weeks you will need to teach basics. Plan enough time to have the show finished for the first contest.

Other Considerations

Did you allow any time off between band or corps and your indoor season? Please consider burn-out. Determine whether or not you want to hold 2 or 3 full weekend camps which will give you Friday night, Saturday, and Sunday; or, decide if you want to do all-day Saturdays or a series of week nights. You don't want your students' schoolwork to suffer, so be careful of overdoing the school nights.



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Detail Your Production Schedule

- Project when your music must be chosen and arranged
- Indicate when costume and prop designs must be complete
- Indicate a production schedule for show teaching and construction
- Indicate budget planning deadlines
- Indicate show planning meetings
- Indicate fundraisers

Put any reminder on your calendar that will keep you on target. Give this calendar to every person involved in the project. Prepare a more simplified version for the performers. If you plan your time, you are more likely to succeed and far less apt to be caught off-base or behind schedule. This will also allow band directors, parents, members, and administration to be able to better support your efforts.