

REHEARSAL TRIAGE & REMEDIES

CONDUCTING 201

- Conducting Pattern Review – See reverse side
- Show what you want:
 - Dynamics – Size of Pattern
 - Style (legato, staccato, accented)
 - Cueing (eyes & gestures)

REHEARSAL STRATEGIES

1) Basics First

The fundamentals of tone production must be encouraged and reviewed constantly. Do not expect everyone to remember.

Vocal

Proper posture – elevated rib cage, relaxed shoulders, tall head

Proper breathing – low/relaxed breath

Proper breath support – fast moving but controlled air

Proper oral space – open and vertical vowels

Instrumental

Wind Instruments

Proper posture – elevated rib cage, relaxed shoulders

Proper breathing – low/relaxed breath

Proper breath support – fast moving but controlled air

Proper embouchure (mouthpiece placement, teeth placement)

Strings

Proper posture & bow placement

(<http://www.violinmasterclass.com/en/masterclasses/stance-violin-position>)

*Look at the video regarding “Straight Bow Geometry”

Bow grip

(<http://www.violinmasterclass.com/en/masterclasses/right-hand/bow-grip>)

2) A meaningful performance is comprised of the following musical elements:

Accuracy

Rhythms

Notes

Precision

Intonation

Balance

Attacks

Releases

Style

Articulation

Tempo

Expression

Phrasing

Dynamics

3) Musical Triage (Score Study)

Identify the elements described above that could be stumbling blocks.

We must start with the first set of elements before worrying too much about the others. It is okay to mention dynamics and make them aware of them, but great dynamics with wrong notes will not produce the desired result.

Music selection is VERY important in this process. If we can never get past the accuracy portion of our triage, then we are choosing music that is too hard. **Find music that will allow your musicians to enjoy singing music and not just notes.**

Considerations:

Rhythmic Complexity

Ranges for every part, not just sopranos

Intervallic Complexity

Harmonic Complexity

Number of parts (SAB, SATB, SSATB, etc)

*Number of rehearsals

Plan rehearsal to address these elements in the proper order.

Rhythmic Concerns – Say the text in the proper rhythms, add notes after rhythm is corrected.

Note Concerns – Sing notes on generic syllable (la) without rhythm to help identify intervals, add rhythm and text as accuracy improves.

Intonation Concerns – Use piano for starting notes, sing a cappella and use piano to check as you go.

Balance – Every part must be heard. This can change how certain sections may approach their dynamics. They must hear everyone else but themselves.

Attacks – Breathing in time will usually correct this. Some soft consonants and vowels may require an “h” behind them to get past the consonant fast enough.

Releases – Clarify what beat sound will stop.

Articulation – Try to find examples to help explain the sound you are looking for. (i.e. for staccato you might have the choir imagine a bouncing ping-pong ball)

Tempo – Many times songs will be learned at slower tempi, it is important to be sure it all stays together properly at the tempo you plan to present it.

Phrasing – This is a master class in itself, but a basic guide is to sing it like it would be said. Inflections and length of phrase.

Dynamics – These are relative, and will be dictated by numerous factors.

4) Rehearsal Triage

As rehearsal takes place, we must be ready to change course at any time. It is important to remember that we stick to the order of triage. This will ensure that the music is, at a minimum, presented correctly. Correct notes and rhythms will not produce a musical presentation, but it will still be somewhat pleasant to the ear.

As things go better, sing a cappella at times to ensure solidify parts and to help the group gain confidence.

➤ DIAGNOSE & FIX

- When a problem is addressed, require it to be performed correctly at least 3 times right then. (Make them prove it)
- With rhythms, many times the problems occur at the entrance after a rest or a sustained note.
- Any balance issues must be addressed with ALL of the members. (Balance is an ensemble problem)
- Phrasing issues can be tricky as the music becomes more complex. In some cases, individual lines need to be given specific instructions, then everything put together so they can hear the total affect.