

Harmonizing your Program:

Cultivating a Positive Environment and Building Strong Rapport in the Orchestra

Introduction:

What are your strengths?

What is your end goal with your orchestra program?

Overview:

Creating a nurturing and positive environment within the orchestra classroom is essential for fostering student engagement, musical growth, and overall well-being. Today we will delve into the multifaceted role of teachers as leaders in shaping a supportive and encouraging atmosphere. Emphasizing the importance of positive rapport with student musicians, the session will explore strategies and best practices to enhance teacher-student relationships, boost morale, and create a harmonious learning space.

Objectives:

1. **Understanding Your Role:** Examine the pivotal role of teachers in influencing the classroom environment and the impact of their interactions on student motivation and performance.
2. **Building Positive Rapport:** Discuss practical approaches for developing and maintaining positive relationships with student musicians, fostering trust, respect, and open communication.
3. **Promoting Inclusivity and Respect:** Explore techniques to ensure all students feel valued and included, promoting a culture of mutual respect and support.
4. **Encouraging Student Ownership/Buy-In:** Learn how to empower students by involving them in decision-making processes and fostering a sense of ownership and responsibility within the orchestra.
5. **Implementing Effective Classroom Management:** Share strategies for maintaining a positive and productive classroom atmosphere, including conflict resolution and proactive behavior management.

Leadership Levels: from 5 Level of Leadership by John C. Maxwell

Level 5: Pinnacle

Respect, students follow you because of who you are and what you represent.

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Level 4: People Development

Reproduction, student follow you because of what you have done for the organization.

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Level 3: Production

Results, student follow you because of what you have done for them.

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Level 2: Permission

Relationships, students follow you because they want to.

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Level 1: Position

Rights, students follow you because they have to.

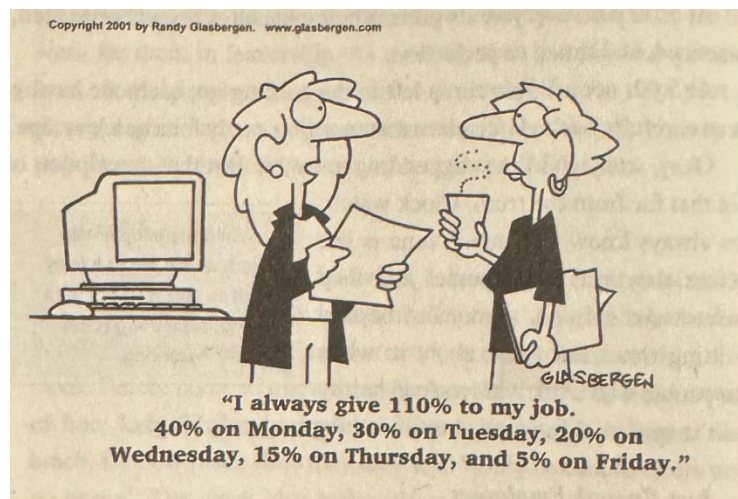
Outline:

Share a pet peeve

1. Intro

- Importance of a positive classroom environment

“Leaders who rely on their position and title are the weakest... clock-watchers”



2. The Teacher's Influence

- Impact of teacher attitudes and behaviors

Frances Hesselbein, former chair of the Leader to Leader Institute says, "Leadership is less about what you do, and much more about who you are. People see through your bag of tricks and phony behaviors."

3. Building and Sustaining Positive Rapport

- Techniques for connecting with students individually and collectively

Research conducted by Opinion Research Corporation with American Workers found that an overwhelming majority of workers valued "leading by example" above all other leadership traits.

- Communication strategies that foster trust and openness

4. Creating an Inclusive and Respectful Environment

- Activities and practices that promote inclusivity

- Addressing and celebrating diversity within the orchestra

- Bullying prevention

5. Empowering Student Musicians

- Encouraging student input and leadership opportunities

John Wooden, legendary UCLA basketball coach would always say he would not designate a captain until after the first 2-3 games. "Don't tell me what you are going to do. Show me"

- Benefits of shared decision-making and collaborative learning

6. Effective Classroom Management

- Proactive strategies for maintaining order and focus

- Conflict resolution techniques

7. Conclusion

“Success demands more than most people are willing to offer, but not more than they are capable of giving”

- Recap

- Q&A session to address specific concerns and scenarios

Positive rapport byproducts (this is what we are looking for):

1. Enhanced Learning Environment
2. Increased Student Engagement
3. Improved Behavior and Classroom Management
4. Enhanced Communication
5. Increased Confidence and Self-Esteem
6. Better Academic Performance
7. Fostering a Love for Music
8. Developing Social and Emotional Skills
9. Training responsible citizens with a strong sense of empathy (long term impact)

More maxims about leadership:

- It's our responsibility to move towards our people. Get out of your territory (office). Learn who they are. Find out what they need and help them.
- A leader doesn't need to have all the answers.
- Always include others.
- Don't mention your title (pulling rank).
- You can care for people without leading them, but you cannot lead them effectively beyond level 1 without caring for them.
- Nothing lifts a person like being valued by others.
- It's not about what you achieve in life. It's about who you bring with you on your journey.

NOTES:

Importance of a positive classroom environment (Academic, social, emotional)

- Students are more likely to participate actively and take risks, which is essential for artistic and musical growth.
- When students feel valued and respected, they are more engaged and motivated.
- Positive rapport can lead to higher enthusiasm for the subject matter.
- Students who have a good relationship with their director are less likely to exhibit disruptive behavior.
- Positive rapport helps establish mutual respect, making it easier to manage the classroom effectively.
- Students are more likely to communicate openly with a teacher they trust, sharing their thoughts, concerns, and ideas.
- This open line of communication can help identify and address personal/academic issues early.
- Positive interactions with directors boosts students' confidence and self-esteem.
- Encouragement and constructive feedback help students feel competent and appreciated, fostering a sense of achievement.
- Research has shown that students who have a positive relationship with their teacher tend to perform better academically.
- A supportive director can inspire students to strive for excellence and reach their full potential.
- A positive rapport can instill a lifelong love for music in students.
- When students enjoy their time in the music classroom, they are more likely to continue pursuing music outside of school.
- Music education often involves collaboration and teamwork, which can be facilitated by a positive classroom atmosphere.
- Students learn important social and emotional skills, such as empathy, cooperation, and effective communication.
- The positive experiences and relationships formed in the music classroom can have a lasting impact on students' lives.
- Former students will carry the lessons learned into their future endeavors.

Matt's controversial notes on the use of sarcasm:

Sarcasm can easily be misunderstood, especially by younger students or those who may not have fully learned how to decipher. This can lead to confusion and miscommunication.

Loss of Trust and Respect:

Frequent use of sarcasm can erode the trust and respect students have for their teacher. Students might feel belittled, embarrassed, or disrespected, which can harm the teacher-student relationship.

Negative Impact on Self-Esteem:

Sarcasm, especially if directed at a student, can hurt their self-esteem and make them feel singled out or ridiculed. This can be particularly damaging in a learning environment where students should feel safe and supported.

Classroom Management Issues:

Sarcasm can create a negative or hostile classroom atmosphere, leading to increased behavioral issues and decreased student engagement.

Ingenuine Communication:

Sarcasm can make it difficult for students to discern when the teacher is being serious or joking, leading to inconsistency in communication and expectations. (Stephen Colbert example)

Cultural and Individual Differences:

Students from different cultural backgrounds might not interpret sarcasm the same way. What might be intended as a light-hearted comment could be perceived as offensive or confusing.

Role Modeling:

Teachers are role models for their students. Using sarcasm can set a precedent that such behavior is acceptable in any situation, which might lead to students using sarcasm inappropriately with others.