

Balancing Teacher, Performer, and Administrator

Developing Your Career as a *Savvy Street-Wise Musician*

{Joel Gordon - September 16th, 2018 - Truman State University}

I. Teacher (who you are in the classroom and around the community)

What are aspects that your area/school is missing/lacking that you can make happen?

- Chamber Music
- Community Outreach
- Theory Class
- Private Lessons*
- Summer Camps
- Pep Band
- Jazz Groups*
- Holiday Tour
- Honor Ensembles
- Peer Leadership
- Beginner Fundamentals*
- Color/Winter Guard
- Fundraising Programs
- Student Recitals
- Conference Performances

What will people **associate** you with at first thought?

What will people **see** you doing in public?

What will people **hire** you for a job?

Quality is grown slowly. Be careful to implement planned components one at a time...

1. Make a schedule of how much time to invest where. Be *intentional* with time.
2. Strive to “get more done” while in the classroom--leave school at school.
3. Have a priority hierarchy of NEED vs. NICE vs. NOT.

Building relationships, consistency, and trust are the most important focus.

II. Performer (who you are on the bandstand and in the scene)

What kind of group are you looking to perform with?

- Concert Band
- Swing/Big Band
- Top 40 Covers
- Contemporary Worship
- Acapella Group
- Chamber Ensemble*
- Jazz Combo*
- Chamber Choir
- Traditional Church
- Folk/World Music
- Full Orchestra
- Wedding Band
- Full Chorus
- New Music*
- Piano/Organ

“The Spectrum of Performing for Payment”

JOB	GIG	SHOW
High pay (\$\$\$)	Medium pay (\$\$)	Low Pay (\$)
Low artistic choice (&)	Medium artistic choice (&&)	High artistic choice (&&&)
Ex: Swing Era tunes at a wedding reception on contract.	Ex: “Easy Listening” music at a restaurant for a flat fee.	Ex: All original charts at a theatre with a cover charge.

How to get performance opportunities:

1. Decide what kind of group you'd like to make/perform with.
2. Survey your scene (area) for what groups or venues are available.
3. Go to concerts/performances of the groups -or-
Go to concerts/performances at the venues where you'd like to perform.
4. Introduce yourself to people and offer to sub or follow up with emails/calls.
5. Put together a press kit to send/share with groups/venues -or-
Invite local musicians to play in your group and give them your cut of the \$.
6. Follow up. (contacts need to be maintained or they are forgotten/lost).

III. Administrator (who you are in the office and beyond...)

Find your niche of 2-3 specialties that you are passionate about.

Ex: I am a cello teacher and chamber musician.

Ex: I am a marching drill writer and drum major clinician.

Ex: I am a show choir arranger, vocal coach, and musical theatre director.

How is the world going to know what you do best? What has your name on it in public?

- | | | |
|-------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|
| -Personal Website | -YouTube Videos | -Social Media |
| -Word-of-Mouth | -Published Articles | -Conference Presentations |
| -Masterclasses | -Online Resources | -Press Critiques |
| -Local News | -Professional Photos | -University Connection |
| -Interest Groups | -Community Events | -Fan-Base Mailing List |

Food for thought: *Sometimes events are worth doing because of the connection or publicity rather than just for the pay...sometimes events are not worth doing for the connection or publicity rather than just for the pay because you are decreasing the value of musicians as a whole. Discerning between the two is the difference between a breakthrough and blackeye for your career.*

IV. Closing Thoughts (if you only remember a few takeaways...)

Interests that I have put on the back burner to pursue current projects:

- | | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|
| -Playing Guitar | -Writing for Big Band | -Singing/Vocal Study |
| -Elementary Music | -Saxophone Quartet | -Jazz Studies Grad School |
| -Advanced Conducting | -Jazz Culture Research | -Practicing Bassoon |
| -Joining a Concert Band | -Sound/Post-Production | -Studying Music History |
| -Taking Private Lessons | -Bass in Church Band | -Playing Soccer |

It is better to do two or three focuses well than try to keep up with fifteen skills.

There is always a compliment to be had...a negative comment can get back to you...

You need to protect time for what is MOST important in life (faith, family, fellowship...)