

# The Conductor's Part Always Isn't in the Score

*a Clinic Presented*

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The score serves as the conductor's roadmap, yet it provides only a portion of the information a music director needs to successfully lead an ensemble. Explore a range of practical applications on leadership, stage etiquette and conducting technique that you can use to fulfill the multiple roles of a conductor.

## 1. THE CONDUCTOR AS A LEADER

- Inspire performers to do their best; inspire the following in each player
  - Desire to belong to the group; pride of membership
  - Willingness to practice the music on their own
  - Willingness to attend and work hard at all rehearsals
  - Desire to give the best at concerts
  
- How can I become a better leader as a conductor?
  - Study problems of leadership
  - Study as much as possible about music and non-musical subjects (languages, literature, art, architecture, acoustics, sports)
  - Choose music you love
  - Choose your proper work level
  - Take a personal interest in your players
  - Develop a clear conducting technique

## 2. PRACTICING CONDUCTING

- Use audio and visual aids – recordings, mirrors, videotapes, metronomes
  
- Visualize a group
  
- Sing
  
- Conduct in silence
  
- Develop your ears
  
- Develop independence in your left hand

### 3. STAGE ETIQUETTE

- Pre-concert check
  - Make sure ensemble is set up properly
  - Don't leave cases or extra equipment on stage
  - Make sure sound equipment, lights are working
  - Check podium and height of conductor's stand
  - Plan your path to the podium
  - Plan final bows
  - Leave scores on stage
- Conductor's stage entrance
  - Move to the podium with a continuous flow and sense of purpose
  - Carry your baton with you
  - Acknowledge the audience with a smile and bow
- In between musical selections
  - Don't change the music immediately
  - Recognize the ensemble, soloists, composer and/or arranger
- While you're conducting
  - Avoid bending or stooping
  - Keep shoulders down in relaxed, normal position
  - Avoid looking casual or indifferent, unless you want to relax the atmosphere in a tense moment
  - Avoid annoying habits (including those with keys, glasses, watches)
- Announcements
- Concert attire

### 4. CONDUCTING SOLOS

- Agree with the soloist on interpretation before the first rehearsal
- Rehearse the ensemble before adding the soloist
- Be prepared for surprises