

Continuing Education: The Key to a Successful Career for Directors AND Students

Dr. Tim Lautzenheiser

*“I began my education at a very early age
—in fact, right after I left college.”*

Winston Churchill, 1874 - 1965

There is more **new** information in one issue of the *Wall Street Journal* than our grandparents consumed in a semester of high school. With modern technology and the ongoing exchange of breakthrough data, the educational process (school) isn't something we do, but it is something we **CONTINUE TO DO** throughout our lives; it is never-ending and it is gaining momentum at warp speed. Times have changed and our attitudes about the importance of constantly **UPGRADING** our knowledge base must change with them.

The old paradigm stated: “Go to college and learn to be a band director, then dedicate your life to sharing the learned musical knowledge with your students.”

The new paradigm states: “Go to college to learn as much as possible during your undergraduate tenure, then start teaching and continue your educational growth throughout your professional career while dedicating your life to sharing your evolving library of the learned knowledge with your students.”

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It is so easy to “stick our heads in the sand” and ignore the latest contributions, from the newest literature to technological breakthroughs. It's far easier to “do it the way we've always done it,” (and not complicate the agenda with all this “new stuff” that really hasn't stood the test-of-time, often a convenient rationalization) than to venture out into the

The veteran music educators are clearly aware:

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realm of the unknown. It is also much safer. However, shouldn't we be dedicated to availing our students to the **FINEST MUSIC EDUCATION POSSIBLE**? How can our students grow unless we grow? Shouldn't we be the role models for ongoing self-improvement?

Times are changing! Unlike days-gone-by the band director/teacher is no longer in a position of being **THE ALL-KNOWING EXPERT**. Our students (in many instances) are more masterful at operating a computer than we are, or finding information on the Internet (within a matter of minutes) we have been searching-out for the last several months. The trusty old metronome no longer merely provides a mechanical (tic-toc) to insure a steady pulse,

but through a technological metamorphosis, it has been added to program that can record, evaluate, tune, correct, accompany, and even email the results to the band

director... all this while still providing the faithful tempo of its old-style ancestor.

**Watch for Dr. Tim at
the TBA Convention/
Clinic this summer.
He will present a
leadership program
especially beneficial
for students.**

Continuing Education

The Winston Churchill quote at the beginning of this article is a wonderful bit of wisdom; we must heed the message within, “The completion of the college requisites and the celebration of our graduation merely provided the gateway to THE COMMENCEMENT (the commencing/the beginning/ the start) of our REAL education.”

Today’s master teachers are also today’s master students as they embrace the responsibilities of their CONTINUING EDUCATION via:

Regional Workshops: This has become a popular cooperative effort involving the local colleges/ universities and the area teachers. From conducting seminars to organizational time-management sessions, a quick visit to the local college’s web site will offer a docket of the ongoing offerings.

Summer Classes: Institutions of higher education are now extending their summer menus to go well beyond the traditional “complete your master’s degree” agenda. Many of the summer music camps (for student musicians) have a “Director’s Track” featuring a faculty of teachers who are modern-day experts in an array of subject areas: Building a strong parent-booster organization, recruiting and retention of beginners, how to create an adjunct staff of private teachers, developing a successful public relations program, etc.

Conventions: This particular forum has a multi-faceted payoff:

- A clinic schedule that serves as an educational buffet to discover what is happening in other parts of the musical world.
- The chance to visit exhibits demonstrating the most current materials from publishers, manufacturers, and countless music industry supporters.
- A series of concerts to serve as bold reminders of what is possible as we readjust the expectations and raise the bar for every aspect of our programs.
- The chance to network with our colleagues, create new professional relationships, and “talk the talk” with those who share a similar pathway.

Personal Reading and Listening: The most current information is right in front of us. It comes in the form of books and CD’s. A quick “search” on the Internet will offer a treasury of wonderful materials certain to increase the AWARENESS of even the most “learned” music educator, and it is growing per hour.

As the well-known television advertisement says, “It just doesn’t get any better than this!” We are at the most exciting time EVER in the educational community. As band directors we know, “The students in our bands today are marked to be the leaders of tomorrow.”

Our CONTINUING EDUCATION insures (our students’) CONTINUING SUCCESS.

Dr. Tim Lautzenheiser is a well-known name in the music education world as a teacher, clinician, author, composer, consultant, adjudicator, and above all, a trusted friend to anyone interested in working with young people in developing a desire for excellence. His own career involves ten years of successful college band directing at Northern Michigan University, the University of Missouri, and New Mexico State University. Following three years in the music industry, he created Attitude Concepts for Today, an organization that manages workshops, seminars, and convention speaking engagements on positive attitude and effective leadership training. Tim presently holds the Earl Dunn Distinguished Lecturer position at Ball State University. Tim is the Director of Education for Conn-Selmer, and he serves as the national spokesperson for MENC’s “Make a Difference with Music” program. Tim’s books 'The Art of Successful Teaching' and 'The Joy of Inspired Teaching' are best sellers. He is co-author of Hal Leonard’s popular band method, 'Essential Elements' and the creator of Director’s Communication Kits. Tim is a graduate of Ball State University and the University of Alabama. He was awarded an Honorary Doctorate Degree from VanderCook College of Music. Additional awards include the distinguished Sudler Order of Merit from the John Philip Sousa Foundation, Mr. Holland’s Opus Award and the Music Industry Award from the Midwest Clinic Board of Directors.