

Doing Things Better Than We Think They Need To Be Done

Dr. Tim Lautzenheiser

Having spent 35 years traveling all over the world presenting clinics and workshops for aspiring student leaders, there have been countless young people who have come to the forefront to embrace the challenges of the leadership agenda. Through all the successes (and some non-successes), certain people stand out from the rest of the pack. This short story spotlights one of THE VERY BEST of THE VERY BEST. It spotlights a very special young gal who in a signature quiet fashion demonstrated a level of leadership unknown in common hours. She lived the adage: LEADERSHIP ISN'T SOMETHING YOU DO; LEADERSHIP IS SOMETHING YOU ARE.

Enjoy this heart-warming story, and invite your own students to realize EVERYONE has the potential to be an exemplary leader at all times.

As we were preparing for the marathon of our rigorous summer schedule, a band director colleague called and said, "Tim, I have a remarkable sophomore student who is the ultimate leader. Is there any chance she could be a volunteer at one of your camps? I do think she could make a wonderful contribution and she is eager to be involved."

A sophomore?!...you must be

joking!...you think a sophomore is ready for this level of responsibility?! It's difficult for the adult volunteers to meet the high demands placed on them during one of the intensive leadership retreats.

He was insistent, so despite my skepticism I agreed to have the young lady come along even though I had little (if any) hope for her success, especially since she was going to be surrounded by people who were on their A-game at all times.

She was quiet, polite, connected, and demonstrated a high level of appreciation for all. During the pre-event staff meetings she made it a point to meet the rest of the adult/college volunteers and showed a sincere interest in their personal and professional lives. She willingly took on many of the less-than-glamorous tasks with a sense of purpose and passion. She was always the first to show up and the last to leave, and she never failed to thank me at the end of the day... NEVER.

Her contribution to the entire week was beyond measure, and her efforts far surpassed many of the veteran volunteers. Her

energy level was always positive, her emphasis was on the welfare of others, and she had an innate ability to see what needed to be done before others identified the area of concern.

At the conclusion of the event, we all said our farewells, the volunteers were given their due accolades, and

everyone left the site with grand feelings of accomplishment. As I made the final pass through the various classrooms to make sure nothing had been left, I spotted the young lady rearranging the chairs, cleaning the whiteboards, etc. Amazing...simply amazing.

When all was neatly put away and the details had been handled, she handed me a thank you card, gave me a big hug, and said, "There is no way I can express how much I appreciate your willingness to let me be a part of this experience; I know you took a chance and I'm indebted. It was an honor to serve alongside you and your colleagues." I asked her to sit down and share her secret to leadership success. She responded, "This is my mantra: I make an effort to do everything better than I think it needs to be done."

**"This is my mantra:
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FYI: This very special leader is now a medical doctor, and she serves her hometown community with the same sense of importance she brought to the table during her volunteer week at the camp.

We can all “talk it,” but the real leaders “walk it.”

In the words of William Arthur Ward:

Do more than belong: PARTICIPATE.

Do more than care: HELP.

Do more than belief: PRACTICE IT.

Do more than be fair: BE KIND.

Do more than forgive: FORGET.

Do more than dream: WORK TO MAKE
THE DREAM COME TRUE!

What a grand bit of wisdom. May we all dedicate ourselves to DOING THINGS BETTER THAN WE THINK THEY NEED TO BE DONE.

Tim Lautzenheiser is a trusted friend to anyone interested in working with young people in developing a desire for excellence and a passion for high level achievement. His career involves ten years of successful college band directing at Northern Michigan University, the University of Missouri, and New Mexico State University. Following his tenure at the university level, he spent three years with McCormick's Enterprises working as Executive Director of Bands of America. In 1981, Tim created Attitude Concepts for Today, Inc., an organization designed to manage the many requests for workshops, seminars, and convention speaking engagements focusing on the area of positive attitude and effective leadership training. Over two million students have experienced his acclaimed student leadership workshops over the last three decades. He presently serves as Vice President of Education for Conn-Selmer, Inc. In addition, he continues his rigorous travel schedule touting the importance of arts education for every child.

His books, produced by G.I.A. Publications, Inc., continue to be bestsellers in the educational world. He is also co-author of popular band method Essential Elements and is the Senior Educational Consultant for Hal Leonard, Inc. Tim is the Senior Educational Advisor for Music for All and NAMM (The International Music Products Association).

Tim holds degrees from Ball State University and the University of Alabama. In 1995 he was awarded an Honorary Doctorate from the VanderCook College of Music. He is presently an adjunct faculty member at Ball State University (Earl Dunn Distinguished Lecturer), Indiana-Purdue/Ft. Wayne University, and Butler University. In addition, he serves on The Midwest Clinic Board of Directors and the Western International Band Clinic/American Band College Board of Directors.