

Persistence: The Guaranteed Fuel For Success

Dr. Tim Lautzenheiser

Those who are committed to *excellence* are always exploring new sources of information to increase their personal library-of-understanding. In doing so they discover uncharted horizons they could not previously imagine; it is an exciting and endless journey. Might I suggest you are reading the various articles in this publication in hopes of finding some the latest, greatest data that will offer new possibilities for your own program; it is one of the predictable characteristics of those people we have come to label as *master teachers*.

The truly great educators SENSE *what is* and they move forward in the constant development of *what can be*. While there will always be systemic mandates that challenge every teacher, they do not serve as a deterrent in reaching the given goal. The *masters* have “given-up giving up.” They realize PERSISTENCE is always the answer to reaching the destination. While it is easy to become discouraged or to lose one’s enthusiasm along the way, the strength-and-determination to PRESS ON is (and always will be) primary.

One of the most famous quotes comes from J. Calvin Coolidge, 30th President of the United States:

“Nothing in the world can take the place of persistence. Talent will not; nothing is more common than unsuccessful men with talent. Genius will not; unrewarded genius is almost a proverb. Education will not; the world is full of educated derelicts.

Persistence and determination alone are omnipotent. The slogan Press On! has solved and always will solve the problems of the human race.”

It is one thing to write about it, it is quite another thing to put it into action. And, let’s be honest, there have been many times for all of us when we wanted to throw-in-the-towel, however one gains momentum by moving forward one step at a time. Whether it is inspiration or perspiration...or a combination of both, the willingness to *stay the course* is a cornerstone attribute of those very special teachers who walk-their-talk day in and day out.

A dear friend passed along this wonderful quote from Penny Kittle’s delightful book, *The Greatest Catch: A Life of Teaching*:

“When you’re teaching you’re going to see people who cut corners, don’t work as hard as they should, or just complain all the time about everything. I believe you’ve got to do what’s right, every single day of your life, even if the rest of the crowd isn’t. Teaching is about honor and goodness and mercy. It really is. And no one will be watching you most of the time. You either live up to the calling of the profession or you don’t, and most likely no one will ever know but you.

But it matters because your students are counting on you.”

Therein lies the part we can control; our own daily approach to not only WHAT we do, but the WAY we do WHAT we do. We **DO** have some say-so in all of this. We do have the

wherewithal to take each present-moment and make it a teaching-moment. While our rehearsals and our classes might not reflect the perfect model at all times, as long as there are students who choose to learn music and make music, we

have work-to-do, and—as we know—it is some of the most important learning they will experience along their curricular pathway; YOU have a positive impact on every aspect of their lives. It matters because **YOU MATTER!**

Dr. Tim Lautzenheiser began his teaching career at Northern Michigan University. He then moved to the University of Missouri, and from there to New Mexico State University. During that time, Tim developed highly acclaimed groups in both instrumental and vocal music. Following his tenure in the college band directing world, 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 teacher in-service workshops, student leadership seminars, and convention speaking engagements focusing on the area of effective leadership training. Tim presently serves as Vice President of Education for Conn-Selmer, Inc.

**Gain more inspiration
from Dr. Tim at the
Opening Session at
the Convention/Clinic
on Thursday, July 21,
9:30 a.m.**