

Advice to New Teachers...

NEVER FORGET

Richard Floyd

NEVER FORGET why you chose this wonderful profession in the first place. It is very likely that you were seduced into this magic world of music and music making because of the way it made you feel.

You are not beginning this life journey because you finally learned to play the chromatic scale at MM=144. You didn't choose music as your career path because you finally played a "high C" on your trumpet or mastered a challenging passage. You chose music because of an emotional connection. It was that defining moment or series of moments when music touched your soul, and you came to the realization that you couldn't live without it, and you were consumed with the dream of sharing it with others.

Never lose sight of that reality. It will be easy to become obsessed with personal achievement, extrinsic goals, a boundless litany of suggested strategies, endless competitions and seductive peripheral activities that disguise themselves as being central to the true purpose of music education. Do not be seduced by these illusions and false values. If you remain ever mindful of those magic moments that ignited the fire for making and teaching music and you strive to create those kinds of experiences in your students then your professional life will be happy, fruitful, and long.

NEVER FORGET to seek opportunities to play your instrument and personally make music. That is a major component of what brought you to this juncture in your life. It is essential that you remember what it is like to be on "both sides of the stick."

NEVER FORGET that it is the art of making music that gives it true value. In truth, recreating the notes on a printed page of music is no more or less rewarding than solving an algebra equation. No music has been created. But when those notes and rhythms are infused with your human spirit and your passion for creating and sharing beauty the outcome has the potential to be priceless.

NEVER FORGET to maintain a musical fortress of great music that offers you inspiration, comfort, and revival. There will be countless times when you will need to be reminded of the intrinsic place of music in your life and the lives of others. Your musical fortress must reflect the greatest music that mankind has to offer. Be it Mozart or Mahler or composers on the cutting edge of compositional thought make it the best of what is out there. And it must be a compendium of great music that constantly grows and evolves.

NEVER FORGET that you will always be a student. Explore new frontiers, embrace fresh ideas, and seek opportunities to collaborate with master teachers. Be on the lookout for occasions to observe and be engaged with the finest teachers and conductors within your sphere. The great golf teacher Harvey Penick said it best, "If you want to be a better golfer don't have lunch with lousy players."

NEVER FORGET that it is perfectly OK to be pleased with your successes. To be pleased is perfectly normal and healthy. But, never, ever be satisfied. If you are satisfied, you become comfortable and if you are comfortable, you become complacent and if you are complacent you will cease to challenge yourself and cease to grow.

NEVER FORGET as the Chinese proverb reminds us, "It is good to have a goal to journey towards, but it is the journey that matters in the end."

And above all, **NEVER FORGET** ...life is a "do it yourself" project.



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because of an
emotional connection.**

RICHARD FLOYD is presently active as a conductor, music educator and administrator. He has enjoyed a distinguished and highly successful career at virtually every level of wind band performance from beginning band programs through high school and university wind ensembles as well as adult community bands. In 2014 Floyd retired as State Director of Music at the University of Texas at Austin where he coordinated all facets of secondary school music competition for some 3500 performing organizations throughout the state for 30 years. He now holds the title Texas State Director of Music Emeritus. He also served as Musical Director and Conductor of the Austin Symphonic Band that is viewed to be one of the premier adult concert bands in America. Mr. Floyd has toured extensively throughout the United States, Canada, Australia and Europe as a clinician, adjudicator and conductor including appearances in 43 American states and in 9 other countries. He is a frequently featured clinician for the TMEA and TBA Conventions and has presented four conducting and rehearsal technique clinics for The Midwest Clinic. Paramount in Floyd's life is his wife Cheryl, who enjoys her own distinguished career as one of the premier middle school directors in the nation, their son Weston and Dick's daughter Chris and her extended family.