SAA Biennial Conference 2014

Metamorphosis from Student into Artist Teacher

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This presentation will address a variety of situations and decisions that young teachers have to deal with as they make the transition from their collegiate years into the beginning stages of their professional teaching careers.

1) How to make a smooth transition from your degree into the workforce:

- Plan ahead.
- Develop a private studio as soon as possible.
- Observe colleagues and other artist teachers.
- Diversify your teaching and learning experiences.
- Know your worth and have a plan:
    - Setting rate
    - Emergency fund
    - Debt & savings
    - Retirement
    - Taxes
    - Health insurance
    - Professional insurance
- Find a mentor.

2) The lifelong benefits of finding and/or staying connected with a mentor:

- Receiving advice
- Continual inspiration
- Building connections

3) Job applications and interviews:

A) INITIAL APPLICATION:

- John Hopkins Peabody Institute Music Entrepreneurship & Career Center: http://www.peabody.jhu.edu/conservatory/mecc/resumes.html
- Resumé & CV **see attached examples*
- References
- Cover Letter
    - Eastman School of Music resource: http://www.esm.rochester.edu/iml/careers/documents/coverletter2005_000.pdf
    - "How To Say It" by Rosalie Maggio
- Teaching Philosophy: **see attached examples*
- Videos (performance, teaching, conducting)

- Other Miscellaneous Items (you might be asked to submit): **see attached examples*
    - Course syllabus and/or outline
    - Lesson plan(s)
    - Questionnaire(s)

B) PHONE INTERVIEW:

- Do research on the school, history of department/program, and the faculty.
- Make sure you have had plenty of rest the night before, and that you are able to converse collegially in an environment free of distractions and/or noise.
- List of frequently asked questions **see attached examples*

C) ON CAMPUS INTERVIEW:

- Do your best to go into this experience rested.
- Be prepared to be on your feet and talking the whole time.
- STAY HYDRATED.
- Bring snacks/food with you that you can eat in your hotel room at night. Meals with faculty will be built into this experience, but -- depending on how eager they are to talk to you, you might not end up actually getting to eat very much.
- Typical itinerary often includes:
    - Meals and meetings with faculty
    - Meetings with the Dean and Provost (if it is a university)
    - Performance
    - Masterclass
    - Lecture
    - Conducting an ensemble
    - "Meet and greet" with students and other community members
        - It is important to remember that the students are the heart of our jobs. With this in mind, be prepared to answer their questions and know that they are evaluating you and will have a say in the choice of the final candidate.

D) CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS:

- Do not feel pressured to say yes immediately to an initial offer.
- Be clear on what your duties and responsibilities will be.
- Research:
    - Cost of living
    - Moving expenses
    - Average salary for position and area
    - Benefits and retirement plans
- How to handle the actual negotiation conversation:
    - Know clearly what parts of the offer you are prepared to accept, and what items you would like to negotiate.
    - Be prepared to be flexible.
    - When negotiating salary:
        - Do NOT be the first person to throw out a number.
        - If/when you are asked what salary you would be comfortable with, do not give an exact number -- give a range. Make sure you know clearly what range you could be comfortable living within, (i.e. know your bottom line), and quote the top end of that range. You most likely will not get it, but you will probably end up somewhere in between, which is a good thing.
        - You will know what kind of cushion there is based on the counter-offer. If the committee chair is willing to go up quite a bit then you know that there is

latitude. However, if the committee chair only goes up by a small amount, then you will know that there is probably not a lot of "wiggle room," in which case you can decide whether you are comfortable with the offer or not.

4) Tips for adapting to a variety of teaching situations:

- **TEACHING ENVIRONMENTS:**
    - Private Studio
    - Public School
    - Music Franchise
    - Established Music School
    - Pre-College String Program (attached to institution or university)
    - University Teaching Position
- **STUDIO POLICIES:** **see attached examples*
    - Important things to include:
        - Welcome & brief summary of teaching philosophy
        - Tenets of Suzuki Method and Talent Education
        - Outline of parent's responsibilities
        - Private lesson expectations
        - Group class expectations
        - Information for brand new students
        - Recital and "special events" calendar
        - Lesson schedule
        - Attendance and makeup lesson policy
        - Information on where/how to get instrument and other required materials
        - Fees and payment
        - Small contract to be signed by parent and teacher *(teacher makes a copy of this page and keeps it on file)*
    - Consider giving an informal "quiz" on studio policy to parents **see attached example*
- **PARENT EDUCATION:**
    - Two basic models for initial parent education: group setting or one on one
    - Reflections on what we have found to be most useful in our own parent education journeys:
        - Thoroughness
        - Emphasis on primary goal of Suzuki Method: <u>CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT</u>
        - Practical assignments that prepare parents for what their actual duties will be as a Suzuki parent
    - Continuing parent education ideas:
        - Continue parent discussions during theory classes on group days.
        - Have parent book clubs with Suzuki/music related literature.
        - Set up system for "old" families to mentor new ones just starting.
        - Arrange for a parent "get together" (retreat) once a semester.
- **TRANSFER STUDENTS:**
    - Transfer students can present unique challenges.
    - Establish expectations and boundaries within first lesson.

    - Stay true to the "One Point Lesson."
    - Respect previous teachers.

- **UNIQUE CHALLENGES YOUNG TEACHERS FACE:**

    - Being the youngest and newest person on faculty
    - Not being parents yet

5) Technology's place in the Studio

- **WEBSITE**

    - DIY Resources:
        - Wordpress.com
        - AboutMe.com
    - Potential items to include:
        - Welcome & mission statement/teaching philosophy
        - Teacher bio for private studio; faculty/staff bios for larger program
        - Studio/program information for private lessons, group classes, chamber music, orchestra(s)
        - Studio/school policies and procedures
        - Placement/registration forms
        - Financial information (i.e. cost, types of aid offered if any, etc.)
        - Calendar
        - Page with links to music stores/companies, recordings, (especially Pre-Twinkle pieces that are not on CD), practice websites and helpers, miscellaneous PDF handouts
    - Technology waiver form (cover yourself legally) **see attached example*

- **FACEBOOK**

    - Have a page for the program/studio.

- **NEWSLETTER**

    - Items to potentially include:
        - Recent school "happenings" and upcoming events
        - Highlights of students who have completed practicing challenges, won solo competitions, or played a special concert.
        - "Guest" articles written by students, parents, and/or other teachers
        - Calendar
        - A "fun" item such as a new practice chart, (created by student, parent and/or teacher) that can be copied and used
    - Maximize avenues for distribution: print, email, post on website.

- **SMARTPHONES/TABLETS**

    - Photos & video for home practice
    - Cell phone policy
    - Apps:
        - "Clear Tune Chromatic Tuner"
        - "The Amazing Slow-Downer"
        - "The Coach's Eye"

        - "Tally"
        - "Winner Dinner Chicken Spinner"

6) Time Management

- **BALANCING LIFE WITH WORK**
    - Know your priorities.
    - Professionally, work toward a balance between teaching and personal practice.
    - Carve out time in your schedule to handle email and phone communications.
    - Be kind to yourself.

- **TIME MANAGEMENT IN LESSONS**
    - Have a tracking system that helps you to keep a consistent schedule of what you work on in each lesson.
    - Use lessons as a model for what home practice should look like.

7) How to cultivate "good citizens of this world"

- We educate by example: *Important to remember that "80% of what we teach is who we are." --Eric Booth*
- Encourage a teamwork mentality.
- Have a theme for the year.
- Provide opportunities for service.
- Keep standards of excellence in practice, performing, and teaching front and center.

Everything we do and say in teaching, performing, leading, and our interactions with our students and our colleagues should reflect Dr. Suzuki's philosophies. We live out his philosophy in how we teach. Parent education at the beginning is crucial, and if we can build the community between students/families and instill the real meaning of "Every Child Can" (no matter how long it takes!) in our studios/programs, then this influence will continue to spread out to our communities and the world.

**Please feel free to contact us through the SAA website if you would like a copy of a more detailed handout, additional resources, and/or if you have any questions or thoughts regarding this presentation. We'd love to hear from you!*