

Creating an Indoor Percussion Ensemble



Competitive indoor percussion is an exciting branch of the pageantry arts with approximately 10,000 young people participating in ensembles in the United States, Canada, Japan, and Western Europe.

Many local organizations are developing and growing, most of which are governed by the ensembles themselves. These organizations, often called “circuits,” provide competitions many weekends from January through April. Involved with most circuits are adjudication associations which provide judges for the competitions of the circuits. These judging associations may be separately governed or attached to the circuit as a separate branch of that circuit.

Responsibility of the circuit:

- Develop growth in the activity at the local level
- Administer local competitions
- Assure that the ensembles are properly adjudicated
- Communicate information pertinent to the activity

What is WGI?

WGI was founded in 1977 to draw together the growing winter color guard activity, standardize rules, and provide leadership and guidance. WGI is now an international organization that offers:

- Standardized judging criteria within the activity
- Improved communication
- Cooperation with local circuit organizations
- Divisions for both color guard and percussion participants
- An education program offering clinics and printed & video materials regarding the color guard and indoor percussion activities
- A network of Regional contests in the U.S., Canada and Europe culminating in an annual International Championship in April.

In 1992 a new division joined WGI, that of Indoor Percussion. The first Championships included only seven ensembles with Clovis West High School becoming the first champion. By 2000, the percussion activity had grown to include 8 separate divisions of competition; six of these are marching and two are concert classes. WGI percussion now boasts nearly 500 participating ensembles annually, representing more than 12,000 performers from 37 states.

In recent years, with the incredible growth of the indoor activity and these types of ensembles, many NFL and NBA franchises and amusement parks have reached out to indoor percussion ensembles and

instructors to form drumlines and other such percussion ensembles for event entertainment. The impact of indoor percussion is certainly having a very powerful effect on the world of percussion, percussion education, and community entertainment!

All WGI contests provide two divisions of competition specifically for:

- **Scholastic** - ensembles whose membership comes from the same high school (or a school that feeds in to that particular high school) or ensembles whose membership comes from multiple schools approved to combine resources by the principal.
- **Independent** - ensembles whose members are not necessarily associated with a particular school.

For Scholastic groups, WGI offers both a Concert class and a Marching class. There are three divisions of class competition for both marching and concert ensembles:

- *A Class* - Beginning programs and performers.
- *Open Class* - The intermediate developmental level of performers.
- *World Class* - The most advanced programs and performers.

WGI provides many services for those interested in the percussion activity. Here are just a few:

- "FOCUS" (WGI's magazine)
- Regional Contests
- World Championships Percussion Souvenirs
- Championship Performance Videos
- Judging Manuals
- Support Literature
- Public Relations Support
- Rulebooks
- Associate memberships
- Yearbooks
- Judges training

WGI is interested in you and your concerns or suggestions. We are always available for dialog with people interested in pageantry and what it provides for our youth.

Exploring the Possibility of an Indoor Percussion Ensemble

Directors confront many questions when considering the expansion of an existing program to include an indoor percussion ensemble.

- What is an indoor percussion ensemble?
- What kind of time is involved?
- How will the students benefit?

- What are the rules and guidelines?
- Where can I find the rules and guidelines?

An indoor percussion program is not only educationally sound, it can have a dramatic and positive influence on the total marching band program if it is a part of a scholastic group.

In a school situation, the indoor percussion ensemble is a co-curricular or extra-curricular activity which offers participation to both girls and boys. Usually its purpose is similar to that of *both* a music ensemble and a sports team:

- To learn how to play and perform
- To strive for excellence
- To develop teamwork
- To learn sportsmanship
- To achieve the highest possible ranking in your competitive circle
- To interact with peers from other communities
- To entertain

Indoor percussion has become a completely unique activity that combines many of the best elements of a jazz band, symphonic ensemble, marching band, theater production, stage musical, and sports team. These multiple influences combine to create a completely unique performing arts experience. Thus, indoor percussion is a blend of multiple co-curricular and extra-curricular activities that produces "The Sport of the Arts."

A valuable experience for indoor percussion performers is an interaction with students from other communities throughout the United States, Canada, Europe, and Asia. The success of this activity is rich in those areas and growing in Europe and Asia. This social and competitive exchange with groups of their own age from different backgrounds, lifestyles, and educational experiences adds another facet to their self-perception while creating lasting friendships!

Percussion ensembles have the latitude to perform at a local level with much the same scope as an athletic team, or they may choose to expand and include performances in other parts of the country affording an opportunity for trips visiting historical and cultural sites. A combination of both types of schedules is also possible. Very few co-curricular activities offer students an experience which challenges and stimulates growth on so many levels:

- Multi-physical
- Mental
- Social
- Time Management
- Artistic Perception
- Creative Expression
- Aesthetic Valuing
- Team Work

- Group Cooperation

The activity demands musical growth and development involving a variety of core musical skills, standards, and abilities. Students learn to perform for peers and strangers alike. They perform instrumental literature often representing various genres, styles, and cultures. Students are responsible for performing with expression, technical accuracy, sound quality, and articulation. Students also learn how to perform in solo settings, with small segmental ensembles, and as part of a greater overall ensemble production.

Indoor percussion demands physical involvement in both rehearsal and performance involving muscle tone, conditioned response with/to music and other stimuli, simultaneous coordination of head, arms, legs, body stature as well as poise and control while experiencing physical and mental pressure.

The mental training requires multi-levels of thought organization including each student's individual parts of music, how they sound with the other musicians, the portrayal of moods harmonious with other performers and musicians, an understanding of how and why they execute each move, and advance awareness of what the next move/note/step will be and why it is there. The cumulative result of such physical and mental discipline is a student with deeper feelings of understanding, a more disciplined focus (which finds its way into study habits in scholastic efforts), and a higher level of self-confidence.

An indoor percussion program will expand the techniques of those who comprise the music program's percussion section in just the same way that concert band, jazz band, chamber ensembles, and winter guards continue the development of those skills with subsequent impact on the excellence of the music program.

Socially, members learn to function in a group situation setting common goals, cooperating, and striving for success as a team.

The many outlets for performances available to a percussion ensemble, besides contests, include the regular school activity schedule of rallies, basketball half-times, community showcases, or assemblies for special events which will show the activity to the school community. Other students will become more interested in the program; faculty members are always impressed, and the audiences (parents and students alike) enjoy the show for its entertainment value. Within the community there are always organizations looking for varied forms of entertainment and where space is adequate, the indoor percussion show can win tremendous support for the overall band program.

Competition as a Basis to Measure and Appreciate Excellence

Competition in and of itself generates a divided position on the part of many educators who fear a misplaced focus on winning at any cost. Because WGI is based on education, that subject has had careful study and ongoing scrutiny. Competition in this arena is the means whereby we teach the following:

- Recognition and appreciation of the achievements of your competitors
- A barometer whereby you measure achievement against a set of standards

- A means to recognize your own potential by achieving more than you thought you could
- Putting competition in a light of discovery and growth rather than winning as a priority

Competition exists in today's world in every walk of life. To prepare our youth with techniques that will keep this aspect in a healthy focus while discovering and enjoying their own excellence may be our greatest gift to them. When investigating competitions, look for other schools in the area that are already competing; identify their officers who can acquaint you with the rules, show procedures, and schedules of contests and related events. If there are no visible organizations, you may contact the WGI office for information regarding your nearest percussion circuit and who to contact.

Within the abundant opportunities for growth, artistic and physical expression, leadership, and self-discipline for your members, the director/advisor also finds the satisfying reward of seeing youngsters realize their potential in such an exciting and positive manner.

Steps to Starting a Percussion Ensemble

This challenging project will prove to be a very rewarding experience to the membership, staff, and the management. Many percussion ensembles are part of a larger organization or are self-supporting. When starting a competitive ensemble you should consider the following aspects:

Structure of the Organization

If you are part of a larger organization, the structure will already be in place. Determine the role of the percussion ensemble within the larger framework. Understand the reporting relationships, job descriptions, goals of the ensemble relative to the parent body, etc. Chances are that legal considerations may already be in place because of the parent body.

If you are starting a new organization, your structure and foundation is of utmost importance. You will need to form a management structure taking into consideration the following:

- Constitution/By laws/Officers
- Philosophy
- Non-Profit status 501(c)3
- Tax-Exempt status
- Leadership/reporting relationships
- Job descriptions
- Meetings
- Boosters
- Budget/financial system/insurance
- Goals (long and short term)

Instructors

Instruction will be needed to address the selection of music, program design, instrumentation, equipment, technique, teaching and perfecting the product, etc. These duties may be done by a single individual or several, depending on the resources available and your needs. In some instances the management and instructor may be the same individual. If you are a scholastic ensemble, don't overlook the possible talent from your music faculty.

Members

In order to compete using WGI rules, all Independent class ensemble members, including A, Open, and World, must all be 22 years of age or UNDER as of March 31st in any given year. International percussion ensembles are not bound by any age limit and must compete in the Independent classes. Ensembles competing as Scholastic groups must have all members approved for participation by the principal of the sponsoring school.

Contests

If a local circuit/association is already established in your general area, contact them for information on membership, dues, obligations, judging clinics, rules, etc. Most established circuits have a level of competition for the new/inexperienced ensemble. If a circuit is not available in your general area, contact the WGI office and we will try to help get something started or direct you to the closest circuit available.

Transportation

The organization will need a mode of transportation to contests; consider buses, vans, or individual cars. Funds and length of trips may determine what you wish to use.

Equipment

Obviously, you will need the appropriate equipment which includes instrumentation typically utilized and recognized as part of a percussion section. You may also use electronic instruments recognized as normal stage and band rhythm section instruments. At times a small color guard may be utilized for effect at the discretion of the director. Some ensembles even involve special props which are an option and these are almost always designed and/or made by the group.

Rehearsal Facilities

Indoor facilities will be needed with a minimum floor space of 50' X 90'.

Housing

From time to time you will need housing for camps or overnight trips. You will want to check into gyms, hotels, private homes, rec centers, etc.

Finances and Budgets

This will depend on how ambitious you wish to be. All of the above considerations involve cost and will have to be considered in light of your organization and structure. Since the contest situation does not offer money in a prize structure, fund raising becomes an important part of your program. There are tons of websites that offer unique ideas for fundraisers!

Rules and Regulations

Study the rules and score sheets and philosophy of programming carefully. The staff members should understand them so they know what is expected of them, and so they can start out with the greatest opportunity for success. Rules, score sheets, and adjudication manuals can be purchased from the WGI office.

Planning the Program

There are three components that are cornerstones to a successful indoor program. They are the identity or personality of the ensemble, the concept and design of the show and the training and excellence of the performer's skills. This material is designed to assist ensembles to stand out and be unique. There is a tendency to overlook aspects of personality within the percussion ensemble and to pick music that lacks real staying power and interest. Often there just doesn't seem to be the time to go through all the steps we will discuss, but their importance really can't be stressed enough.

Designing an Identity

Image-Personality-Style

There is an innate collective personality that exists with the members of your ensemble. This personality or identity is influenced by their social and economic situation, their beliefs, attitudes, values and goals. They bring to your percussion ensemble some built-in properties that can serve you well in understanding your members, capitalizing on who they are and helping them to discover the best of who they can be. The other component will be those same values, beliefs, attitudes and goals of your staff. Unless the two are compatible, you could find yourself with a conflict you really don't need.

These two groups will combine to form the core personality of who you collectively are. This core personality or identity will remain the base of your ensemble. It will evolve and grow, but will essentially be the same. It is upon this base that you will develop the second aspect of what we call identity. Each program you create will call for a particular sound, style, look, role, and character. This secondary element becomes a part of the design of each show. Here is where the members act out the exploration of the many varied options you will give them.

Most teens are in their search of who they are. You can provide them with a unique opportunity to investigate many possibilities in the safety of the percussion family. You can give them the confidence to

discover who they are and who they can become. For this reason, the process involved here is an important development for them and for you. You are encouraged to invest in these steps.

Know Your Members

Discover their individual personalities, fears, circumstances, strengths, opinions and preferences.

Know Yourself and Your Staff

Understand your individual personalities, weaknesses, circumstances, strengths, and opinions.

Explore with Music

Music opens up lines of communication. See what the kids relate to, take them beyond the top 40 by introducing a variety of sounds and watch their physical response to the music. Talk about what the music feels like, what it looks like. A little improv shows you who is willing to get up and perform as well as how motivating the music is to them and how they act it out. Observe the gestures, attitudes, and responses you get from the students and begin to put together a sound and look for your show based, at least somewhat, on their natural responses and their feedback to you and to one another as they share in this process.

Motivate Your Members

Generate enthusiasm, build confidence, and be positive and honest. Set a standard for your group — they will reflect you! You will become the energy source from which they will draw. Eventually they will return that energy to you when you need it most. Find time to laugh at yourself and with them.

Design a Look, and Attitude, and a Personality

Use the collective line's personality as the basis for your program's sound, role, and character. Define the character or role of the program. Spend time directing how they should feel when they are playing their part. Give them specific gestures and attitude for the role.

****Remember this is a process; don't look for all of this to happen in one rehearsal. It is an ongoing effort. The most memorable groups have a clearly defined look and attitude.****

The Program and its Concept

Your program concept, musical choice and visual style contribute largely to set you apart from the many others in your class. Strive to be remembered as you create your program.

Consider these Options

- Create a musical soundtrack that will showcase you and your best assets as you create your musical and visual illustration.

- Don't select music that demands a skill you don't have. Be careful of music with more depth than you can illustrate. Can you pull it off?
- Never create a program piece at a time. Select music that can be designed to create a whole show. Have the master plan in place before you begin.

Consider these Questions

- Does it have highs and lows?
- Does it have opportunity to develop ideas?
- Does it have impact and effect built in?
- Does it provide contrast?
- Will the students be able to relate to it?
- Will the audience understand it?
- Does it have a great ending? It Must!
- Can you produce a count sheet to it? Do you understand the count sheet?
- Will it show your ensemble off to their best advantage?
- Does it inspire creativity?

Know what is going on in the activity...Study lots of other percussion ensembles.

Create an accessible program. Be unique and proud of who you are.

Be very careful of going too high up the abstraction ladder. Young performers often have a hard time with abstract interpretation.

Lastly, as your show is starting to come together, make sure that it can be completely understood by audience members and judges alike, *without* any explanation from the design team. If you find your program won't translate without an explanation, head back to the drawing board.

Both Musically and Visually

- Pace your show
- Contour your show
- Provide visual and musical interest through contrast
- Remember the importance of staging, focus, continuity, coordination, layering, appeal, and effect

Music Considerations

Shopping for music? Remember it sets the mood, guides your orchestration, leads the movement, grabs the audience, and lets you show your virtuosity.

It's that time of year when designers are searching for the perfect vehicle to inspire and formulate their indoor percussion shows. In recent years we have enjoyed original, classical, ethnic, rock, jazz, and music

designed to startle the listener, all intricately orchestrated. There is no question at all that designers must have creative freedom in the selection of the music and creation of the musical score. However, once that music is selected, once the design team sets out to illustrate their vision of that program, then a whole new set of issues arise.

We have been talking about pacing of the show for years. Where, when, how and **why** effects are planned into a show has an enormous correlation to how the musical program lays out. The whole concept of pacing begins with the selection of the show music and how the music is arranged and orchestrated. Always consider the need for the kind of contrast and development which can guide many shows to create a successful coordinated effect. Always be concerned with the kind of impact points and musical/visual resolutions which our activity has come to recognize as effective tools within the program. Tension and release is an important consideration within the effect caption.

The whole history of reacting to the effectiveness of a program involves mood and appeal and, reality is, that it will be the musical choice that will set this in motion. One of the most commonly shared response mechanisms in people is their reaction to music/sound. Don't lose sight of this fact when selecting your music. Know your audience. Be prepared for how they will respond to your choices. Know the rules of competition and the tenets of good programming and be certain that your show's music will set you up to fulfill all the qualities which produce an effective and successful program. Consider these points as you begin your show planning when you are out there shopping for music.

Orchestration

Many designers make the mistake of scoring for their indoor percussion ensemble using the same techniques and methods used for marching bands and drum corps. Before arranging a single note, carefully consider the indoor environment and the effects it will have on your ensemble's overall sound. The walls and ceiling, the close proximity of the audience, the amplification of some voices but not others, and the rapidly-changing listening environment should all have an impact on the scoring decisions made by the designers. Consider some of these suggestions for your front ensemble and battery arrangements:

- Leave more "space" in the percussion score than might typically exist in an "outdoor" production
- Make sure the melody will clearly project above all other voices
- The intent of the written score should be easy to decipher when listening to the ensemble
- When in doubt, use less and do less (most programs suffer from being "overwritten" rather than "underwritten")

- Write for the instruments you have, rather than the ones you wish you did
- Write for the students you have, rather than the ones you wish you did (always put your ensemble in a position to be successful with the skills you know they can demonstrate proficiently)
- Showcase the strengths of your ensemble

- Utilize music notation programs with realistic sound libraries to get a feel for your progress prior to music distribution (this way, many “rewrites” can happen before the music is ever learned)
- Work out all the details (dynamics, stickings, instrument changes, implements, etc.) *prior* to distributing music to your students

Copyright Info

All forms can be found at <http://www.wgi.org/contents/percussion-copyright-information.html>.

What information is required of WGI percussion units?

While selecting a show, please refer to the “Additional Requirements” list located on [wgi.org](http://www.wgi.org). This can help your ensemble avoid problems. This list includes music which has a history of licensing problems.

Submit a “Permission to Arrange” form to the copyright holder of the piece(s) you have selected. (Please allow up to three months to receive a response from the composition copyright holder). If your ensemble is using an original composition, please utilize an “Original Composition” form.

Complete and submit the Song Selection Information portion of your director’s only website before December 1st.

If you have already received your approved letter of permission to arrange, or are using an original composition, please submit these at the same time.

Copies of the letter(s) showing permission to arrange must be filed no later than March 1st.

How do I determine the copyright holder?

Composition copyrights are typically managed by music publishers. The music publisher may be the owner of the copyright, or may simply be an agent designated by the author to handle permission requests.

To identify the music publisher(s) for a particular song, you should first consult a CD that contains the song. Some CDs will identify the music publisher by name. Others will contain a notation identifying a performing rights society (ASCAP, BMI or SESAC) that the song is associated with. Using this information and consulting a few databases on the Internet, you should be able to come up with the name and contact information for the music publisher.

If the CD identifies the performing rights society (ASCAP, BMI or SESAC), you can go to the web site for the appropriate society and search the database to find the music publisher(s). For ASCAP, go to www.ascap.com. For BMI, go to www.bmi.com. And, for SESAC, go to www.sesac.com.

Searching for the song title in the databases should give you at least the name of the music publisher, and will usually give you both the name and contact information. BMI and ASCAP are the two organizations that register all copyright holdings in the United States. They DO NOT grant permissions. BMI and ASCAP are used as sources to determine the “Original Copyright Holder.”

If you are unable to find any mention of the music publisher or a performing rights society on the CD, you should still be able to find the publisher in the performing rights society databases. Simply enter the song title in all three databases and look for the correct match.

If the CD identifies the music publisher, you can go to the web site of the Music Publishers' Association, www.mpa.org, and search the database for the publisher's address and other contact information. Not all publishers are listed in the MPA directory, however. If the publisher is not listed, you should be able to find it through the performing rights society databases.

In the event that you are unable to locate the copyright owner using these tools, you can attempt to locate the copyright owner by searching the records of the Copyright Office. The records can be accessed by going to www.copyright.gov and following the "Search Copyright Records" link. In reading the record, make sure you look for the copyright claimant, who may or may not be the author. The copyright claimant is the one with authority to grant permission to use the work.

Finally, you should be aware that there is often more than one music publisher for a particular song. In cases where more than one publisher is listed, permission should be requested from each publisher in order to make sure that you have all the permissions necessary to use the composition.

Who can I contact for more help?

WGI is pleased to offer the services of Jeni Paulson from CopyCat Music Licensing (copycatlicensing.com). Copycat Music Licensing will work to secure the permission to arrange for your ensemble and save you the headache and paperwork. This service is being offered to WGI percussion ensembles at a rate of \$250. You can contact her directly at jeni@copycatlicensing.com.

Visual Considerations

Costume Design

Tasteful attire to support the character, role, personality, and body of the performer; consider function, color, design, fabric, style, and taste

Function of the Costume

- Depict a role or character
- Adapt to stage (color and distance)
- Accommodate mobility (freedom of equipment/movement)

In Selecting Colors Consider

- Your stage is a "tan" gym floor or a colored floor covering which you purchase.
- Visibility to the audience
- Have a color wheel and know the hues, gradation and color families
- A vivid costume color will draw focus to the body and dominate over the musicality

Design

- Consider the body shapes you have to deal with. Always design with the extremes of body shapes in mind.
- Consider the character or role you will portray.
- Consider whether or not you wish to use any removable costume parts as props.
- How long will you want to use this costume?
- Will they be homemade or custom made? What level sewing skill do you have?
- Consider your budget.

Fabric

- Be sure you can move. Avoid binding in the body or restricting the function of the arms or legs.
- Consider how excessive fabric will impact on drill lines as to clarity. Flowing fabric won't give a clear line. Decide if that is a problem.
- Know your options—Lycra, spandex, lame, polyester, silk
- How many sessions do you want to use these costumes? Consider durability, laundering, wear and tear.

Style

- Is there a particular look that accommodates your style either musically or visually?
- Know what is appropriate for classical, jazz, modern, and theatrical styles.
- Knowing all of that, make intelligent sensitive choices in a unique and original approach. Be one of a kind.

Taste

- Taste is what you like.
- Having taste implies an educated and discriminating awareness.
- Showing taste implies sensitivity to your audience and their taste.
- Being tasteful implies application of all of the above.

The Reality Is...

- Be sensitive to changing young bodies.
- Remember the age group you teach.
- Remember if you represent a school.
- Avoid sleaze.
- Never dress your students in ugly attire (if *you* wouldn't wear it...)
- Class is often equated to taste.
- It is better to be understated than overstated.
- If your students feel uncomfortable performing in front of their peers, then the program choice is a poor one

An attractive and tasteful costume will make the students feel special and will cost no more to create. There is no substitute for taste and detail.

Props

- Know how you will use them within the show or on the stage.
- Know what musical and thematic ideas you will be interpreting and how they will augment these ideas.
- Be creative...design new props!

The word design implies a uniqueness and originality. Anyone can copy; it takes genius and daring to be original. Make each design choice uniquely your own.

Planning your Basic Movement Training

Based on the show concepts, style and personality, design the proper training for the following components of movement. Include warm-up and technique instruction. Little will be as important to you as the correct training time you will invest in your students. Don't short change this investment.

- Movement fundamentals—preparing the body for heightened responsibilities
- Basics of step-time-space-line
- Method of traveling
- Postural and gestural qualities
- Expressive qualities of movement dynamics (weight/time/space/flow)

Movement rehearsal should be done in appropriate attire—clothing that will allow the instructor to watch for posture, alignment, starts of moves, etc. Bulky attire will conceal this development of body skills relative both to movement and the manipulation of equipment. Wear the kind of shoe you will wear in the show.

Basics/technique classes should follow a pattern. Consistency will encourage focus and achievement. Set the example for your students. Discipline should be understood and self-imposed. Yelling at the students will only put tension into the body and impair productivity.

Make Corrections

Don't let students practice errors. Your observation skills must be sharp and you must know how to make corrections. Be able to do what you ask of your students; much of what they learn will be through observation.

Staging/Drill Design

The three basic approaches from which to choose in designing your show are:

Geometric Drill—use of basic forms, circle, square, cone, cylinder, linear, curvilinear This is what most have known over the years.

Freeform, Textured, Segmented—this approach to form design provides contrast from the starkness of line geometric drill and opens up the stage to more dimensional equipment moves.

Theatrical—here we deal with staging, entrances, exits and interaction between sections or characters.

Consider the following design points as you plan your show:

- Balance is an important factor in successful design. Design may be either symmetric (formally balanced) or asymmetric (informally balanced). Freeform does require balance.
- Visual ideas should flow or evolve logically from one to another.
- Where you stage a picture or set is important to control the focus of your design.
- Always write your form show knowing in advance what kind of musical/visual concepts you want to present because this will tell you how much space to plan for.
- Staging of sections will make a difference in how your visual effects/presentations will work.
- Know in advance what kind of drum presentation is suitable for the drill form or set you have designed.
- The closer the space in any form, the stronger the intensity/ dynamics of the move will be. The more open the space, the lesser the intensity/dynamics will be.
- Single bounding line forms, using all the performers in one big picture, are an important opportunity to create a major impact or resolution to a musical/visual idea. This often is successful at the start or resolution of a big idea.
- Contrast is an important feature to successful design. If you have done line-geometric drill, give thought to creating contrast through texture or segmentation. If you have been doing segmentation, texture or theatre, give some relief or contrast to the eye through geometric-line drill.
- Be sure your design is clear, readable, and pleasing to the eye.
- Be sure your concept exists on the floor as well as in your mind.

The design team must work together to plan and create a good design. Your staging person must know in advance when to open up space, or where to segment for feature ideas, or when you create a big picture for a full ensemble statement.

How to be a Successful and Effective Teacher

Many of today's instructors come from the unique school of "past experience." Some bring a wonderful sense of work ethics, personal sensitivity, and technical knowledge. Some carry harsh and difficult mannerisms and a lack of organization or focus. They are all the products of their own learning experiences and have only their own teachers after whom they can pattern their style. Many are young graduates who don't have the maturity or experience helpful in any teaching situation.

With the tremendous growth of indoor percussion within the scholastic arena we now find the added responsibility of being in tune with the various attitudes, chains of command, budgetary and time limitations, involvement of parents, and the list goes on and on. The following information is intended to

assist the instructor in understanding those areas which could make their lives easier and lead them and their students to more rapid and higher success.

What are the Qualifications of a Good Instructor

- Fully competent to teach all techniques involved in the area for which they are hired whether it is program design, instruction, music, technique, or movement
- Completely understand their moral and ethical responsibilities relative to the students
- Uses appropriate language—profanity is unacceptable
- Does not fraternize with students (inappropriate), especially in scholastic situations
- Does not make rude or insulting remarks which diminish the student's self esteem
- Possesses a sense of responsibility and a work ethic that is consistent and timely
- Is always punctual to rehearsals
- Arrives prepared with lesson plans
- Possesses great productivity and time management skills
- Is accountable to director, students, staff, and parents
- Possesses strong communication skills relative to dealing with:
 - o Administration
 - o Students
 - o Parents
 - o Other Staff
 - o Circuits and Competition administrators
- Is enthusiastic with a strong sense of commitment
- Has a balanced personality
- Understands the importance of team effort, team building, and compromise where necessary
- Establishes attainable goals and the means to achieve them
- Knows how to laugh, puts competition into perspective, turns learning into fun, and motivates students to discover their greatest potential

Time Management

Work Less- Produce More- Have Fun

In every work situation time is of the essence. The person who plans his/her time and details the tangible aspects of the job will find themselves far and ahead of those who fly by the seat of their pants. The indoor program plan is no exception. Developing this kind of time planning will not only serve you well, it will impress every other individual with whom you work. Everyone, including your students, have lives they must attend to outside of this activity. They will support you best when they can know your needs well in advance.

The Master Calendar

The master calendar is for everyone connected with the production of your ensemble. On your master calendar, enter established dates for performances, trips, exams, proms, school breaks, or any other

dates that will impact your production schedule. Working backwards from the first show, figure out how many rehearsals you will need to teach the show. Note the start of production, showing all rehearsals. Then work backwards from when you will begin teaching the show to determine how many weeks you will need to teach basics. (If you are a scholastic ensemble, basics may already have been taught prior to band season.) Note this class time, be sure you allow time needed to teach technique. If you are a scholastic ensemble, move to the calendar time when the summer/fall season ends and schedule the time you will begin rehearsals. Plan enough time to have the show finished for the first contest.

Other Considerations

Did you allow any time off between band or corps and your indoor season? Please consider burn-out. Determine whether or not you want to hold 2 or 3 full weekend camps which will give you Friday night, Saturday, and Sunday; or, decide if you want to do all-day Saturdays or a series of week nights. You don't want your students' schoolwork to suffer, so be careful of overdoing the school nights.

Detail Your Production Schedule

- Project when your music must be chosen and arranged
- Indicate when costume and prop designs must be complete
- Indicate a production schedule for show teaching and construction
- Indicate budget planning deadlines
- Indicate show planning meetings
- Indicate fundraisers

Put any reminder on your calendar that will keep you on target. Give this calendar to every person involved in the project. Prepare a more simplified version for the performers. If you plan your time, you are more likely to succeed and far less apt to be caught off-base or behind schedule. This will also allow band directors, parents, members, and administration to be able to better support your efforts.