Strategies for a Successful Performance
Some ideas from Dan Cherry
http://paws.wcu.edu/dcherry

PREPARATION

• Get to know the music: spend time with the score, listen to multiple recordings, and do background research on each piece
• Become completely comfortable with each piece: try practicing passages faster, slower, louder and softer than required; try playing tricky passages in different keys or registers than written; be able to sing every note that you play
• Practice in many different rooms, especially large ones
• Record yourself often and listen critically
• Play with your pianist as much as you can
• Practice extra hours to get into peak condition in the weeks before the performance, then taper your practice time as you approach the performance date
• Play in front of people to simulate the pressure of the real thing
• Practice overcoming physical symptoms – elevate your heart rate just before starting by walking stairs, doing jumping jacks, etc.
• Practice visualizing the recital/concert in detail, including a successful outcome

ON THE DAY OF THE PERFORMANCE

• Get a good breakfast and stay super-hydrated all day
• Warm up, stay fresh, but DO NOT practice – you already know the music
• Dress well, look good, but be comfortable (wear comfortable shoes)
• Develop a pre-performance routine and be sure to use it
• Stay positive – look forward to your performance!

ON STAGE

• Walk quickly and confidently, smile, and be sure to bow and acknowledge your pianist (or any other musicians)
• Eliminate extraneous thoughts, negative self-talk and outcome thinking by singing a unison duet in your mind the entire time you’re playing
• Convey audible contrasts in volume, articulation and style
• Take the time you need between movements and pieces
• Enjoy each and every opportunity you have to share your gift with real, live people – that’s what music is all about!

SUGGESTED RESOURCES

• Baker, Buddy. The Buddy Baker Tenor Trombone Handbook
• Fink, Reginald H. The Trombonist’s Handbook
• Green, Barry. The Inner Game of Music
• Greene, Don. Audition Success
• Herrigel, Eugen. Zen in the Art of Archery
• Kleinhammer, Edward and Yeo, Douglas. Mastering the Trombone
• Klickstein, Gerald. The Musician’s Way
• Maxted, George. Talking About the Trombone
• Ristad, Eloise. A Soprano on Her Head
• Werner, Kenny. Effortless Mastery