

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*