

**UBC Music Education Teacher Panel
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Ten Things to Keep In Mind as a New Music Educator

Understand your responsibility as a teacher. If you have been a professional musician for some time, you may continue to view yourself as a musician who teaches to "make ends meet." Be sure you have a clear understanding of why you got into teaching. There are student-musicians everywhere in need of proficient, professional, practical, patient, and passionate music educators.

Develop a philosophy of music education and write it down. What do you think is important? Reflect on your past experiences as a student-musician in a high school music program. My own teaching style is predicated by my philosophy. Try to include daily sight reading and ear training and keep at it. This will eventually reap huge dividends.

Stay organized! This is the key to your success. Get a day planner, pocket PC, or some other organizational technology to keep everything in order. Keep a "September" file to save time in planning the first month and to get reacquainted with the fundamentals you inevitably will have to cover with your student-musicians after a summer break.

Set goals. In my first year teaching, I decided to have larger goals and smaller checkpoints along the way. Have an understanding of the bigger picture. I remained fairly relaxed in terms of when those goals would be met depending on how quickly my student-musicians grasped the concepts. Repetition, reinforcement, patience and persistence are the keys!

Get a life outside of school. As enthusiastic and driven as you might be in your first teaching position, aim to leave all school-related things at the school. When you leave at the end of the day, make it **your** time. Maintain a healthy balance between developing yourself as an educator and your own ambitions. Keep active as a musician!

Try to maintain a healthy lifestyle. Eat lots of fruits and vegetables. Take vitamins [especially B complex and C]. Engage in physical activity as often as possible. This will help to maintain the rigorous output of energy.

Learn to remain reflective as a teacher constantly trying to improve your craft. Maintain a journal or a blog. Check out professional development opportunities. Aim toward a graduate degree at some point.

Stay positive! There will be very trying days. Develop your ability to be patient and empathic. Try to understand where your student-musicians are coming from. Understand your shortcomings [we all have them] and strive to turn and develop them into assets.

Develop a sense of humour! Be light-hearted about life! Life is too short.

Check these sites out regularly for questions from teachers and answers from master teachers:
<http://www.menc.org/networks/mentors/mentorsmain.html>