

# TODAY'S DRUM MAJOR

*Central Iowa Color Guard and  
Drum Major Camp 2016*

*with*

*Rusty Raymond*



*and*



*Chet Aliga*

## **TODAY'S DRUM MAJOR**

This book is designed as an aid to the drum major and leadership clinics that the author puts on at high schools and universities throughout the Midwest. It is an instrument to help in the understanding and development of drum majors, both experienced and inexperienced. It is designed to give attention to the many facets which today's drum majors must be aware.

Individual sections are written to allow you to follow the clinician during the clinic. There has been significant room left in the book for you to write notes and ideas as they may occur during the clinic.

Because not all programs are the same, it is important for you to remember to take the ideas that are presented, analyze them to see if they fit within the structure of your program, and then cast aside those ideas which do not fit and modify those that do to make them work for your specific situation.

## **RUSTY RAYMOND**

Rusty Raymond served as the Director of Bands at Missouri Southern State University in Joplin, Missouri, for more than a decade, where he directed the Marching Band, Wind Ensemble, and Symphonic Band, and teaches the trumpet studio, marching band techniques class, and conducting classes. Previously he served as the Director of Bands at Parkview High School in Springfield, Missouri and as the Assistant Director of Bands at Truman State University where his responsibilities include directing the TSU Gambler Marching Band, the Symphonic Concert Band and the Men's Basketball Pep Band. Prior to his appointment at Truman State, he taught in the Oskaloosa and Lenox, Iowa school systems. He has rejoined the teaching staff in his hometown of Oskaloosa.

Mr. Raymond's drum major experiences began in 1980 and include being drum major for the 1984 Marching Bands of America Class A Summer National Champions in Whitewater, Wisconsin. He also served as drum major of the Northeast Missouri State University (now Truman State University) Showboat Gambler Marching Band for two years and marched with the Cavaliers Drum and Bugle Corps. He is in constant demand as an adjudicator, guest conductor, drill designer and clinician for drum majors, basic marching fundamentals, and leadership camps for high schools and universities throughout the Midwest. His students have consistently won numerous "Best Drum Major" awards at major competitions throughout the Midwest.

## TODAY'S DRUM MAJOR CAMP CURRICULUM & ACTIVITIES

Clinic/Camp curriculum to include:

- Conducting skills
- Basic & advanced marching fundamentals
- Vocal commands
- Leadership skills
- Salutes
- How to read drill charts
- How to block drill charts
- Score reading
- Teaching strategies
  - Types of learners
  - Maximizing comprehension
- Discussion sessions on:
  - Effective leadership
  - Effective communication
  - Motivational techniques "Win people to your way of thinking"
  - Goals & goal setting
  - Discipline
  - Showmanship
  - Exploding the Myth "Drumlines Don't Need Drum Majors"

Activities

- Conducting exercises
- Leadership discussion sessions
- Score study
- Conducting lessons with scores students bring to camp for fall shows
- Block drill exercises / basic marching fundamentals
- Daily evaluations
- Videotape analysis of conducting (when facilities allow)
- Videotape analysis of marching (when facilities allow)
- Salute competition
- One on one teaching opportunities
- Guided practice teaching
- Conduct to prepared selections (Star Spangled Banner and other songs to be announced)
- Final performance and presentation

## **GOALS QUIZ**

List 3 strengths and 3 weaknesses that you feel you currently possess:

Strength	Weakness
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.

List 3 areas or things that you would like to be able to do better:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Identify any obstacles / barriers that have hindered your progress to this point.

## **SMART GOALS**

List 2 personal SMART goals that you have for the coming year:

- 1.
- 2.

Identify 2 SMART goals that you have relating to band for the coming year:

- 1.
- 2.

## **TODAY'S DRUM MAJOR**

Congratulations! You have demonstrated to your director the proper skills that he/she deems necessary for a drum major. The position of drum major is one that should be taken seriously for what it is, a position of leadership and responsibility. When it is time for your band to perform, it is not the director that is out on the field with the band, it's you. You are their leader. This clinic will utilize a three faceted approach in an effort to make you into an effective drum major. The three areas that we will focus on include:

- Leadership skills (including teaching and motivation strategies)
- Conducting skills and techniques (including score study)
- Marching & Maneuvering fundamentals

### **Goals**

***No one can predict to what heights you can soar. Even you will not know until you spread your wings.***

## **LEADERSHIP**

What exactly is a leader? Just because someone calls you a leader, does that mean you are actually a leader? What makes leaders different from all the other people in the band or school or society?

First, let us look at what qualities are associated with leaders. Think of at least one individual that you consider a leader. It may be someone your age or they may be older. It might be a parent or a teacher or a coach or a minister. Maybe it is the person that was your section leader when you were a freshman. Take just a moment to identify at least one person you consider a leader. Now identify the specific qualities or actions, which that person demonstrated. Enthusiasm, dedication, pride, self-esteem, hard working, sacrificing, friendly, outgoing, positive, and motivating are all qualities associated with leaders.

The responsibility of being drum major includes not only leading the followers but leading the other leaders in the band as well. You have been chosen for this position for the good of the band, not the good of your ego. Good leaders do not have egos. Just as good players are not made overnight, good leaders are not made overnight. I'm sure that you have paid your dues and come up through the ranks just like everyone else. The respect that good leaders achieve is likewise not achieved overnight but is earned over a time. Egos can be a terrible thing for leaders because it sometimes elevates them to the point that they think they are above doing certain tasks (cleaning the bus, lining the field, etc.) or socially above others. Self-confidence is knowing that you can do it. Egotism is telling people that you can do it. Remember, it is not your band or their band, it is everyone's. Everyone is trying to achieve the same goal, to have your band perform at its highest possible level and have fun. The easiest way in which a drum major or section leader can disappoint and let down their director is to allow their position to go to their heads and begin acting superior or better than others in the band. This is also the easiest way to alienate yourself from the members of your band.

### ***Leadership***

***The speed of the leader determines the rate of the pack.***

## **Qualities Found in Leaders**

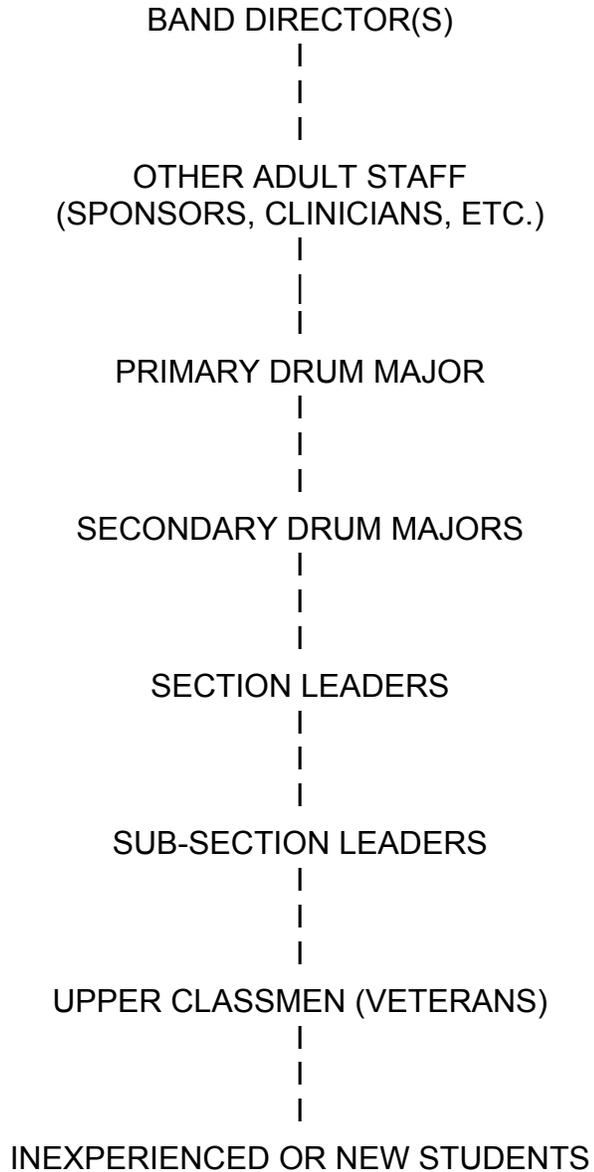
### **Good Leaders:**

1. have good communications skills
2. are goal oriented (have good GPA's)
3. follow other leaders
4. are great teachers
5. help others improve
6. **always** set the example
7. are ENTHUSIASTIC !!!!
8. have great PMA's (Positive Mental Attitude)
9. put the group's interests before their personal interests
10. stand up for their values
11. are able to motivate others
12. Show / demonstrate respect
- 13.

### **To allow student leadership to develop in bands, the Director must:**

1. set the example for the leaders
2. give them specific tasks and responsibilities
3. allow students to make mistakes
4. set high expectations of students and let them know it
5. build / demonstrate a sense of trust
6. communicate goals and responsibilities
7. seek out and develop their leadership skills
8. realize that fairness and high standards are important
9. separate individual achievement from the student's self worth

**HIERARCHY OF LEADERSHIP**  
(CHAIN OF COMMAND)



**Teamwork**

Teamwork is the ability to work together toward a common vision. The ability to direct individual accomplishment toward organizational objectives. It is the fuel that allows common people to attain uncommon results.

## **DEFINITION OF ROLES**

Most student problems among leadership revolve around the issues of who was supposed to do what. Because this may change between each school the following section is left blank so that you may sit down with your director and specifically spell out what your roles are. Remember that it is not your responsibility to tell your band director what you think the roles should be but to ask what he/she wants the roles to be. It is also important for you to understand the differences between power and authority. Power comes from the ability to punish and/or reward people for their actions while authority is based upon status or the position one holds. Some drum majors fail in their duties as drum major because they lose sight of the fact that their role is one of authority not power. This is one of the major differences between you and the band director(s). They are not only in position of authority but they are also in a position of power. As drum major, you are only in a position of authority; you have been chosen or given a "status". This is where the drum major with an ego will run into trouble because not only will they think that they have or deserve to have "power" as we have defined it but they may also think that their position or "status" elevates them above others in the organization. It should be remembered that everyone in an organization is equally important and that the differences between individuals is only what their assigned task is. The hierarchy on the previous page is used only to show the delegation of responsibility, not to show that any one group or person is better than anyone else. In order for any organization to function properly it is important for its members to understand how they fit into the "big picture." You have been asked to assume a role that has different duties than most in your band. It does not mean that you are better than them; it only means that you have been assigned different tasks to do.

**There is no I in the word TEAM**

The role that your band director(s) have assigned you, may or may not include any of the following:

- Keeping track of attendance
- Running a music rehearsal
- Running a marching rehearsal
- Running a marching sectional
- Running a music sectional
- Passing out music / drill charts
- Writing parts for your section off of a score
- Picking up the bandroom
- Setting of section goals
- Individual instruction / tutoring of younger students
- Monitoring of positive and negative feedback during rehearsals

### **Define Your of Role & Responsibilities**

Use the following space to write out the *primary* responsibilities of the drum majors and section leaders. If there are multiple drum majors, you may want to identify any varying responsibilities. Include only those items that your director has specifically spelled out for you to do, not those things which you would like to do.

Drum Major(s) -

Section Leaders -

## RESPONSIBILITIES

The successful drum major is one that is able to do the following:

Conduct effectively

Communicate effectively

Motivate band members, section leaders, and other student leaders

Give proper vocal commands

Reinforce and remind what the director(s) tells the band

Pace rehearsals

Know how to handle discipline problems  
(diffuse situations before they become problems)

Anticipate and fix problems on the field

Help establish Esprit de Corps

Assist section leaders in teaching memorization skills and sectionals

Odd jobs - checking in and out uniforms, hand out music, etc.

**Leaders do what needs to be done,  
when it needs to be done,  
whether they want to or not.**

*- Fran Kick*

List other responsibilities that drum majors at your school have had:

- 
- 
- 
- 

GUIDELINES FOR DRUM MAJORS TO LIVE BY

Set the example

Take the initiative

Must earn respect

Incorporate goals and goal setting

Commit yourself to the job you have and the goals that have been established

No favorites - Must be willing to work with everyone

Accept people as they are, not as you want them to be

Emphasize the positive people and/or positive actions

Support everyone (praise in public, criticize in private)

Criticize the problem, not the person

Support others before they have a chance to support you

Be able to take and put off criticism

People make mistakes - Don't dwell on them

Everyone is part of the band; make everyone feel included and important

Help others to improve

**Be Positive !**

**Be Enthusiastic !**

## COMMANDS

### **Vocal Commands**

Commands must accomplish two things; 1) Establish tempos and 2) Convey a desired action to the rest of the ensemble.

A drum major uses commands to communicate specific actions to the band in an organized manner. To be effective commands must be given properly and consistently. If a drum major gives the command for horns up in a particular way one day then that drum major should give that same command the same way every time after that.

To be effective and project to the entire band, commands must be articulated in a very short and staccato manner. You must "bark" commands, not shout them. In order to project over the entire band, it is necessary to lower the voice and have the command come from the diaphragm. Breath support is imperative! Take a big breathe as if you are preparing to play your instrument. Being loud enough to be heard over the band is not enough. You must enunciate clearly in order for the band to do exactly what it is you are commanding.

Commands use a specific cadence to achieve continuity. Commands have distinct rhythmic patterns to them. The standard that is used in giving commands is a 4-count cadence. Establish the tempo by clapping 4 counts prior to giving the command. Clap through entire command until count one of the following measure.

Commands are made up of two different parts:

- 1) Preparatory Command
- 2) Command of Execution

## **Preparatory Command**

The preparatory command gives the information of what action is desired from the group. The preparatory portion of a command must be pronounced sharply and clearly. If commands are not given properly there will be confusion as to what is expected from the band members.

## **Command of Execution**

The command of execution tells the group when to execute the desired action. As with all commands, it must be given in a short and staccato manner. "Harch, ho, halt, hut," etc. are all commands of execution letting the band know precisely when the command is to be executed. It is important to understand how this part of the command can be separated from the rest of the command if the need arises. For example, maybe the preparatory command was given too early and the band needs to continue doing what it is doing for a few more counts. (Right wheel . . . . . ho!) Remember to give the command of execution on the left foot.

## **Point of Execution**

The point of execution is the count on which the command that has been given is executed. For almost all commands the point of execution is count one of the measure following the command.

There are three basic cadences that are used in giving vocal commands. While a number of the commands can be given with different cadences, it is important to remember to achieve continuity by using the same cadence for a command each time it is given. (*Remember to establish a steady tempo when giving commands.*)

***It is a proven statistic  
that there are six to eight failures  
for each success.***

The following is a partial list of suggested cadences for vocal commands:

(Prep. Command)		(Command of Execution)		Point of Execution
				
Band	Ten	Hut	(and)	X
Dress	Center	Dress	(and)	X
Mark	Time	Mark	(and)	X
Band	Horns	Up	(and)	X
Band	Horns	Down	(and)	X
Right	Wheel	Right	(and)	X
Left	Wheel	Left	(and)	X
Right	Slide	Right	(and)	X
Left	Slide	Left	(and)	X
Band		Halt	(and)	X
				
Rea-dy		Front	(and)	X
Pa-rade		Rest	(and)	X
For-ward		March	(and)	X
Back-wards		March	(and)	X
				
Band	Pa-rade	Rest	(and)	X
				
To The Rear		March	(and)	X

## **Whistle Commands**

Whistle commands are sometimes used by drum majors, due to any number of a variety of circumstances (band size, noise from outside the band, loss of voice, tradition, etc.) to make sure that the entire band can hear the command and respond at the proper moment. Whistle commands are presently used primarily for parade marching and only occasionally for field show marching. As with vocal commands, it is extremely important to give whistle commands the exact same way each time.

While drum majors are encouraged to use verbal commands whenever possible, there are some times when you may need to use whistle commands. The whistle commands presented here are an adaptation of traditional or Big Ten style.

Whistle commands are made up of long and short blasts on the whistle. They can also be made different by bending the pitch of long whistle blasts. Like vocal commands, whistle commands need to be articulated very precisely. To do this, we need to articulate into the whistle and use our tongue to stop the air. The proper articulation to use is "tot."

These signals are based on an 8-count sequence. When giving these signals to a squad or band, it is not necessary to always use this 8-count sequence as long as the command of execution is given on the left foot. The purpose of using the 8-count sequence is for uniformity in a large class. As with vocal commands, it is important to use the same cadence each time a specific command is given. By doing so, a higher level of execution of the action will be achieved by the ensemble. Do not waste your time or the ensemble's time practicing things that will not be used by the band in performance situations. It is nice to have a band that can do a flank turn in place but if your band never uses this maneuver in performances, why waste precious rehearsal time on it?

## PHYSICAL / MENTAL WARM-UPS

Before you start conducting or marching, it is important for you to warm-up your body physically just as you would warm-up your embouchure before playing your instrument. We will go through the following exercises before beginning any conducting exercises. Although we will not always go through these exercises as a group, it is important to go through these stretches every day so that muscles do not tighten up on resulting in pulled muscles or pinched nerves. Many of these same exercises may be used at the end of rehearsals to warm-down.

### Physical Warm-Ups

1. Necks
2. Stretch Up
3. Touch Toes
4. Side Stretch
5. Twists
6. Lunges (left and right)
7. Hamstring / calf stretch
8. Arms/Shoulders
9. Wrists/Forearms
10. Pull Arms Behind the Head
11. Boings / enthusiasm builder / circulation

### **Determination**

***The race is not always to the swift .....but to those who keep on running.***

## CONDUCTING

The main thrust of this clinic will be aimed towards conducting. It is my philosophy that the drum major's first responsibility is conducting the band and getting them to perform at their highest possible level. It is therefore very important that today's drum major knows and understands the mechanics of conducting. The areas of conducting that will be covered in this clinic include: beat of preparation, patterns, including patterns of subdivision, dynamics, eye contact, cut-offs, cues and different conducting styles.

### **Arm Position**

- 18 inches in front of you
- Giving someone in front of you a back rub
- Elbows slightly bent
- 45 / 45 rule

### **Finger/hand Position**

- Palms down
- Keep knuckles up
- Forefinger and thumb together  
(or relaxed hand position with fingertips extended -  
thumb and forefinger not touching)
- Where is the “**focus**”

### **Conducting Plane**

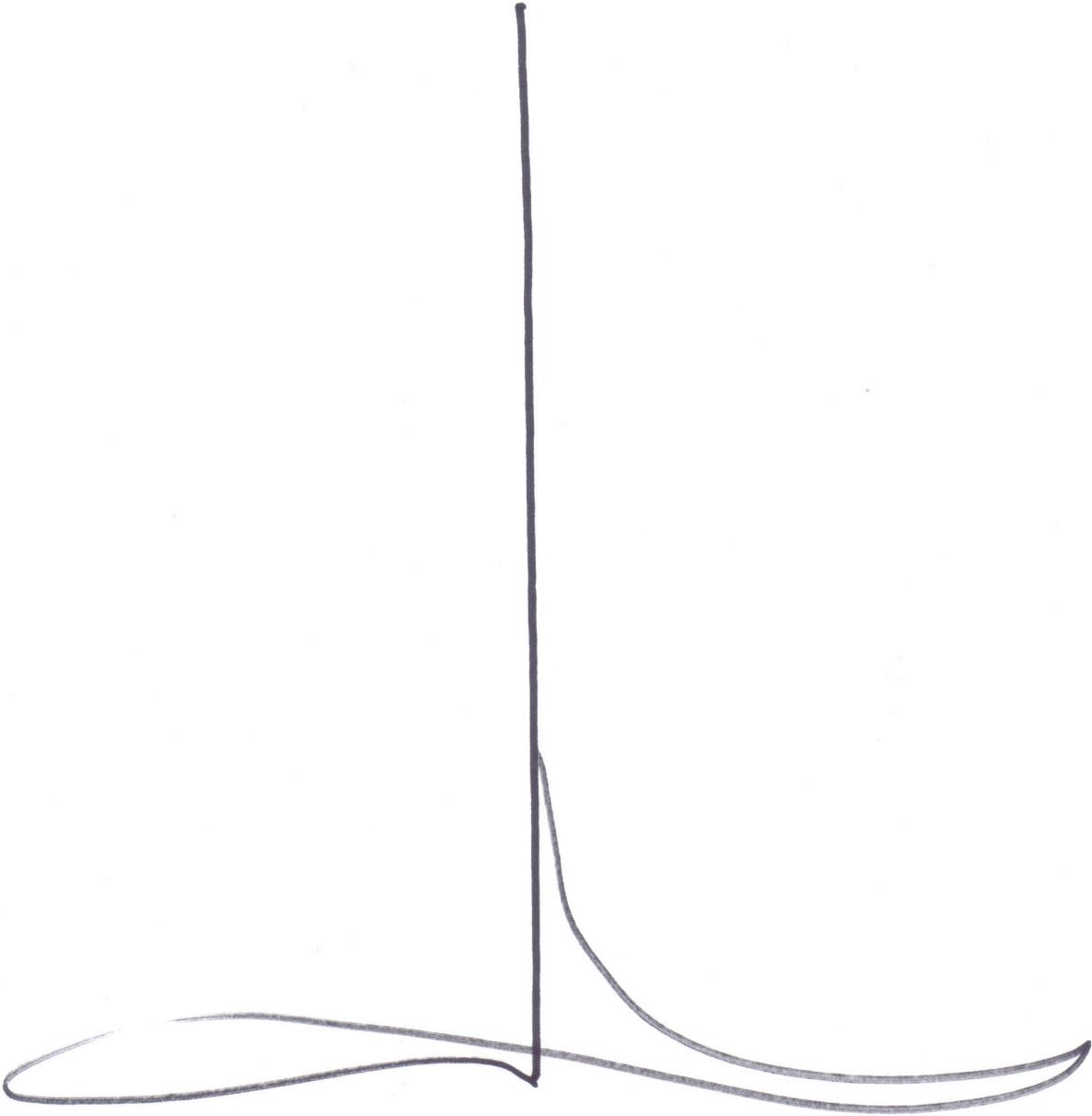
- 18 inches in front of you
- Bottom of the plane is straight out from your sternum

### **Conducting Window**

### **Risk**

***You cannot discover new oceans unless you have courage to lose sight of the shore.***

**Pattern of 4**



## Beat of Preparation

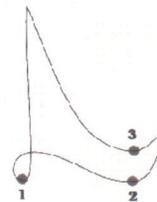
The beat of preparation is the beat or count directly before the pattern actually begins. The need for a beat of preparation is 1) to establish the tempo, 2) to establish the dynamics and character of the music before the first beat is played, 3) to focus the band's attention so that they may all begin together. Remember, the beat of preparation must be given on the count preceding the initial entrance or start of music and must be in the same tempo and character of the music. If a piece begins on an offbeat, the beat of preparation will be the first full count before the first note. One additional technique that is important to use when starting the band is to breath with the ensemble as they inhale for the first note. By breathing with the ensemble it helps them to breathe together, thereby attacking the first note together.

## PATTERNS

Pattern of 4



Pattern of 3

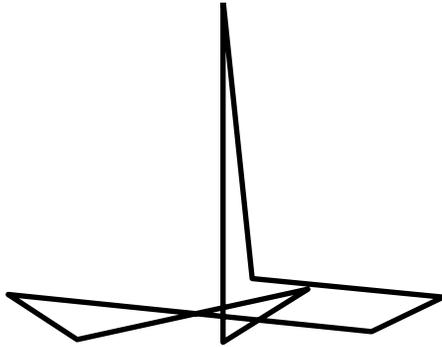


Pattern of 2

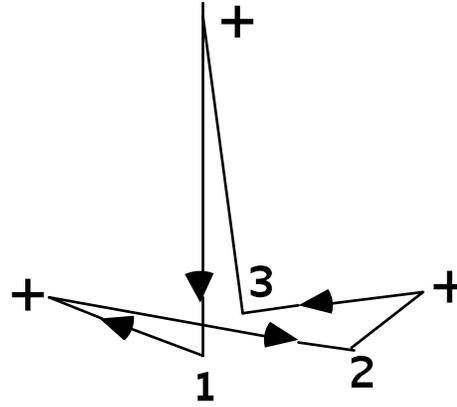


# Subdivided Patterns

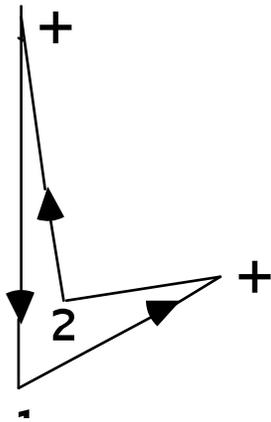
Pattern of 4



Pattern of 3



Pattern of 2



## **Conducting Exercises**

- 1.) Ictus exercise
- 2.) Painting the wall
  - paintbrush
  - horizontal
  - vertical
  - independence drills
- 3.) Touching the wall
- 4.) Chalkboard exercises
  - Varying size of conducting boxes
  - Varying patterns
- 5.) Daily Dozen (See additional sheet in back of booklet)
- 6.) Block drills (8 x 8, 8 x 6, etc.)
  - Cut-offs
  - Dynamics
  - Cues (left hand, right hand)
  - Combination Cues and Cut-offs
  - Multi-meter exercises
- 7.) Swimming pool exercise
- 8.) Mirror conducting
- 9.) Video analysis
  - self
  - others
- 10.) Watching others

## Exercises for your enjoyment

Cues

Set #1 (Cues)

Right hand conducts pattern

Left hand gives cues (remember to prep one count prior to cue)

Count to Cue ("Up Cue")

1

3

2

4

Set # 2 (Cues)

Right hand gives cues

Left hand conducts pattern

Count to Cue ("Up Cue")

1

3

2

4

Set # 3 (Cut-Offs)

Both hands cut-off together ("Circle Grab Down")

Count to Cut-Off

4

2

3

1

Set # 4 (Combination Exercises)

Cue with left hand, cut-off with both hands

Cue

Cut-Off

1

4

2

4

3

4

4

4

1

2

2

2

3

2

4

2

1

3

2

3

3

3

4

3

1

1

## **SCORE STUDY**

It is very important that we as drum majors have done our job before getting up in front of the band. We must know exactly what we are going to do before trying to do it. Score study is one of the means by which we prepare ourselves. In order for us to help the band perform at its highest level, we must know what each person or section is supposed to be doing at any given point in a piece of the music. How many times have you or someone else watched a videotape of the final performance of the marching band and said, "I didn't know the drumline or guard or trombones did that." The problem is that as conductors we too often only pay attention to the main melody line. Our score study will begin by outlining melodies as they are presented and passed through different sections of the band. This will be followed by becoming familiar with counter melodies, accompaniment parts, and the percussion score. Sometimes it helps to understand the music better if you have played through it on your own instrument. Play with your sections during some rehearsals (not all rehearsals) and play through most of the parts on your own so that you know when they are being played correctly. While it may be very difficult to learn each part, it is imperative that you reach an understanding of which parts should have dominance at any particular time. Again it should be stressed that we are doing score study to understand the music more fully in order to help others understand the music more fully. It is not your responsibility as drum major to do score study for the purpose of developing an interpretation. That is the responsibility of the director. Your responsibility is to understand his or her interpretation of the music. Pay attention to what your director focuses on during rehearsals. Always bring your scores to each rehearsal.

## Conducting Musically

There are a number of things that you as a drum major have at your disposal that can help you get added excitement out of your band's performance. The key is getting the band to play the music the best they possibly can and in doing so create excitement. You must be able to communicate how you think the music should be played. The key to communicating an interpretation of the music is to make sure that you know how your director has interpreted the music. Once you know what he or she is trying to achieve, you must figure out how to get those ideas across to the rest of the band. The easiest way is to watch your band director and base your gestures on what they have done. Don't just try to copy or imitate the exact way that your director conducts. All conductors are different and the same gesture may have be interpreted differently when given by different conductors. Instead, use your director's conducting technique as a basis to start with when deciding how you need to conduct a piece of music. What to see where they crescendo or decrescendo, cue, etc.

**Facial expression** is one of the easiest ways to communicate different concepts to the band. For example, smile if the song conveys a happy feeling or frown or scowl if you are trying to get the band to be more intense. The tension that you have in your face, arms, and body, can create certain responses from your band. The easiest way to see what things work and what things do not work is to experiment with many different things during warm-ups or sectionals. The only way that things will work when you are up on the podium is if your band is used to watching you. If the band does not even bother looking at you when you lead them through a B flat concert scale, they will not bother watching you while they are playing their music. One of the biggest resources available to you is your director. Ask them to evaluate what you are doing. See if they feel that you are bringing out their interpretation or not. Video analysis of yourself can also give valuable feedback.

## Style

As a drum major you must have at least four different styles of conducting which you can draw upon as the basis of what you do in front of your band. Each style has its own characteristics that make it unique and determine when each style is either appropriate or inappropriate. These four basic styles of conducting are:

1. Normal
2. Legato
3. Staccato
4. Straight (Robot)

Things that will increase your effectiveness as a conductor include:

Knowledge of conducting skills (and the ability to use them)

Knowledge of music

Communication skills

Eye contact

Expressiveness

**KNOWING WHO TO CONDUCT TO!**

## MULTIPLE DRUM MAJORS

### **Primary Conductor**

The primary conductor is the one who establishes tempos, dynamics, etc.. It is their responsibility to know and understand the tempos, articulations, important voices, dynamics, and anything else that is relevant to the performance of the music. The best way to do this is to talk to your director before you are ever in front of the group. It is also important for you to be at all music rehearsals with your score and to take notes of what the director is telling the band. As drum major, it is your job to make sure that the things that been worked on in music rehearsals happen when you go outside and put it on the field. Maintain eye contact not only with the musicians on the field but also with the other drum majors.

### **Secondary Conductors**

It is the responsibility of the secondary conductor(s) to express the same tempo, dynamic level, and style to the band that has been established by the primary conductor. Mirror conducting is the easiest and best way to make sure that the secondary conductor is conducting in the same manner as the primary drum major. To mirror conduct with two people, stand facing each other with enough distance between you that when you begin conducting, you will be about two inches apart at the fingertips. If someone has been designated as the primary conductor, it becomes the responsibility of the other drum majors to emulate the primary drum major. It is important to the musicians on the field that when he or she looks at a drum major (which one depends upon location on the field and is constantly changing) that they see the same style of conducting regardless of which drum major they are seeing. This is not to say that the primary conductor should become the all-knowing center of the universe and everyone else must conform to his or her ways. Everyone must remain flexible. The primary conductor may even change in the middle of a song if the band makes a backfield move in which everyone faces backfield. In this example the primary focus may change from the drum major on the front podium to one backfield depending upon the circumstances.

## DRUM MAJOR PLACEMENT

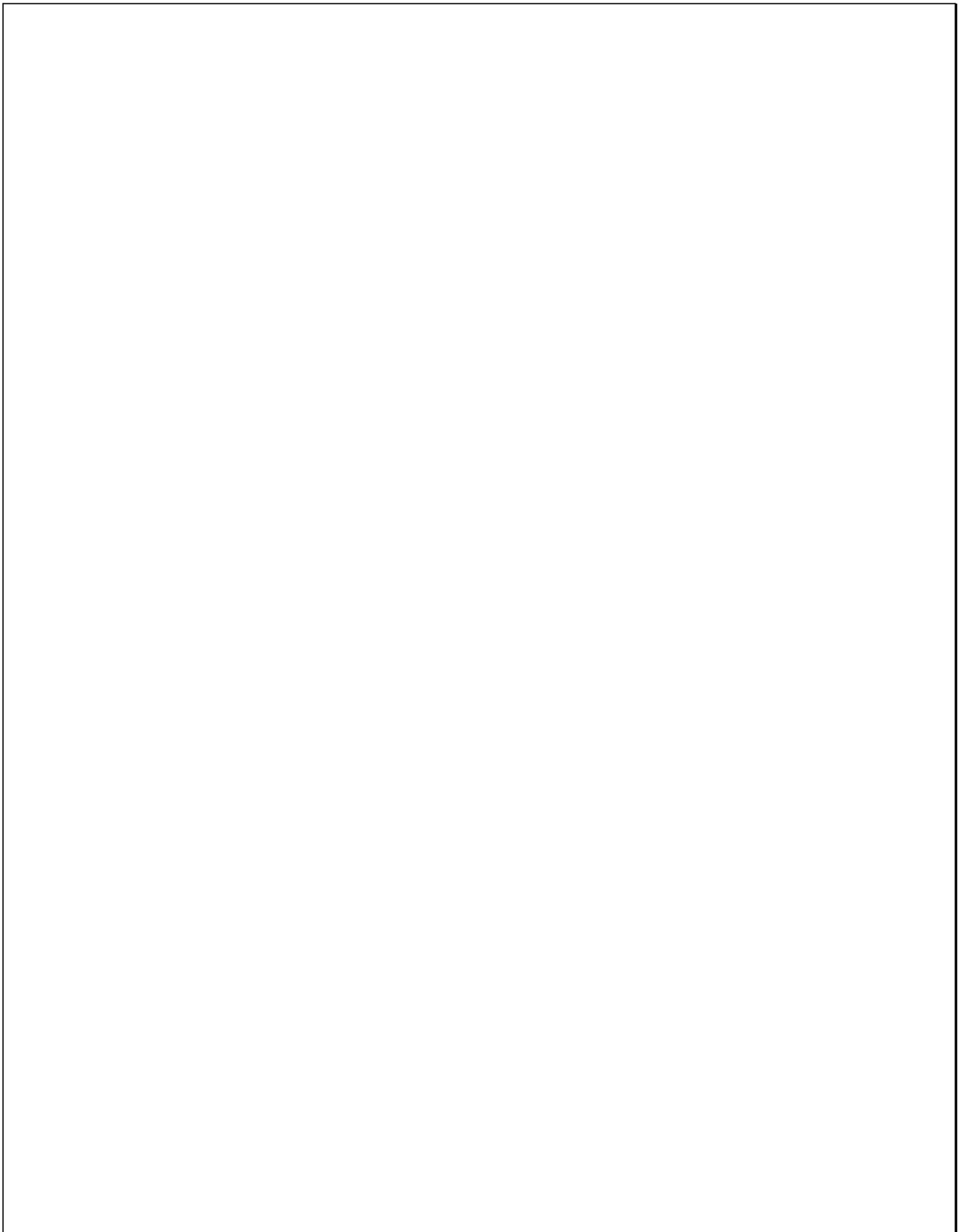
### **Parades**

Drum major locations during parades can vary depending on your director's purpose/role of the drum major during a parade. Location depends greatly on what kind of parade formation your band uses. The important questions that need to be considered when deciding where you should be located include: where is the percussion located, where are the strongest sections located, what sections watch the most, where can you be seen by the majority of people?

It is important that you face the band while conducting and occasionally glance over your shoulder to check pacing and spacing if you are leading the band. Your director would not put his/her back to the band when directing the concert band; neither should the drum major as he/she leads the band down the street. Eye contact is needed with the band at all times.

If there is more than one drum major, it is important to establish a primary conductor who will be responsible for giving roll off commands and commands to begin marching or movement and halt. The primary conductor is usually the one that is stationed by the drumline or in visual contact with the drumline. The secondary conductors are responsible for making sure everyone is ready to hear commands (eye contact with band) and for such things as maneuvering. It is not uncommon for the primary drum major to be positioned in front of or by the drumline with a secondary drum major at the front of the band watching the primary drum major.

Some directors approach drum majors during parades from a primarily visual standpoint which is to say that they are used for showmanship more than they are used musically. Showmanship can include things such as saluting the judges or acknowledging the applause of the audience.



## **Field Shows**

Placement of drum majors during field shows can greatly affect the performance of your band both positively and negatively. Just as your band director would never have two conductors in front of the concert band at the same time, make sure that there is only one primary place for the ensemble to focus its attention. Remember that the decision concerning who is the primary drum major that any other drum majors need to watch is based upon drum major placement and has nothing to do with age or seniority. The emphasis may also shift during a show from one drum major to another. For example, if the entire band is facing and marching backfield, it is not possible for the drum major on the front podium to have the primary influence upon the band. Primary emphasis is shifted to the drum major that is positioned so that the majority of the band can follow. When the band is facing front again, the emphasis will again shift to the front drum major. Some will argue that the front drum major establishes the tempo and maintains it regardless of where the ensemble is facing. As with any musical ensemble, there needs to be some flexibility to adjust. In a Utopian world the front drum major would establish everything and the problems created by field placement, time delay, etc. would not exist. Unfortunately, we must deal with these facts of life.

*T.E.A.M.*

*Together Everyone Achieves More*

## SALUTES

The primary purpose of a salute, whether for a parade or at the beginning or end of a field show, is to acknowledge the presence of the judges and announcer and to acknowledge the appreciation of the audience. The purpose of a salute is not to choreograph an entire Broadway musical to impress people. When working with drum majors I tend to endorse the KISS principle.

**K - Keep**

**I - It**

**S - Short and**

**S - Simple**

It is much more desirable to have a short and simple salute which is very crisp and does not require a lot of extra time on your part to perfect. I have always used a salute that only took 2 counts to get to the position of salute and 3 counts to retrieve the salute. A salute that takes more than 8 counts to get to either the position or salute or to retrieve the salute is too long. It is allowable for a salute to be somewhat longer, if it incorporates more than one drum major or it utilizes the color guard or band.

It is fine to add those little movements that spice up salutes as long as it doesn't get to be too much. If you are unsure about whether your salute is too long or has too much "stuff" in it, ask yourself this question, "Does the salute have more flash or detract in any way from what the band will be doing off the starting line?" I have seen many drum majors give incredibly intricate and showy salutes but when the band started to play, it was anti-climactic. Remember, don't let being drum major be an ego trip.

Variety and creativity can be exercised when designing a salute. By varying the tempo or altering the three basic components of a salute you can create an original salute that you feel comfortable using.

The three components of a salute:

1. Beginning position (Presentation)
2. Salute
3. Ending position (Retrieve)

Ways to vary the presentation include:

- tempo (fast, slow, or combination)
- add hand or footwork
- leaning / lunging
- change the flow/timing (smooth vs. snappy or combination)
- sequencing (for multiple drum majors)
- incorporation of uniforms or equipment (capoes, hats, maces, etc.)
- incorporation of color guard or band

*Are you willing to be successful?  
not*

*Do you want to be successful?*

## REHEARSAL GUIDELINES

As leaders you may be responsible for becoming the teacher when the band breaks down into smaller groups. Remember that this is something that your director(s) may or may not have you do; you should not expect them to allow you to do it. Keep these guidelines in mind as you rehearse in the sectional setting.

### Preparation

- Know when, where, and how you are going to work the section (Use your time effectively so that the section does not waste its time. This means having extra copies of music, drill charts, tuners, audio or videotape, etc. ready to use and a place to use them.)
- Learn the material to qualify yourself as a worthy teacher.
- Give everything possible in writing as well as verbally. Reinforce everything
- Have a good G.P.A.

Goals

Plans

Approaches (teaching strategies)

- Establish a consistent record keeping system

### During the Rehearsal

- Be respectfull of other people's time: start on time, end on time - no matter who is there.
- Use a system: have a concise warm-up
- Work a small amount of music at a time. Use repetition. Give reasons for stopping.
- It has to be fun.
- Students need to feel that they are getting better during each rehearsal.
- Give instruction quickly and keep moving.
- Have a means of assessment
- **Know what you are going to say and/or do before you say and/or do it.**
- Isolate the specific problem
- Stay on-task
- Work slowly, many times through! You are advanced. It may be easy for you, but it may be difficult for other students
- The first time with a new idea, concept, or piece of music strive for 85% comprehension.
- If after a sufficient period of time someone is still having trouble with a concept, working with them one-on-one will yield the greatest results.
- Be accommodating to different learning styles  
Visual learning / Kinesthetic learning / Aural learning

### During Full Rehearsals:

- Know the goals of the rehearsal
- Be attentive to what your section is doing (Good and bad)
- Always be / look busy
- Have your scores with you and mark them accordingly

### Music Sectionals:

- Be prepared (facilities, materials, etc.)
- Know the goals
- Tuning / Warm-up (Out of tune notes are wrong notes)
- Work a small amount of the music at a time. Use repetition.
  - Give reasons for stopping
- Meet people at their level, help bring them up to your level
- Isolate the problem(s)
  - Wrong notes
  - Rhythms
  - Articulations (attacks and releases)
  - Balance (members of section and section within the ensemble)
  - Dynamics
    - Individual
    - Section
    - Ensemble
  - Memorization
- Break the problem down to its smallest component
- Work the problem slowly
- Put the pieces together
- Increase tempo
- Checklists
- Reevaluate / set new goals

### Marching Sectionals:

- Be prepared (facilities, materials, charts, checklists, etc.)
- Know the goals
- Warm-ups
- Know what you are going to say before you say it
  - Know the verbal commands the drum majors use
- Isolate the problem
- Break down the motion to its smallest possible part
- Slow the motion down (See it, feel it, Do it)
- Put the parts back together
- Checklists

## **OFTEN ASKED QUESTIONS**

How can I obtain the respect of the band?

How can I obtain the band's trust?

How strict should I be?

How do you deal with friends?

How can I work with a headstrong drumline?

How can I help to improve the flag line?

What should I be doing while the band is blocking drill?

How do you get the kids who "know it all" to listen to you?

What do judges look for when awarding "Best Drum Major" awards?

How can we gain respect and attention from the first day of band practices as capable leaders?

## Effective Communication

The first rule of effective communication is good listening skills. Many people think that they are good listeners but are not entirely aware of the type of skills needed to truly be effective.

Most people talk at 125 words per minute while our minds take in 600-800 words per minute. Often times the person listening tends to take a mini-vacation.

Know what you are going to say **BEFORE** you say it.

Choose your words carefully, people may actually do what you tell them.

It's not what we say, but **what they get** that matters.

### **Perception is reality**

#### Methods of Communication

- Written

- Spoken

- Symbolic Gestures

  - Be aware of your own gestures

  - Practice a variety of gestures

- Visual Images

#### Body Language+

- Posture

- Eye Contact

- Personal space

#### Listening (2-way)

- Be attentive

  - 3 Types of Listening Skills

    - Empathizing

    - Analyzing

    - Synthesizing

### **Barriers to Effective Communication**

- Using excessive authority, hence creating fear of openness in others
- Preaching open communication while only rewarding good news
- Stifling dissent in the name of teamwork
- Asking closed questions which elicit only yes or no answers
- Promoting a culture which places too much emphasis on unanimity
- Being too concerned to win the argument, so not listening to others
- Speaking down to people - in Parent to Child mode
- Reacting defensively to negative feedback

### **Steps to Effective Communication**

- Listen actively - ask open questions in an interested voice - those not answerable by yes or no
- Thank people for their openness - stress how much you value it - even if you don't particularly like what they said
- Point to areas of agreement before jumping on areas of disagreement - this reduces defensiveness by letting the other person know that you agree in part - hence not attacking everything they said
- Portray any disagreement as simple a difference of opinion - controlling your anger so as not to convey an "I'm right" - "You're wrong" attitude
- A negative reaction will strongly influence the other person - either to get angry back or say nothing next time
- It is a well known fact that people seek confirmation of their own views, so if you really want other people's views, don't penalize them for not agreeing with you! Easier said than done.
- Set aside your authority to create an atmosphere of partnership to reduce fear in subordinates
- Promote a culture of constructive dissent - though not to the point of paralysis

**Whether you think you can, or  
whether you think you can't,  
you're always right.**

## ADVICE FROM AN EXPERIENCED DRUM MAJOR

Recently I asked one of my drum majors to reflect back on their first year as a drum major and make a list of five things that would have been helpful to know going into their first year as a drum major.

1. Have confidence in yourself and want to do your best job.
2. Communicate with your band directors before the season begins.
3. Know that you'll always have "problems" and "problem-people" and learn to deal with it.
4. Get prepared physically and know your responsibilities as a drum major (what your band instructors expect).
5. Talk to members of the band - section leaders and especially the drumline. Get their input.
6. PRACTICE !!! Patterns  
Tempos  
Dynamics  
Cut-offs  
Marching  
Commands  
Posture  
Attitude  
Last of all salutes!!

## MARCHING FUNDAMENTALS HANDBOOK

**PROPER POSTURE:** Proper marching is built upon the foundation of proper posture. Proper posture can make a band look larger or smaller than they actually are and also shows the pride and discipline of a band. There are five points on the body that should be aligned to assure proper posture.

Those five points are:

1. Ankle
2. Knee
3. Hips
4. Shoulders
5. Ears

All five points should be aligned in a vertical line with the shoulders rolled up and back.

**GLIDE STEP:** This is the most fundamental step in corps style marching. It is a controlled "roll step" that is characterized by the heel of the foot touching the ground first while the toes are pointed up, the foot rolls forward as the weight of the body is put upon the foot. The heel to toe roll should be executed as smoothly as possible to reduce the bounce of the upper body. Proper glide step technique will result in a better sounding band because of the reduced amount of horns bouncing against the students' lips. The normal glide step is 22 1/2 inches in length that equals 8 steps to 5 yards on a football field. The toes should point straight forward

### **FIVE RULES FOR THE PROPER GLIDE STEP:**

1. Plant the heel.
2. Keep the foot low to the ground.
3. Flex the toes (Toes Up!)
4. Roll through the entire foot.
5. "Break" the big toe.

### **BLOCK BAND DRESS POINTS:**

1. File (Front to back)
2. Rank (Side to side)
3. Diagonal

### **MARK TIME:**

The illusion of movement can be accomplished in 4 ways

1. Entire foot leaves the ground
2. Only heels leave the ground
3. Only toes leave the ground
4. Feet remain planted on ground / knees bend slightly

## MARCHING AND MANEUVERING DRILLS

1. Muscle stretching
  - Touch the sky
  - Touch the toes
  - Lunges
  - Side stretch
  - Boings
  - Wacky Jacks
2. Posture
  - Slow 5 count roll up
  - Shoulder roll
  - Shifting weight / weebles
3. Horn Carriage
  - Horns up (1 & 4 count)
  - Horns down (1 & 4 count)
  - Box angle
  - Box center
4. Mark Time (Low)
  - 4 count sub-divided drill
  - 3 count sub-divided drill
  - 2 count sub-divided drill
5. Mark Time (High)
  - 4 count sub-divided drill
  - 3 count sub-divided drill
  - 2 count sub-divided drill
  - Balance drill
6. Glide Step
  - Slow - verbalize the 5 steps
  - First step
  - Rocker
  - 8 x 8
  - 8 x 16
  - 6 x 8 x 16
7. Wheel turns
  - 4, 8, 16 counts (for 90, 180, and 360 degrees)
  - Pinwheels - arms out
8. Pivot turns (Flank turns)
  - Left and Right First Step
  - Zig - Zag
  - Alternate Line Drill
9. Slide
  - Top Turns
  - Box Drills
  - Plus Drill
  - Circle Drill
10. Prance Step
  - First Step and Hold
  - 8 x 16
11. Floating the Eyes
12. Follow the Leader
13. Float forms
  - Forward
  - Back
  - Oblique
14. Dress Points of Block/Forms
  - Front
  - Side to Side
  - Oblique (Diagonal)
15. Rock & Roll Turns
16. Exercises based on specific examples from your show

## M & M CHECK OFF

1. Posture / Carriage
  - five points in line \_\_\_\_\_
  - shoulders pulled back \_\_\_\_\_
  - eyes up, chin parallel to ground \_\_\_\_\_
  - proper arm position \_\_\_\_\_
  - feet at 45 degree angle(or toes together) \_\_\_\_\_
  
2. Dress Center
  - snaps head \_\_\_\_\_
  - no movement on "and" \_\_\_\_\_
  
3. Low Mark Time (#4)
  - feet clear the ground (see daylight) \_\_\_\_\_
  - no bounce \_\_\_\_\_
  - no sway \_\_\_\_\_
  - heel toe up - toe heel down \_\_\_\_\_
  
4. High Mark Time
  - lifts heel first - touches toe first (down) \_\_\_\_\_
  - heel comes up inseam \_\_\_\_\_
  - heel touches the bottom on knee \_\_\_\_\_
  - foot dangles \_\_\_\_\_
  - legs straight in front of body \_\_\_\_\_
  - no bounce or sway \_\_\_\_\_
  
5. Glide Step
  - plants foot \_\_\_\_\_
  - stays low to the ground \_\_\_\_\_
  - toes up \_\_\_\_\_
  - roll heel to toe \_\_\_\_\_
  - breaks the big toe \_\_\_\_\_
  - doesn't lean into beginning or end \_\_\_\_\_
  - backwards (on balls of feet or drag toes) \_\_\_\_\_
  
6. Prance
  - half step distance \_\_\_\_\_
  - foot/toe position \_\_\_\_\_
  - knee makes 90 degree angle \_\_\_\_\_
  - backwards and forwards \_\_\_\_\_
  
7. Turns
  - wheel \_\_\_\_\_
  - flank right \_\_\_\_\_
  - flank left \_\_\_\_\_
  - to the rear (180°) \_\_\_\_\_
  
8. Horn Position
  - Brass - 10 degrees above parallel \_\_\_\_\_
  - Flutes 90 degree angle with body \_\_\_\_\_
  - Uniform carry position \_\_\_\_\_
  - Box angle \_\_\_\_\_
  - Box center \_\_\_\_\_

## **READING THE DRILL CHART**

Drill charts are one method that enable drill designers to assign specific positions on the field to individual performers. Through these specific assignments, drill can be taught at a much faster rate and with a higher level of execution than was previously possible.

The drill chart breaks football field down into smaller units of measure. Most fields are mowed and painted every five yards. Using the normal size step in corps style marching (22 1/2") it takes eight steps to cover a distance of five yards.

The depth of a high school football field can be divided into three equal rectangles by use of the hash marks. There are 28 normal (22 1/2") steps from the front sidelines to the front hash mark; 28 steps from the front hash to the back hash, and 28 steps from the back hash marks to the back sideline. It is important to realize that college and professional football fields have closer hash marks that may have effects on the group when blocking and/or performing. It is a good idea to step off and measure the distance in between hash marks of both your practice field as well as your performance field.

When setting a rank on a yardline, the heel of the foot is to be placed against the edge of the yardline with the foot covering the line itself. By doing so, the line of alignment (five points) will be directly in the middle of the yard line.

When reading a drill chart, it is often times easier to turn the page upside down so that you are looking at the sideline from your position on the field. If it seems at all confusing, write on the charts where the home stands or audience will be to give you an immediate point of reference. It is very important to note the scale of the drill paper being used. The drill paper we use is a one step grid, meaning that each step that is indicated by a small box. There are eight boxes between each yard line representing the eight steps needed to cover that distance. Some drill sheets are marked every two or four steps by either lines or dots. Be sure you know what scale of the drill paper has been used.

### **Effort**

***Some people dream of worthy accomplishments, while others stay awake and do them.***

## TEACHING THE SHOW

It will be of great benefit to have your band students learn the music and if possible have the music memorized before you start the blocking process.

1. Make sure that the students understand the grid system that you are using, including the location of home stands, yard line, hash marks, and terminology that is written on the chart.
2. Teach the dress points for each picture as you block the people into place.
3. Teach the horn, foot (facings), and body placement as you teach each picture.
4. Teach the transitions between pictures with specific counts for each section of the band, guard or drum line.
5. Apply the music to the transitions and standfast sections as soon as possible.
6. Reinforce fundamentals as you teach the show.

When teaching the show, your responsibilities as drum major include:

1. Knowing the drill (counts, facings, horn angles, etc.) before it goes on the field.
2. Trying to intercept questions members of the band may have for the director. If you don't have the answer to their question tell them you will find out for them. Valuable time is wasted when twenty different people have to tell the director that a spring just broke on their horn. The most commonly asked questions that waste the director's time deal with information that has usually already been given such as horn facing, number of counts that a move takes, and what set they are supposed to be in or going to.
3. Understand that not everyone is going to understand everything the first time through. Make sure that the rehearsal keeps moving quickly. (You need to help those having difficulties outside regularly scheduled rehearsals.)

### Success

***Success is a journey not a destination.***

## PRIORITIES IN FIELD MARCHING

While you are blocking your show and/or rehearsing your drill, one problem that always arises is one person will be exactly on the point on which they were blocked and yet be totally out of the form. This problem arises for a number of different reasons, which may include a field that has not been properly measured and lined. When this happens, and it will happen, you need to know how to deal with the problem. The easiest way to avoid the problem is to not let it happen. Make sure that everyone in the band knows and understands the priorities of dress in field marching.

1. Be in the form. Know what the form is supposed to look like and your relationship to the people around you.
2. Maintain the correct interval and distance between marchers.
3. Know body (including feet) and horn facings at all times.
4. Know your spot on the field (realize that fields differ and not all are painted precisely), and understand that it is to put you in the approximate area of part of the overall form design.

\*\*\*\* It is also a good idea to have your music with you so that you can see exactly where in the music you are at each picture.

## UNDERSTANDING DRILL TRANSITIONS

It is important for you as a drum major to understand not only what the set pictures of the drill are supposed to look like but that you also understand the transitions or the time and movement from one picture to another picture. In most corps style drill, the concept of taking equal size steps to get to a desired point is very important. The reason for the emphasis on equal sized steps is to insure that forms are not distorted as members move from one picture to another. If a particular move takes 32 counts to get from picture A to picture B, then there should be 32 separate pictures in between picture A and picture B. Having students point to halfway points between pictures and stopping them after 16 points is one way of reinforcing the concept of equal sized steps. This will also help clean drill.

# Squad Leader Planner

Month:

Short Term Goals	Due	Notes	Done?	Rehearsals & Meetings	Date	Time	Done?
1							
2							
3							
4							
5							
6							
7							
8							
9							
10							

Planning/Prep To Do	Due	Notes	Done?	Phone Calls	Number	Done?
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
7						
8						
9						
10						

For next month:

- 1 .....
- 2 .....
- 3 .....
- 4 .....
- 5 .....
- 6 .....

## FINAL NOTES

There are just a few final thoughts that I would like to leave with you. First of all, I hope that you have made some new friends at camp. You are in a unique position as a drum major to help your band build better camaraderie not only within each ensemble, but between every band. You as drum majors must be willing to take the first steps. Support each other. Everyone, no matter what city or school they may be from, is out there on the football field or street trying to do the same thing: perform the best that they can. Making ourselves the best people we can be is what we are trying to achieve, not scoring x amount of points. That is what this is all about anyway. Good luck to all of you in the coming years, I hope I have the opportunity to see you in action.

**GOOD, BETTER, BEST  
NEVER LET IT REST  
TILL YOUR GOOD IS BETTER  
AND YOUR BETTER IS BEST !**

## *Notes*

## *Notes*