

Rehearsal Protocol

I. The Lesson

This lesson is a little different than some of the other lessons in this series. We're not going to dig into deep spiritual principles or exegete scripture. Rather, we're going to look at several elements that go into making rehearsal times more timely and productive. Let's call it "rehearsal protocol."

There is nothing more frustrating than making time in your busy schedule to come to worship rehearsal and then ending up wasting time, feeling unproductive, or staying *way* past the normal time. The tendency is to blame these types of rehearsals on the worship leader. And while you are correct in thinking that the worship leader has a lot to do with the productivity and timeliness of rehearsals, so does the worship team, as well. We'll deal with the worship leaders later. For now, let's look at several elements that you, as the worship team, can put into practice in order for rehearsals to be productive and timely.

- 1) If you're _____, you're _____!
 - What time does rehearsal begin? Figure out how long it takes you to set up your instrument, monitor, or warm up your voice. Work backward from the time rehearsal begins to allow for this preparation and plan on arriving then.
 - Example: If rehearsal begins at 7:00pm and it takes you 20 minutes to setup your amp, dial in your tone, and tune up, then you should arrive to rehearsal at 6:40pm.
 - One of the most frustrating things for the worship leader and the rest of the worship team is when one or more of the members are late – it delays *everything!*
- 2) Come _____
 - Make sure your gear works, you have sufficient cables, your strings are fresh (and you have all your strings), or you have an ample supply of drumsticks. Even coming to rehearsal early doesn't do any good when you don't have what you need to be successful. Take ownership of your instrument/craft and be prepared! Check your gear in enough time to do something about it if it is not adequate for rehearsal.
- 3) Come to rehearsal _____
 - A grumpy, angry, discouraged, or otherwise unpleasant attitude stands *directly* in the way of team unity (see "One Accord" and "Byproducts of Unity"). If you are really going through something, ask the other team members and your worship leader to pray for you. Transparency and honesty are powerful "unity builders" in the team.
- 4) Don't create _____!
 - Don't feel the need to practice every fill, lick, run, part, vocal line, etc. that you've ever thought of playing. This should be saved for your personal practice times (you *are* practicing, right?).

- It is immensely frustrating for the team and worship leader when the musicians play when a specific part is being worked on with one or a group of the members of the team.
 - Even if you are working on a specific part for the song being rehearsed, be sensitive and make sure that you're doing that at the right time. Practicing the right part and the wrong time contributes to musical chaos.
- 5) Take adequate _____!
- Never come to rehearsal without a pen/pencil. Why spend an hour or two rehearsing only to leave and forget every production element that was worked on during the rehearsal? This is not only frustrating to the worship leader and team, but hinders the worship "flow" and creates more work for you in the long-run.
 - Additionally, make sure you then *take your chord charts/notes home* in order to practice and then *bring them with you to the worship service*.
 - There is nothing more reassuring to a worship leader than to see members of the team with a pen in their hands, taking notes.
- 6) Be ready to _____ and _____
- If you can offer help to another member on the team with his/her part, be ready to offer it in humility. If you withhold your knowledge of the part/song, the team suffers.
 - If your idea or part is determined to be inappropriate for the song (for whatever reason), be ready and willing to submit to the leader. Willing submission to leadership brings the blessing of God on the team. Defiant opposition brings disunity and all the negative byproducts thereof (see "Byproducts of Unity").
- 7) Don't become annoyed when the leader brings extra elements to the rehearsal.
- Examples are: these lessons, prayer times, watching a DVD, etc. Understand that these additional elements are designed to build up the team as a whole. Even if you've got it all figured out (first off, you probably need to pay *special* attention if you think you have), understand that other members of the team are benefiting from it, even if you are not.

II. Discussion

- 1) What are the results of unproductive and untimely rehearsals?
- 2) What are the results of productive and timely rehearsals due to musicians following "rehearsal protocol?"
- 3) How can we, as a team, lovingly encourage each other to follow these guidelines week-by-week? (doing it in a wrong way creates tension and spite between team-members.)
- 4) What are the effects of productive rehearsals on the congregation?