

The Art of Professionalism: A Guide for Musicians in Rehearsals and Concerts

Being a musician demands more than talent—it requires professionalism, punctuality, and a team-first mindset. Arriving 10 minutes before rehearsals and 30 minutes before performances ensures you're mentally and physically prepared while leaving room for unforeseen delays like traffic or setup issues. If an unavoidable circumstance arises, notify the personnel manager well in advance.

Once seated, focus on the repertoire for the upcoming performance. Your warm-up is not the time for showy concertos or personal favorites; keep it to scales or material directly relevant to the rehearsal. Every moment should center on best serving the ensemble rather than drawing attention to yourself.

Preparation is key: learn your music before arriving at the rehearsal. Listening to the piece with your part or following along with a score is essential to internalizing entrances, bowings, articulations, and dynamics. Stay alert and responsive at the rehearsal—have a pencil ready, pay close attention to the conductor, and watch your principal player. Every action reinforces habits, so strive to maintain a tone that blends seamlessly with the ensemble. The goal is to contribute, not to stand out.

Breaks are an essential time to recharge. Move around, stretch, hydrate, and clear your mind to return refreshed. This time isn't for socializing or distractions—prioritize your physical and mental readiness. Leave personal matters outside of the rehearsal or concert hall.

When bowing after a performance, face the audience with a confident smile. Your focus should be on the moment, gauging your movements by watching the concertmaster to ensure unity in presentation.

Finally, respect the rehearsal and performance spaces. When finished, pack up quietly and leave the area cleaner than when you arrived. The space might be needed for others or closed up for the day. This attention to detail in every aspect of your role reflects your professionalism and respect for the art and the community of musicians around you.

By embodying these principles, you ensure not just your success but the success of the entire ensemble.