



**International Principals' Forum
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“Employability and Entrepreneurship”

***“The potential role of the one to one instrument lesson of the
curriculum as a consulting tool for entrepreneurial skills”***

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Nowadays, the conservatory curriculum which constitutes the essence of the long European history of music education, must face the new challenges as they arise through the new and radically changing environment of the music profession. A point of balance is asked to be drawn between the preservation of traditions of the European music education concerning the academic outcomes and the response to the demands of the modern labour market. Employability and entrepreneurship are the two words which are calling us urgently to discuss the way and space they will occupy in the conservatoire curriculum of the 21st century.

In this very intriguing discussion, one of the aspects that we have to investigate is the potential role of the one-to-one instrumental lesson of the curriculum as a consulting tool for entrepreneurial skills.

Whilst learning an instrument, one-to-one classes hide in their very nature an extremely important potential, for two fundamental reasons:

1. Because the instrument one must study is what will also define the title of one's degree and furthermore constitute the basic structure upon which the whole curriculum will be built upon.
2. As the very nature of learning an instrument is individualism. All the teaching energy of the tutor is focused and personalized according to the particular-personal characteristics and needs of each student.

The personalization of the teaching methods and the feedback that inevitably happens, therefore automatically becomes -if we decide to use marketing terms- a relation that is not dissimilar to that of a manager or agent and client.

So let us shed a brighter light on this prism of the role of the instrument tutor within the frame of a conservatory curriculum:

1. In all schools, Conservatoriums, Universities and Hochschulen that offer musical performance and musical pedagogy studies, the instrument teacher is the one who will emphasize or decide if the student is to follow one or the other. This happens with many

different ways and differs from one school to another. But, the essence lies in the fact that **the teacher** will lead the way, will induce and finally decide the route that is to be followed by the student. This procedure by itself is in my opinion the most characteristic example of the systematic role of an instrument teacher in relation to the professional orientation of the student.

2. Even though the sequence in relation to the difficulty of technique and artistic integrity or the repertoire is basically given, the instrument tutor is the one who will judge each case separately and decide which repertoire the student is to work on, based on the improvement of specific individual weaknesses but also emergence the special personal gifts and talents.
3. The instrument tutor will give individual advice to each student in matters of competitions, auditions, seminars and master classes which could be beneficial.
4. He will also help in the choice of repertoire for the conduction of performances, except of those that will be mandatory to the educational procedures, **again** based on the utmost exploitation of the technical and artistic abilities of the student.
5. As for the graduates of the first cycle of studies, the instrument tutor is the one who will guide the student in matters of postgraduate studies and also the future career.
6. Finally, during the preparation of each students performance within the sphere of the educational procedure, the instrument tutor is the one who will advise on matters of stage presence.

In closing, we must not leave out the smaller -but also very important- everyday tips that the teacher is offering, and have to do with the professional manner as a whole but also with the profiling of a well presented music performer.

Dear colleagues and members of this forum,

These matters in their majority have not to do with the essence -the basic structure or the kernel if you want- of the subject of the individual one-to-one lesson, but nonetheless constitute important parts.

As you can understand from what I have foretold, I believe that the possibilities that are provided by the individual lessons in relation to employability and entrepreneurial skills training

within the scope of a conservatory curriculum, can be further developed as a one to one consulting tool, but also be combined with other familiar multidisciplinary tools so that we can succeed in obtaining the desired result.

As an instrument teacher I find it extremely intriguing and would be willing to work with other colleagues that look that matter at hand through a similar point of view, so that we can further venture in these possible advancements, not only from the spectrum of the role of the instrument teacher but also further afield. To make the decisive move and to re-examine not only the hierarchy of the academic priorities of the instrumental lesson, but also its total structure as it is today.

Let us ask ourselves again, for these difficult questions -and this concerns the teachers that constitute a conservatoire curriculum as a whole- which demand complicated answers such as:

- Is music a single, discrete entity or does it encompass, a broader more multidimensional field?
- Should we perhaps re-evaluate how we think about music?
- What is it that we want? Specialization or a more multi-dimensionalism?
- If it is specialisation, that we want, and up to what point?
- How are we to succeed?
- And in what point of the academic route of the student could this be done?
- On the other hand, if we want multi-dimensionalism how and with what tools are we to succeed?
- Is there a possible point where the pursuit of a multi-dimensional base will meet specialization?

Dear colleagues,

These are some of the questions which I believe we should not be afraid in asking ourselves but also provide answers to.

I would like to close with the following:

The fact that we are now talking openly about the matter of employability and entrepreneurial skills training in art studies, shows that we are making rapid leaps toward a society which cannot even begin to comprehend matters that are not measurable in terms of the market. This by itself is a worrying sign in regards to the role of the arts as a whole in the modern community that is forming. We should face this challenge with sobriety and academic –but also artistic- dignity. Perhaps it is our duty to “translate” the importance of the existence of musical art in this new “code of communication”, and the understanding of the environment around it that is a product of the modern society. Perhaps in this way, through the abstinent but peculiar translation we will be able to succeed to transfer the distinguished human values of cultural arts, for future generations to come.

Ioannis Toulis

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