

On Rehearsing

1. Start and end on time. It is respectful and loving as well as an important basic discipline from which ordered work flows.
2. This thing we do is about people first, then music, and then everything else.
3. Care for your materials and bring them for the work— scores and your trusty choir pencil.
4. First number all your measures. In this you are truly measuring the work to be done as well as organizing yourself to work well.
5. Respect the moment of correction. This moment of sacred concentration is where the work is shaped.
6. For yourself and for those who work with you, hold high standards but also deep and abiding compassion.
7. Have tremendous fun. But put the fun in the work.
8. Sing right away. Fill the duration of notes with vowel and sound— legato/energy is the basic expressive element in singing.
9. Work with the largest possible spectrum of dynamics but strive to remain within the sleeve of beauty (unless there's a great reason to make an un-beautiful sound).
10. Create an energized pulse and rhythmic intensity in all you do. *Consonant clusters with duration happen before the beat.*
11. Let your intellect and soul inhabit each word that you sing. This makes your diction and singing energized, specific, and effective. *This "choral lumpiness" is made from stressed and unstressed syllables, and it is often good and interesting!*
12. Know that there is always a moment to forget about technical worries and concerns. This is when you should give yourself over to be transported by the essence of the music. Don't let that moment come too early or too late in the process. No chops, no chance! No *expression*, no music!
13. Involve yourself with your collaborators through your eyes, ears, and body.
14. Find your favorite parts and enjoy them every time. Let them change and develop as your understanding of the piece grows.
15. The purpose of rehearsal is to learn everyone else's part (not your own). Your own preparation is your contribution and welcoming gift to your colleagues.
16. During rehearsal it may seem like you are changing the music, but you are actually changing yourself and changing each other.
17. Relax. You're among friends.
18. Always Be Tuning