



UNA VOCE

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The Organization of Canadian Symphony Musicians (OCSTM) is the voice of Canadian professional orchestral musicians. OCSTM's mission is to uphold and improve the working conditions of professional Canadian orchestral musicians, to promote communication among its members, and to advocate on behalf of the Canadian cultural community.

Communicating – your way

Barbara Hankins

Editor



It was my parents who left home when I was in University, not I. They moved to Nepal for twelve years while my dad worked as a Canadian-paid surgeon and my mum as a hospital volunteer. My mother wrote back all the time – cheery notes about their life, and questions and comments about ours. My dad wrote less often, but the letters were long, literary masterpieces.

I treasured both styles. When my mum died, her prolific correspondence to friends and family throughout her life was noted by the Canmore Post Office: "We know how many people Alison touched around the world."

How one communicates is a personal matter, however not communicating can be an interpersonal disaster. In this issue read how OCSTM members visited Parliament Hill to talk with MPs about arts funding, how OCSTM musicians use conductor evaluations to communicate their opinions, how Ryerson University promotes civility, and how we can all improve our own conversations at work with suggestions from Vital Smart's Joseph Grenny.

An unalterable and unquestioned law of the musical world required that the German text of French operas sung by Swedish artists should be translated into Italian for the clearer understanding of English-speaking audiences.

— Edith Wharton, American novelist 1862-1937

Update from #WePlayOn

by Shawn Spicer

#WePlayOn



Hello friends,

We have been busy here in London, both on stage and behind the scenes. Since 11 November we have presented four performances: a *Messiah* with Kevin Mallon, a Christmas Pops with Brian Jackson that was run out to Chatham, and a Remembrance Day concert that was put together by Scott Good. I am especially proud of the high quality and variety of the concerts that we have produced. Audiences have been very good for the most part and we hope to do better as we get more lead-time and professional marketing help.

Currently we are absorbed with planning concerts for the new year and next season. There is progress in securing funding from all levels of government as well as foundations and donors. Our hope is that as we continue to become more established we will see significant growth in support, especially from our donors.

A significant factor in our development will be the selection of a new name for the organization, which at the time of writing is imminent. Some other milestones that we have reached are securing professionals to help in operations and marketing, growing the board, and developing volunteer and community support. These are all works in progress; we still have musicians doing a lot of unpaid administrative work and we need to continue to develop our board.

In the new year we will do three concerts and some education and mentoring activity. In January there will be a performance of Dvořák's *Symphony No. 9* "From the New World" when we will make the official announcement of the new name. We are also doing shows with Payodora Tango Ensemble and Stratford Festival music director Franklin Brasz.

At the end of this season we will have performed six concerts funded by a good balance of ticket sales, community support, and government funding. I am confident that we have succeeded in building a firm foundation to grow the organization further. I hope to have more good news to tell you the next time; the progress seems slow and agonizing sometimes, but when we look back it is surprising to see what has been accomplished. Thanks to the ocsm leadership and members for your continued support.

Arts Day on the Hill

by Francine Schutzman and Monique Lagacé

Francine: On October 25, Monique Lagacé and I represented ocsm at an event called Arts Day on the Hill. This is a yearly event organized by the Coalition for the Arts at which representatives of different arts organizations – dance, theatre, music, etc. – lobby Members of Parliament and Senators to engage them in a discussion of government support for the arts. This was the largest such event to date, with 140 participants and 135 scheduled meetings. In fact, we were told that it is the largest lobbying activity by any group in Canada, no matter what the field. I have participated in the Arts Day a number of times now, so the drill is familiar to me: we go in teams of three or four people to visit Parliamentarians who hopefully serve the riding of at least one member of our group, and each team has from two to four meetings over the course of the day, with a reception at the end of the afternoon so that conversations may be continued.



There are always three “asks,” and it’s not always easy to talk about who we represent, our issues, and the “asks” during the allotted half hour. However, I have nearly always found that the people we visit are eager to engage in conversation about the arts in general and

about what is happening specifically in their ridings. This year, we had three messages to convey:

1. Thank you for the arts and culture investments in Budget 2016 (\$1.87 billion over five years).
2. Short-term investments from Budget 2016, in the Cultural Spaces and in the Showcasing Canada programs, need to be extended and sustained beyond two years. (In plain English, this means buildings and touring).
3. The Digital Culture consultations are an essential process between government, industry, and artists – the Canadian Arts Coalition wants to ensure that artists are part of the conversation. (The Coalition is especially interested in giving native Canadians a voice, since they are among the artists who are struggling the most).

I admit that I was quite happy to learn that two members of my team had already taken part in the ongoing Digital Culture consultations, since this is far from any area of expertise that I might possess. Our first meeting was with a new Liberal MP from Halifax, Andy Fillmore. His background was in city planning and his wife is the director of an art gallery, so it was really a meeting of the minds. My team’s only other encounter was cancelled because of a scheduling mixup. I wasn’t sorry about that, since that MP’s main interest is in reviving the cod fishing industry. Still, we probably could have had an interesting exchange of ideas.

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Monique: This was my first experience with the Arts Day on the Hill. I was assigned to a group of four, as Francine explained and, fortunately for me, two persons had past experience and were very good at dealing with all aspects of the activity. We had only two meetings scheduled – maybe because of the record number of participants – and one was cancelled. The only MP we did meet, Angelo Iacono, a Liberal from Laval, Québec, was very interested in the arts and eager to discuss the government’s arts policies, present and future. He assured us that Mélanie Joly was quite aware of artists’ needs for improvement in digital market conditions. He added that, generally speaking, the Trudeau government felt that artists had not been treated fairly by previous governments for many, many years now, even by the Liberals before the Harper era. Music to our ears, of course!

Overall, we did manage to speak about the three “asks” Francine mentioned above and took leave with the feeling that we had fulfilled our mission. The meeting ended with picture taking and many thanks from both sides of the table.

The Great Podium Chase: OCSM and the Art of Evaluating Conductors

Matt Heller

OCSM 1st Vice-President



The year 2016 was one of new faces on Canadian podiums – and not just Gemma New, the Hamilton Philharmonic's 29-year-old music director since January. Regime change has also come to Ottawa, Saskatoon, and Regina within the last two seasons, and Calgary, Edmonton, and Victoria have all announced new maestros for 2017–18.

No two orchestras are the same, nor are any two conductors – yet we look for many of the same qualities: artistic presence; a keen and compelling personality; efficient and informed rehearsal choices; an ability to advocate, connect, and gather a community around great music-making. They're not easy to measure or compare, but we know them when we see them. And even as one search process concludes, the need to identify and seek out quality conductors never really ends.

We designed the OCSM Conductor Evaluation database as a resource for all our orchestras, in all stages of the search process. We use an online survey that asks a set of brief but essential questions, with space for optional comments. These are compiled and shared confidentially with relevant committees, often within two weeks of the performance. Later, other orchestras may access those same results, as they research candidates or narrow the search to a few finalists.

Our transition to online surveys was in 2011, so this past summer seemed like a suitable time to review and make some tweaks. A committee of delegates refined questions to address more specifically conductors' suitability as MD candidates. We also developed an alternate form for evaluating Pops conductors. Thanks to RSO delegate Gary Borton, SNS delegate Kerry Kavaloski, and CPO delegate and OCSM evaluations administrator Michael Hope for serving on this committee with me.

When it comes to conductors, you can't always get what you want – but we always welcome your suggestions and feedback about Conductor Evaluations. Thank you to all of you who participate, and please feel free to contact me or Michael Hope with any comments.

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Saskatoon Symphony Welcomes Eric Paetkau

by **Melissa Goodchild**

Saskatoon Symphony Orchestra



Eric Paetkau is the new Music Director of the Saskatoon Symphony Orchestra and is the founder as well as Music Director of the Toronto-based Group of 27.

As a conductor he has worked with a number of Canadian orchestras including the Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony, the Calgary Philharmonic, the Saskatoon Symphony, the Windsor Symphony, and Ontario Philharmonic. As a violist Mr. Paetkau has performed with the Nuremberg Symphony in Germany, the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, the Canadian Opera Company, the National Ballet of Canada Orchestra, Les Violons du Roy, and Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra.

In his short time with the Saskatoon Symphony Orchestra Eric Paetkau has allowed us to improve musically. We hope to continue to expand our repertoire and audience base in the coming years.

Rune Bergmann Takes the Reins at the Calgary Philharmonic

by **Michael Hope**

Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra



Norwegian conductor Rune Bergmann will be the Calgary Philharmonic's Music Director starting in the 2017–18 season.

An energetic and compelling figure on the podium, Bergmann is a dynamic, versatile conductor with an extensive classical, romantic, operatic, and contemporary repertoire. Considered among today's most talented young

Scandinavian conductors, his elegant interpretations and reputation as an inspiring and profound musician continue to attract the attention of orchestras throughout the world.

Maestro Bergmann has one of the sunniest person-

alities I have ever seen in a conductor, and just that alone puts everyone around him in a good mood for music making.

10 Suggestions for Conductors and Managers

by Janet Horvath

From *Playing (Less) Hurt: An Injury Prevention Guide for Musicians*. Used with permission. Slightly edited for this newsletter. Feel free to share this with your Health and Safety Committee and your management.

1. Choose realistic and playable tempi

Speed is not the ultimate goal. Clarity and ease of playing is sacrificed and tension increases as musicians scramble for notes.

2. Allow musicians to "mark" rehearsals

Let the musicians know that it is okay to take it easier during the rehearsal, especially with tiring techniques. Avoid excessive repetition. When it is necessary, it is better to return to the problem later in the rehearsal.

3. Allow some time between movements and pieces

Even just a few seconds allows the musician to put down or lower their instrument, untwist their arms, roll their shoulders and catch their breath.

4. Balance programs from week to week

The huge "splashy" works need to be alternated with lighter programs, and new or unfamiliar works need to be programmed with familiar ones. Learn from the musicians which works are extremely taxing physically.

5. Consider not doing repeats in rehearsals

Playing through a whole program twice in one day can be very taxing.

6. Monitor the programming and rehearsal of noisy "ear-blasting" works

Alternate huge loud works with quieter ones.

7. Offer hearing protection options

Experiment with risers and shields. Avoid placing the timpani directly behind the horns if at all possible. When this is a problem, place the timpani on risers. Insist that monitors and amplifiers be turned down when they are used.

8. Musicians need good equipment in order to play well

Provide ergonomically designed chairs, stands, and proper lighting. Practice and warm-up space, although sometimes logistically difficult, is a desirable goal.

9. Implement a work-hardening program

A gradual return to the full orchestra schedule is essential to avoid re-injury.

10. Establish a health team

This should be comprised of musicians and staff in order to address issues related to injury prevention.

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Janet played Associate Principal Cello in the Minnesota Orchestra for three decades. She is currently a candidate for the MFA in creative writing at Hamline University, and a staff writer for the classical music e-magazine *Interlude* (www.interlude.hk).

Twitter: @playinglesshurt. For more information on Janet Horvath's book, go to (<http://www.playinglesshurt.com/>).

After I die, I shall return to earth as the doorkeeper of a bordello and I won't let one of you in.

— Arturo Toscanini, Italian conductor 1867-1957, to his orchestra during a difficult rehearsal

Six Things To Do Today that Will Make Your Life Better at Work

By Joseph Grenny

Most employees feel frustrated, concerned, upset, or discouraged at some point during their work day. Why? Because they either disagree with the boss, don't support the suggestion of a colleague, or otherwise possess different views from the vocal majority.

And yet, almost none of these employees share their opinions in a way that gets results. They either clam up because they figure it's politically unwise to disagree with the majority or the authority, or they hold their differing opinions inside until they eventually blow a gasket. That is, they toggle from silence to violence.

Neither method gets an idea out into the open where it can be made part of the collective view – and neither method helps improve working conditions or relationships.

Why do we routinely toggle from silence to violence? We go to silence because we *dread* crucial conversations. These are interactions where stakes are high, opinions differ, and emotions run strong. We fear them because our past experience has taught us that if we're both emotional *and* honest, bad things are likely to happen. So we go to silence. Better to let someone else speak his or her mind than to risk our own reputation.

We go to violence because we're so *unskilled* at holding crucial conversations. While research shows the ability to hold crucial conversations is the key to having influence, job effectiveness, and even marital success, most of us have little or no formal training on the topic. Unfortunately, we've developed our standard mode of operation by watching our parents, friends, and former bosses.

When we do decide to speak up, we inevitably draw from the mediocre skills exemplified by these role models and end up using sarcasm, caustic humor, guilt trips, debate tactics, and other forms of verbal violence. Eventually, we note that we're in trouble for having said something and we pull back into silence. We toggle from silence to violence and back again – and it's not pleasant.

The good news is that it doesn't have to be this way. When we employ the skills of crucial conversations at work we can elevate our capacity to influence decisions, improve relationships, and speak our minds in a way that gets heard. Use the following six tips to make your life better at work today:

1 Reverse Your Thinking. Most of us decide whether or not to speak up by considering the risks of doing so. Those who are best at crucial conversations don't think first about the risks of speaking up. They think first about the risks of *not* speaking up. They realize if they don't share their unique views, they will have to live with the poor decisions that will be made as a result of holding back their informed opinions.

2 Stop Talking. When you recognize a crucial conversation, stop talking – mid-sentence if necessary. The way you handle this conversation will have a big impact on your relationship and the results that matter to you. Think through what is being said and how it's being said. Create a gap between stimulus and response. Keep the brain turned on, don't give in to the fight or flight reflex.

3 Ask Yourself One Question. The big problem with crucial conversations is strong emotion. The brain shuts down and we react instead of thinking through how to respond. The wise person will ask his or herself this one question: What do I really want? Or maybe, what problem am I trying to solve? Or, what

relationship do I want when this conversation is over? Use this question to activate and focus your brain and diffuse your own strong emotion.

4 Make It Safe. Have you ever noticed how some conversations – even about very risky subjects – go very well? And others, perhaps even about trivial disagreements, can degenerate into combat or retreat? Why is that? We've found that the antidote to defensiveness in crucial conversations is to make it safe. People can listen to tough feedback so long as they feel safe with the person giving it. How do you create safety? You help others understand that you care about their interests as much as you care about your own. When they believe this is true, they open up to your views. When they don't, they shut down. Secondly, you must help others know you respect them. Mutual Purpose and Mutual Respect are the foundation of safety.

5 Empathize. The key to influence is empathy. Before starting a crucial conversation, influential leaders carefully think about how the problems they want to raise are affecting, or will affect, the other person. They think about the natural consequences of the situation to the other person. And they reassure others that these consequences always exist. For example, if a direct report appears incompetent, it's likely their incompetence is as frustrating to them as it is to others. The problem is that they don't see how their weaknesses are connected to their own concerns. However, if in a respectful way you can help them see how their own interests are served by addressing the problem, they are naturally motivated to engage in solutions.

6 Invite Dialogue. After you create a safe environment, confidently share your views. Once you've done so, invite differing opinions. This means you actually encourage the other person to disagree with you. Those who are best at crucial conversations aren't just out to make their point; they want to learn. If your goal is just to dump on others, they'll resist you. If you are open to hearing others' points of view, they'll be more open to yours. And finally, if you can't remember anything else in the heat of the moment, ask yourself: "Are we in silence or violence?" If so, do your best to return to healthy dialogue.

Now let me be clear about my claim. I am not suggesting that if you Reverse Your Thinking, Stop Talking, Ask Yourself One Question, Make It Safe and Empathize people will naturally give you everything you want. What I am suggesting is that your influence will increase. Rather than contributing to problems by "acting

out" your concerns, you'll be talking them out instead – and this approach gives you the potential for a solution.

Can these skills be learned? Absolutely. I've spent years developing methods for teaching and training leaders to increase their influence by improving how they deal with crucial conversations. And when they do, relationships and results at work improve rapidly and remarkably.

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Joseph Grenny is a four-time New York Times best-selling author, keynote speaker, and social scientist for business performance. His work has been translated into 28 languages and has generated results for three hundred of the Fortune 500. Joseph has been a contributing columnist for *BusinessWeek*, *Forbes*, *Harvard Business Review*, and LinkedIn. He has appeared on *The Today Show*, CNN, Bloomberg, and Fox Business News, and has been cited in hundreds of news publications including *The Wall Street Journal*, *The New York Times*, and *USA Today*. Joseph is the co-founder of VitalSmarts, an organization committed to teaching others how to effectively change human behavior.

Named one of the Top 20 Leadership Training Companies, VitalSmarts, a TwentyEighty Inc. company, is home to the award-winning Crucial Conversations, Crucial Accountability, Influencer, and Change Anything Training and New York Times bestselling books of the same titles. When used in combination, these courses enable organizations to achieve new levels of performance by changing employee behavior. VitalSmarts has consulted with more than 300 of the Fortune 500 companies and trained more than 1.5 million people worldwide. (www.vitalsmarts.com)

What Does It Mean to Be Civil?

Much of the recent additions to the *Ontario Health and Safety Act* (OHSA) concerning workplace violence and harassment focuses on the "thou shalt nots." Ryerson University's policies adhere to the OHSA, but also offer some helpful information that includes what thou shalt do to help create a positive working environment. The complete *Guide to Civility* may be found at: (<http://www.ryerson.ca/content/dam/irm/pdfs/VHP/Guide-to-Civility.pdf>). The following excerpt is published with permission from Ryerson University.

— Editor

Civility is about more than merely being polite, although being polite is an excellent start. Civility is about being

aware of other people's feelings, and listening and seeking common ground as an initial point for dialogue when differences occur, while at the same time, recognizing that differences are enriching. Through positive, respectful communication, one person has the power to improve morale, productivity and teamwork.

How Does Incivility Affect the Workplace?

Incivility and disrespect in the workplace can be a barrier to effective communication, coaching, and performance. Incivility deals with a broad range of unacceptable behaviours that compromise and devalue the individual, and there may be severe psychological and physical impacts. For example, violence in the workplace may have origins in minor acts of incivility long before the physical violence occurs.

At a basic level, incivility can be in the form of: rude comments, insensitive actions, unintentional slights, complaining, gossip, rumors, crude jokes, and profanity. As issues escalate, incivility can become more verbally aggressive and can include yelling, belittling comments, intimidation, and discriminatory comments. At its most extreme, incivility can take the form of violence or threats of violence.

Incivility can be subtle or overt. It may be a single event or may involve a continuing series of incidents, and may involve the abuse of authority or position. Un-civil behaviour may be unintended or deliberately directed at another individual. In any case, the impact on that individual is what must be addressed.

Being Proactive to Create a Civil Work Environment

Managers

A manager is the person to whom an employee directly reports concerning matters related to their employment.

Managers and supervisors regularly comment and offer advice on the work performance or work-related behaviour of their employees. Legitimate comment or advice is not a sign of disrespect. It differs from incivility or harassment in that feedback is intended to assist employees to improve work performance or the standard of their behaviour. However, civility does require that even the most critical feedback be delivered respectfully, privately, and courteously.

The following tips can help managers be proactive in creating a congenial and team-oriented work environment.

1. Treat your employees, peers, and superiors with respect.
2. Tap your employees' hidden talents and bring them to the front.

3. It is not wise to play favourites and show bias when dealing with your employees.
4. Trust your employees to do their jobs effectively.
5. Praise in public. Pointing out an employee's mistake in public has the worst kind of demoralizing effect. On the other hand, complimenting them on a job well done in the presence of others serves to motivate them to perform better.
6. Do not overreact to mistakes that happen inadvertently. Instead, help employees understand the error so they do not repeat it. A loud, condescending, or rude tone of voice will only make your employees tune out the message you are trying to convey.
7. Make them feel that they count. Employees like to know that they are making a positive contribution. The fact that they make a difference will drive them to be more productive.
8. Constructive criticism works. If you feel that an employee has the potential to do much better at their job, take him or her aside to discuss. Sometimes, the belief that a superior has in you pushes you to achieve more.
9. Do not flaunt your authority. "You have to do it because I say so" is not the way to get employees' respect. You may get the job done but lose your employees' loyalty in the process, and may eventually lose them to another employer.

Employees

The following tips can help employees be proactive in creating a congenial and team orientated work environment.

1. Treat your co-workers, peers, and superiors with respect.
2. Before acting, consider the impact of your words and actions on others.
3. When there is an issue, try talking to the other person directly and not to co-workers behind their back.
4. Don't take feedback, suggestions, or constructive criticism of your work as a personal attack. See it as a positive contribution and an inspiration to excel.
5. Be careful about making assumptions about other people's behaviour and intent based on your values, beliefs, and customs. Specific actions that are considered polite or rude can vary dramatically by place, time and context. Differences such as social role, gender, social class, religion, and cultural identity may all affect the perception of a given behaviour. Consequently, a behaviour that is considered perfectly acceptable by some people and in some cultures may be considered rude by others.
6. Acknowledge the contributions of other employees.
7. Understand your triggers or "hot buttons." Knowing

what makes you angry and frustrated enables you to manage your reactions and respond in a more appropriate manner.

8. Be willing to apologize sincerely to people if you said or did something that may have offended them.
9. Use active listening when discussing issues with others.

Active Listening

When applied in appropriate situations, active listening is one of the most important skills people can have in dealing with issues of incivility. How well you listen has a major impact on your job effectiveness and on the quality of your relationships with others. There are five key elements of active listening. They all help ensure that you really hear the other person, and that the other person knows you are hearing what they are saying.

1. **Pay attention.** Give the speaker your undivided attention, and acknowledge the message.
2. **Show that you are listening.** Use your own body language and gestures to convey your attention. Recognize that non-verbal communication also "speaks" loudly.
3. **Provide feedback.** Our personal filters, assumptions, judgments, and beliefs can distort what we hear. As a listener, your role is to understand what is being said. This may require you to reflect what is being said and ask questions.
4. **Defer judgment.** Interrupting is a waste of time. It frustrates the speaker and limits full understanding of the message.
5. **Respond appropriately.** Active listening is a model for respect and understanding. You are gaining information and perspective. Even if you don't agree with another person's perspective, you should respect and acknowledge their feelings.

UNA VOCE

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