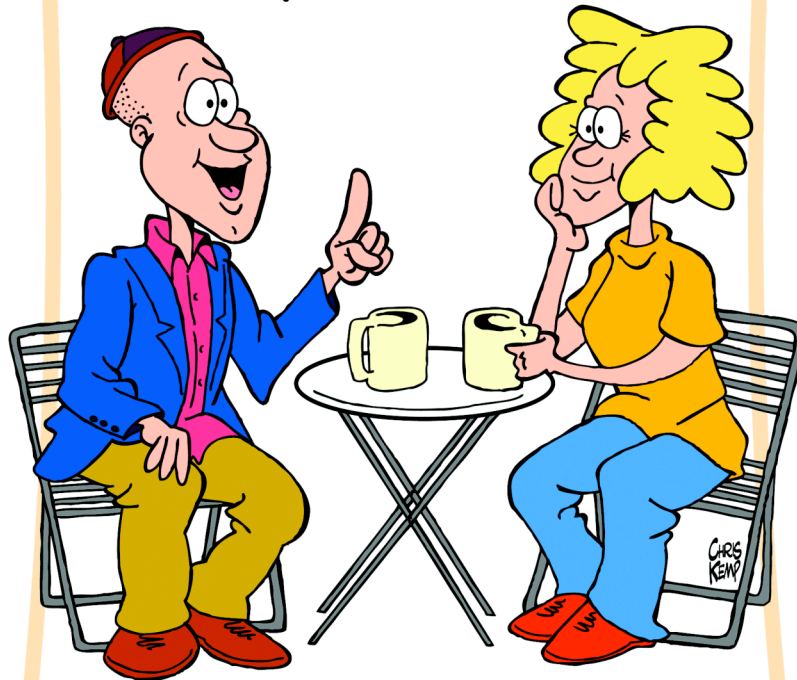


THE FOLLOWING PAGES ARE EXCERPTS FROM:

MUSIC BUSINESS TACTICS

Lessons from Dad

By Chase Sanborn



chasesanborn.com

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to **MUSIC BUSINESS TACTICS**. There are many books that address musical skills, including the others in the Tactics series (**JAZZ TACTICS, TUNING TACTICS, BRASS TACTICS**). This book is about all the other facets of a musician's life that determine success or failure, the business of music and everything that goes along with that. These things are every bit as important as your musical ability when it comes to making a living in this business.

THE BUSINESS OF BEING A MUSICIAN

Music Business Tactics is not about contracts, agents, managers and record labels. It is not so much a book about the music business as it is about the business of being a musician. If you are looking for advice on how to become the 'next big thing', others have more to offer. *Music Business Tactics* is for the independent artist who strives to be a versatile and competent working musician, one who is admired and respected by colleagues and peers, as well as fans, and one who takes care of business musically, personally and financially.

The advice offered here is personal, based on thirty-something years of experience as a professional musician. I do not attempt to tell you everything you need to know about the music business. I just share with you some of the things experience has taught me.

✂ ...*(continued)*

MUSIC BUSINESS TACTICS

SHOULD YOU BE A MUSICIAN?

MUSIC touches the life of virtually every human being. It soothes babies and savage beasts. It proclaims triumphant victory and lessens the sting of defeat. It makes us laugh; it makes us cry. It makes us get up and dance; it makes us sit down and relax. It heals. It inspires. Playing music stimulates independent and creative thinking. It makes you smarter, funnier and better looking. Musicians are admired the world over.

Learning to play music will enhance your life and the lives of those around you. It is a gift you give to yourself and to society. It is hard to imagine a more worthy pursuit.

✓ **YES**

You really should be a musician.

SHOULD YOU BE A PROFESSIONAL MUSICIAN?

B **EING A PROFESSIONAL MUSICIAN** is a tough way to make a living. Every day, jobs evaporate and competitors become more competitive. Each year, university and college programs graduate thousands of well-trained musicians into the marketplace. Musicians, says Kenny Werner, are like coat hangers—there are always a few hanging around. Meanwhile, technological advances spawn machines that produce increasingly lifelike impersonations of live musicians. Machines never miss a note, they never take a break, and they never complain about the arrangement. Many listeners can't tell the difference.

Have I discouraged you? If so, give this serious thought. This is reality. With single-minded devotion, persistence, dedication, patience and countless hours of hard work, it is still possible to make your living in music. But it's not going to be easy, and success is far from guaranteed. If you are not prepared for it, the music business could destroy your love of music.

If you wonder whether you have what it takes to be a professional musician, ask yourself these questions:

- ♪ Are you motivated and energetic?
- ♪ Do you wake up every day eager to learn something new?

✂ ...*(continued)*

THE EIGHT P'S

MUSIC BUSINESS TACTICS is organized in eight sections, each beginning with the letter 'P'. Minding your P's will lead to success in all facets of your life, musical, personal and business.

PERFORMANCE: Your musical ability is the core product. Honing your chops is job #1.

PERSONALITY: If people like you, they are more likely to hire you.

PUNCTUALITY: Managing your time, showing up on time, and responding in a timely manner are crucial elements of the plan.

PRESENTATION: Improving your appearance will improve your success rate.

PROMOTION: It's not good enough to be an excellent musician. Others have to be made aware of your abilities.

PRESERVING FOR POSTERITY: Recording your music preserves it for posterity. Marketing it properly can lead to prosperity.

PENNIES: Take care of your pennies, and the dollars take care of themselves. Managing your money is an essential component of any business plan.

PASSING IT ON: Teaching is good for the soul. It can also be good for the pocketbook.

THINKING ABOUT BUSINESS

A **T THE END** of a successful musical career, if you added up all the money you earned and divided by all the hours you spent honing and plying your craft, you might be dismayed to discover your true hourly wage. The primary rewards from a life in the music business are not financial.

UNFORTUNATELY, WE LOVE WHAT WE DO

As musicians, we love what we do. There can be no better recipe for satisfaction in life. However, this creates a problem. Because we do what we do for love, it can be hard to place an appropriate dollar value on it. But if you don't place a value on your art, you can't expect anyone else to. That is the crux of this book.

✂ ...*(continued)*

CREATE A BUSINESS PLAN

E **VERY BUSINESS** needs a plan, a set of guiding principles and expectations which will make and keep the business profitable and self-sustaining. You must create a product, identify the market for your product, promote your product to the market, and keep an eye on the bottom line.

Q: *I've been advised not to spend time and energy thinking about business, but to focus on my development as an artist, and let the rest fall into place.*

✂ ...*(continued)*

MUSIC BUSINESS TACTICS

PLAY WELL TODAY, PLAY BETTER TOMORROW

AT ANY GIVEN MOMENT in your life as a musician, one of two things is happening: you are getting better or you are getting worse; there is no standing still. Each day you must confront your strengths and weaknesses and strive to move forward. Artistic growth is the cornerstone of your musical business plan.

✂ ...*(continued)*

GETTING THE 'GOOD' GIGS

MANY YOUNG PLAYERS believe (hope) there is a shortcut to the 'good' gigs. That's like the guy in the mailroom asking how he gets to be vice-president. Unfortunately, there are no shortcuts. Even though you may feel you are ready, there are more experienced musicians in line ahead of you. You must pay your dues if you want to advance to the big leagues.

✂ ...*(continued)*

COMPETING WITH COLLEAGUES

THE **COMPETITIVE INSTINCT** is an integral part of being a musician. It drives us to work hard and improve. The instinct is strongest among the young: In the trumpet section, the young player gets to the recording studio early in hopes of grabbing the glory of the 1st trumpet chair. The more experienced player gets to the studio early in hopes of grabbing the stress-free existence of the 4th trumpet chair (and usually the same money). While the young player is in the studio trying to warm up his double-C, the experienced player is in the lobby, chatting with the contractor.

✂ ...*(continued)*

ON TIME IS LATE

ARRIVING **FASHIONABLY LATE** may be fine for a social event, but missing the downbeat is a cardinal sin. People seem to have internal clocks that determine their punctuality. Some are habitually late; others are habitually early. I once had a student that consistently arrived fifteen minutes late for his lesson. If he was only five minutes late he was pleased with himself. While he was wasting his own money, his tardiness was disrespectful and demonstrated an ingrained habit that would be his undoing in the music business.

✂ ...*(continued)*

MUSIC BUSINESS TACTICS

SELF-PROMOTION

SELF-PROMOTION makes a lot of musicians uncomfortable. It can seem like bragging. Unfortunately, many great musicians toil in relative obscurity while waiting for the world to take notice. If you want your contributions to be recognized, you must put modesty aside and trumpet your own talent.

CREATING A PROMO KIT

At a minimum, your promo kit should contain:

- ♪ A publicity photo. (See **PUBLICITY PHOTOS**)
- ♪ A resume or bio. (See **WHAT NOT TO WRITE**)

✂ ...*(continued)*

PUBLICITY PHOTOS

NO MATTER how distasteful you find the idea of self-promotion (what am I going to do with you?) publicity photos are important. People may make a decision about whether to attend your concert or buy your recordings based on whether you look like someone they'd like to listen to!

✂ ...*(continued)*

A SHORT HISTORY OF AUDIO RECORDING

AUDIO RECORDING dates back a little more than a century. The changes have been rapid and dramatic. It's fun to look back; hopefully it helps us as we strive to look forward.

CYLINDERS & RECORDS

The earliest recordings utilized cylinders covered with tin foil or wax, patented by Thomas Edison in 1877. Grooves were inscribed in the surface of the cylinder, corresponding to changes in air pressure. When played back on Edison's 'phonograph', the sound recording could be heard. The first commercial phonograph cylinders held about two minutes of music, and could only be played a couple of dozen times. Initially, the performers were not even credited on the box; the technology was the star. The tinny sound prompted John Philip Sousa to coin the term 'canned music'. A limited number of cylinders could be produced from one performance; musicians had to play the piece repeatedly to make additional copies.

✂ ...*(continued)*

MAKING A RECORD

DESPITE CHANGES in technology, the term ‘making a record’ seems to endure. Recording and releasing your first record is a significant milestone in your career.

✂ ...*(continued)*

SELL YOUR CD

ONCE YOU’VE INVESTED time and money to record a CD, and now have boxes of them in your basement, it sure would be nice to sell some.

✂ ...*(continued)*

THE DIGITAL DILEMMA

THE PROLIFERATION of peer-to-peer file sharing (P2P) and downloading has led to a rapid decline in sales of recorded music. Everybody is feeling the pinch: recording companies, retail outlets and musicians. The irony is striking: the technology that is so seductive to musicians—universal access to recorded music—threatens to reduce or eliminate a substantial portion of our livelihood.

✂ ...*(continued)*

THE FOUNTAIN OF YOUTH

TO STAY YOUNG at heart, stick close to those young of age. Few things in life are as rewarding as teaching, or as exhausting. At the end of a day of teaching I feel drained, yet also energized. With each student, I reach deep inside myself, searching for a way to connect. At the dawn of comprehension, the student's reaction is immediate and gratifying. It is an intimate and personal connection, and it goes two ways; my students give as much as they get. Each time a student takes a step forward, I share in her delight and revel in her exuberance.

Teaching can also be financially rewarding, though money should never be the prime motivation for a teacher. It is far too much work to do it for the money.

✂ ...*(continued)*

GIVING GOOD CLINIC

HAVE YOU EVER sat through a boring clinic? How about an inspiring one? What made the difference? A good clinic is part education and part entertainment. An effective clinician imparts measured amounts of well-chosen information and advice, balanced with performance or demonstration. She inspires students by showing what is possible, and provides concrete tips and strategies for improvement.

✂ ...*(continued)*

MUSIC BUSINESS TACTICS

ARTISTRY

MANY MUSICAL INSTRUMENT companies maintain a roster of 'artists' to promote their products. An artist is someone who has established a reputation as a performer and/or teacher, who appreciates the company's instruments, and who can communicate why she likes those instruments. Artists are usually effective and engaging teachers; most sponsored engagements include an educational component.

DO YOU GET YOUR INSTRUMENTS FOR FREE?

Contrary to popular assumption, artists do not get free instruments, nor are they paid to endorse them.

✂ ...*(continued)*

PUBLISH YOUR PEDAGOGY

EVERY PROFESSIONAL MUSICIAN has a book waiting to be written. We each develop and adhere to the musical philosophies that guide our careers, and which we pass on to our students. Quite a few musicians over the years have picked my brain about writing and publishing a method book. Once I mention the thousands of hours I have invested in this pursuit, most shy away. A stout few have gone ahead and done it, despite my best efforts to discourage them. (I don't need the competition.)

✂ ...*(continued)*

MUSIC BUSINESS TACTICS

HOW MUCH DO YOU CHARGE?

A **BASIC TENET** of business says a company should be able and willing to tell the customer how much the product costs. (Except for car dealers; they make you guess.) As a businessman or woman, you should be able to answer the question: “*How much do you charge?*” Many musicians are flummoxed by this query.

✂ ...*(continued)*

THE DAY JOB

M **ANY MUSICIANS** supplement their earnings with a ‘day job’. There is no dishonor in this, simply an acceptance that musical jobs are rare and valuable commodities. Actors have lived with this reality for a long time. Aside from the financial incentive, having an alternate source of income helps mitigate the discouragement and lack of motivation that can accompany lack of employment. You don’t want to get sucked into the vortex of no-gigs-leads-to-no-practice-leads-to-no-chops-leads-to-no-career.

✂ ...*(continued)*

MUSIC COPYRIGHT

MUSIC COPYRIGHT is a complicated legal maze. Essentially it establishes that the creator of a piece of music is the legal owner and copyright holder. That ownership may be sold or transferred. Anyone who wishes to use that music must license it from the copyright holder.

Q: *If I play a CD as background music in my hair salon, am I supposed to pay royalties?*

✂ ...*(continued)*

THE MUSICIANS UNION


THE MUSICIANS UNION gives musicians a collective voice, negotiating and enforcing agreements with music purchasers and lobbying political parties in a quest for fair wages and working conditions for professional musicians. In the United States and Canada, musicians are represented by the American Federation of Musicians. The AFM, officially formed in 1896, is the largest organization of musicians in the world, with over 250 local chapters.

Q: *When should I join the union?*

✂ ...*(continued)*

MUSIC BUSINESS TACTICS

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

 **HASE SANBORN** is a jazz trumpet player, based in Toronto. Other books by Chase Sanborn include *Brass Tactics*, *Jazz Tactics* and *Tuning Tactics*.



MUSIC BUSINESS TACTICS