Establishing a Private Studio
Workshop notes

Members of Studio Forza, a Bloomington-based music and art studio, presented a detailed plan for establishing a private teaching studio. They discussed business organization, payment schedules, finances, community engagement, attracting students, and self-promotion. A video of this and other Project Jumpstart events may be found on the Past Event Materials section of our website, www.music.indiana.edu/jumpstart.
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Marketing

• Start each lesson with an enthusiastic greeting. Remind your student that you care about them as a person, not just a music student
• As a teacher, let go of the baggage from your day:
  o Write down your worries beforehand in a notebook. You can go back to this notebook after your lesson is over.
  o Try sitting in silence/meditating for a minute or so to relax and get focused before a lesson.
• Remember: you are a business; you are a school!
• To begin, dare to dream big! Constantly brainstorm new ways to achieve your dreams
  o Create an inspiration notebook (or visual poster board)
• Know your reason “why”—and share it enthusiastically!
  o What is your teaching philosophy? Why do you choose to teach lessons?
  o Put your teaching philosophy, mission statement, bio, and curriculum outline in writing. Putting these things in writing will help to solidify them in your mind.
• Music can teach a variety of other subjects, including creativity, self-awareness, and the joy of art and music. Keep this in mind when you are marketing your studio.
• Expansion: know your community
  o How can you set yourself apart from other, similar organizations?
  o Who are your potential clients?
  o What is the rate of your competitors?
    Don’t undercut your competitors, but your rates should be realistic and competitive
  o Know who you want to teach (and what age), before you open your doors
  o Engage in the community! Network, volunteer, meet local music teachers, observe mentors, and share performance and master classes
• Think: you are always performing! You are promoting your business all the time – Be professional at all times in your community. Word of mouth and reputation is very important
• Don’t steal students!
• Always recommend other teachers – have a list of colleagues you would recommend if a student needs a teacher for a different instrument. Hopefully, these colleagues will return the favor.
• Advertise:
  o Update your website regularly, use social media (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn), Craigslist, mailings to local schools, newspapers, professional organizations, etc.
Organization & Finances

- Organization: preserve your studio materials for up to 3-5 years
  - Payment invoices, tax info, student records, enrollment numbers, etc.
- Create a teaching space and an environment that enables you to live, work, and relax exactly as you wish to
- Create a system of accountability:
  - To do lists, productivity sheets
  - Set definitive deadlines
- Student can’t pay?
  - Provide scholarships!
  - Honor his/her previous teacher’s rate
  - Provide family discounts
  - Give a discount for referrals
  - Find ways to make lessons available to any interested student.
- To create goals, provide recitals and encourage that your students use a practice journal.
  - Performances are extremely important! In addition to providing goals, they allow the parents to see what you’ve been doing. They also attract the family and friends of the students, providing an invaluable marketing moment.
  - Never have your students take lessons without some sort of goal in mind.
    - Be flexible. Alter the content of the lesson to fit the students’ changing goals.

Learn More

Watch the event or download Studio Forza’s presentation and handout at http://music.indiana.edu/departments/offices/project-jumpstart/highlights.shtml.