The “Be Respectful” Rehearsal Rules

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As explained in the article, **“BE RESPECTFUL” is a TERRIBLE Rehearsal Rule** as part of the “Creating Choral Culture” series, **here are the 5 Golden Rules for Properly choosing our Classroom/Rehearsal Rules:**

1. *Both the “ruler” and our students must truly understand WHY choir rules exist*
2. *Limit the Amount of Rules to approximately 5*
3. *Use the Rules To Address Only the Most Important Concerns*
4. *Avoid Negativity*
5. *Make every rule specific and enforceable*

“Be Respectful” a bad rule

Don’t get me wrong, “respect” IS something that we should strive for within our classroom culture. It is extremely important. The issue is that RESPECT is not a general behavior, and a specific behavior that presents itself with clarity among all students and all adults equally. As explained in Rule #5, If we, the teacher, have to use our mental energy to evaluate whether a student is being respectful before administering a penalty, we are taking away from our teaching. The differing views on RESPECT can also lead to verbal disagreements between teacher and student, as the definition can be murky; this means that we have to explain what behavior struck us as disrespectful, which will probably lead to them explaining why what they did was not intended to be disrespectful.

If it is NOT clear to EVERY STUDENT whether a rule is actually broken or not, it is not a good rule.

On the next page you will find **5 Rules** that, if enforced, will ensure our students will “Be Respectful”. I have also provided a list of additional rules that are clearly and positively phrased, covering many potential behavioral issues that affect a rehearsal.

Addressing "Respect" using 5 Rehearsal Rules

I believe these five rules cover all aspects of respect as well as many other issues

1. ***Follow directions the first time they are given***
2. ***Please keep your hands and feet to yourself***
3. ***Raise your hand and wait for permission if you wish to leave your seat***
4. ***Raise your hand and wait for permission if you wish to speak***
5. ***Only Choir Materials may be out during the entire rehearsal.***

Additional Rules and wordings of rules that meet the Golden Rules

These rules cover many other specific issues. They are listed for the purpose of demonstrating both a positive and clear way to address specific behavioral issues. Every one of these rules would be easily enforceable because there is no gray area. As a result, we do not have to stop our train of thought while teaching to figure out if an infraction has taken place. Here are some extra rules:

6. ***This is a cell-free classroom***
7. ***You must ask for permission in order to have your cell phone out for any reason***
8. ***Please be on time to class***
9. ***Please be seated in your assigned seat <u>before</u> the bell***
10. ***Please place all of your non-choir related belongings under your seat before the bell rings. This includes cellular phones.***
11. ***Please raise one finger if you need permission to leave the room***
12. ***Please wait for the director's direction before you pack up your belongings***
13. ***Please wait for the director's direction for dismissal***
14. ***Please enter the room and find your seat quietly***
15. ***If you are late, please enter the room quietly and immediately find your seat***
16. ***When you hear the sound of the piano, please stop what you are doing to listen***
17. ***Please come prepared with your music and a pencil***
18. ***Please sit in the proper body alignment (as taught in class)***
19. ***Please stand using the proper body alignment (as taught in class)***
20. ***Water is the only acceptable permitted beverage***
21. ***All food must be finished outside the room. This includes chewing gum***
22. **Please keep all food, including chewing gum, outside of the classroom**