

# Looking Outside of Music Education to Create Our Ideal Classroom

Mark Lee and Dr. David Vickerman - SJSU School of Music  
CASMEC January 16, 2025

---

## Thesis:

By creating an engaging and mutually respectful ensemble culture, our performance outcomes improve.

*TL:DR - A vibrant ensemble culture improves performance*

## Why is Ensemble Culture Important?

1. Structure and Transparency
  - a. “Language is how we give intention to intuition” (Guidara 2022)
  - b. “Game design should make the player feel powerful in the first minutes to grab and keep their attention” (Schrier 2024)
2. Student Empowerment and Group Vulnerability
  - a. “Give someone more responsibility before they are ready” (Guidara 2022)
  - b. “Vulnerability is the core, the heart, the center, of meaningful human experiences.” (Brown 2012)
  - c. “We need to feel trust to be vulnerable and we need to be vulnerable in order to trust.” (Brown 2012)
3. Mental Wellbeing and Balance
  - a. “While we may think of focus as an ideal state where one can be productive and creative, rote attention (and even boredom) are just as important and play critical roles in our well-being.” (Mark 2023)
  - b. “Human beings are never going to be perfect...The best we can do is to keep asking for help and accepting it when you can. And if you keep on doing that, you’ll always be moving towards better.” (*Ted Lasso*, Season 3, Episode 12, “So Long, Farewell,” directed by Declan Lowney.)
4. Recruiting and Retention
  - a. “Never miss a chance for reconnaissance” (Guidara 2022)
  - b. “Gifts are not about what went into it, but how the person receiving it feels...luxury just means giving more, hospitality means being more thoughtful” (Guidara 2022)
5. Fun!
  - a. Puns and Sectional Selfies - SJSU Wind Ensemble

Link to Google Drive Folder with PDF of the Presentation and Handout:



## Literature Resources

- Blanchard, Kenneth H., and Spencer Johnson. 2015. *The New One Minute Manager*. William Morrow.
- Blum, Susan Debra. 2020. *Ungrading: Why Rating Students Undermines Learning (and What to Do Instead)*. West Virginia University Press.
- Brown, Brené. 2018. *Dare to Lead: Brave Work. Tough Conversations. Whole Hearts*. Random House.
- Coyle, Daniel. 2018. *The Culture Code: The Secrets of Highly Successful Groups*. Random House.
- Guidara, Will. 2024. *Unreasonable Hospitality: The Remarkable Power of Giving People More Than They Expect*. Random House.
- Kohn, Alfie. 1992. *No Contest: The Case Against Competition*. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.
- Mark, Gloria. 2025. *Attention Span: A Groundbreaking Way to Restore Balance, Happiness and Productivity*. Hanover Square Press.
- Schreier, Jason. 2024. *Play Nice: The Rise, Fall, and Future Of Blizzard Entertainment*. Hachette UK.

## Contact Information:

Mark Lee  
[mark.lee@sjsu.edu](mailto:mark.lee@sjsu.edu)  
@markjeffreylee  
@sjsubands

David Vickerman  
[david.vickerman@sjsu.edu](mailto:david.vickerman@sjsu.edu)  
@dvickerman  
@sjsubands

