

# The Musicians' Handbook

## The New Rules for Getting Gigs

By Randy Singer

C- 2004

www.randysinger.com

\*\*\*\*\*

### INTRODUCTION

Musicians often ask me how to find employment making money making music. I have averaged four to six gigs per week for the last number of years and have been making music as my living for about ten years. Typical performances include appearances at major hotels, clubs, private islands, estates, parties, sports arena VIP rooms, recording sessions, music festivals, and schools. Making money making music is possible if are willing to work very hard and follow your heart as well as your head. I would like to share some of the concepts and techniques that have worked for me

These are brave new times for musicians. Our livelihood is threatened by competition from all fronts and our musicianship is devalued as technology brings “musical skills” and media coverage to just about anyone who seems to have an image consultant, an investor or a charge card from the music store.

New times require new rules. That is why I have written THE MUSICIANS HANDBOOK- The New Rules for Getting Gigs.

This handbook is designed to show you how seek out the hidden opportunities for performance and make the changes to put yourself in these money making and career enhanced gigs. And if you sing or play multiple instruments like harmonica, guitar, bass, keyboards, percussion, sax, percussion, or any other instrument, you will exponentially improve your musical and economic lifestyle. This little book will show you how.

The following is not an overnight method. It is a long-term course designed to help you to go the next level and achieve your dreams of finding employment as a full-time or part time professional musician. This requires hard work, creativity, imagination, discipline and LOVE.

Few musicians get to be Whitney, Britney, Jessica, Janet, Mariah, or even Toots, Outkast, Benson, Pavarotti, or Paul McCartney, but it is possible to stay busy on the local or worldwide level where life may not be as glamorous but where there is no shortage of work.

There is a price for everything. Would you rather pay the price for excellence than the price that is paid for mediocrity? Without internal change, there can be no external change in experience. It is said, “Change will not occur until the price of staying the same exceeds the cost of staying the same”. If you prefer to stay the same as you are, I suggest that you continue no further with this little book as it may make you feel

uncomfortable. If you are ready to go to veer out of your comfort zone and go to the next level, you have come to the right place.

This is indeed a brave new world and traditional values and previous models of doing business have changed. The music industry is in transition and job security is rare. Newly acquired skills coupled with a keen sense of purpose and direction can never be taken away from you and help you to adapt to the changing of the times.

The rules have changed, so let us change lest we become as obsolete as the Victrola.

If you have your suggestions of ideas that have worked for you, please send them to me via email at: [Randy@RandySinger.com](mailto:Randy@RandySinger.com) and I will publish them at a later time with your name.

Keep the following quotation in mind as we continue.

"The world we have created is a product of our thinking.  
It cannot be changed without changing our thinking."

-Albert Einstein

Now, let's roll up our sleeves and get started!!

## **PART 1**

### **GETTING STARTED**

Let's start by taking a close look at the marketplace and our skills. Our standards and skills should coincide with the demands of the marketplace. Raising our **standard of excellence** and **analyzing the market** is how we do this and is required to accomplish our musical and financial goals.

Remember this sound advice: The more useful you are, the more gigs you will find! The better you know your instrument, the market and yourself, the more useful you will be to potential employers and the more you will find yourself employed. So, let's find ways of being useful to those who have gigs to offer.

### **QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

Ask yourself the following questions-

#### **1. Why would a potential employer choose your services as a musician over another good musician?**

+ Your social, music and business skills, overall presentation and versatility must be of the highest standards in order to compete in the game of the new rules. Employers hire those with credibility and personality and the competition is fierce. How high are your musical, social and business standards and credentials?

#### **2. Do you always tell the truth?**

+ There is no substitute for honesty, integrity and **for always doing what you say you will do**. Follow this formula very carefully and it will change your life. If your actions do not match your words, your experience will not meet your expectations in the long run. Procrastinations and justifications are never substitutes for professionalism and long-term success.

### **3. Can you can sing harmony/lead vocals and play multiple instruments?**

+ Remember that even a little skill at a secondary instrument can get you into many doors that can introduce you to the world. Playing another instrument has helped Toots, Howard Levy and other great musicians. Realize that lead and back-up singing (the more languages, the better) and songwriting can be the clincher that can secure the gig for you. Use and develop all of your talents.

### **4. How is your stage etiquette?**

+Never submit yourself to the embarrassment of playing in the wrong key or overplaying. Less is more so be tasty and create little memorable licks that tell a story instead of run-on licks that go anywhere to nowhere. When you are backing up a vocalist, a rule of thumb, more or less, is *only to play when the singer takes a breath*. There are obvious exceptions to this, but stick to this rule if you are less experienced. Don't play too loud and remember the beauty of a holding a long note from time to time instead of the million note shotgun approach to music. Another important hint while taking a solo is to stop playing for a few bars every now and then. You will be amazed how good you sound to others when you reenter.

### **5. Do you have a good physical presentation?**

+The new rules dictate a higher commitment to personal hygiene and appearance. I have known musicians bounced from gigs because they did not look good enough (or fit the "image") or not hired because of a poor "vibe". How you dress and act can play a huge role whether you land a part or not. Make sure that you carefully check the cleanliness and style of your clothes, hair, posture and total appearance. Do you have good posture and have good eye contact?

Also, dress according to the gig- casual to casual upscale for casual gigs and job hunting, upscale for upscale gigs and "funky chic" for hip gigs, etc. Smoking is taboo at most gigs. The new rules dictate excellent grooming and cleanliness. There is no excuse for a bad haircut and an old pair of shoes. And show up on time!!!

Even your tone of voice or look on you face can confuse the meaning of your words to someone else. Psychologists have determined that communication between two people is less dependent upon the actual words interchanged and more dependent upon tone of voice, body language and gesticulations. It's surprising how many musicians don't pay attention to these important things, and not surprising how bad an impression this makes on employers.

It is common sense to take good care of yourself and your physical/spiritual presentation. Sobriety, cleanliness, groomed hair and an articulate, altruistically sincere presentation can help create a lasting first impression that can cue people to open their doors and

hearts to you. First impressions can last forever. *One of the most difficult things in the world is changing someone's perception of you once they think they "have you figured out".* "Get it right the first time" says Billy Joel. There are few second chances as far as first impressions are concerned.

## **6. Do you have the tools of the trade?**

+You should have professional business cards, a beeper/cell phone, answering machine/voice mail, email, fax, (try Efax.com), computer, internet service, metronome/drum machine, a great audio/video demo, promo package, professionally created bio, demo CD, commercial CD (for selling), gig contracts and musical instrument insurance. And, of course, your instruments should be in top working order.

These tools of the trade can help you immeasurably. Never fear that you cannot do without essential tools or learn anything. For example, there are many who feel computers are either irrelevant or too difficult to learn. Believe that you can do it and make the commitment to learning. Everything looks insurmountable at the beginning and the journey of a thousand miles starts with the first step. Computers will facilitate everything you do. For example, most of my clients and musicians prefer email instead of the phone. It is faster and more precise in so many ways. Don't just take my word for it. Ask most anyone who is successful in the world. They probably use a computer in one way or another.

## **7. Do you have studio recording experience?**

+Listening to yourself is an accurate picture of your musical skills. Just as you would not know what you really looked like without a mirror, a clear recording of yourself will show you how you really sound. You can purchase a new or used multi-track recorder (cheap ones can be purchased for \$200) with a reverb unit and practice overdubbing and punching yourself performing with prerecorded tracks.

Offer to play on your friends' tracks - have recording parties! Use BANDINTHEBOX, karaoke CD's, Jamtrax and Jamie Aebersol CD's, etc. Record yourself and hear yourself improvise. Study the recordings carefully and do not be afraid of what you will hear. There is no substitute for **perfection** in rhythm, melody, tone and feeling except when the vibe of the song dictates a looser feel and attitude. Listen, learn and perfect.

## **8. Do you have a great acoustic and amplified tone?**

+ By all means. When your tone is great, you will sound good no matter what type of equipment you are using. Great tone and great equipment are an unbeatable combination. Gear purchases like instruments, compressors, mikes, wireless systems, pre amps, and multi-effects units are very personal and should be made carefully after doing your research. Singers should always have their own microphones and XLR cords.

Keep in mind that, as your equipment should function flawlessly, sometimes it is necessary to do without any of your equipment. You should have the confidence and ability to step onto any stage with whatever equipment is available and seamlessly perform at the top of your game. A professional is one who performs beautifully in the midst of the most absurd of circumstances and lack of adequate monitors! Remember that great

equipment does not replace natural tone. A great musician will sound great on any system.

### **9. Do you are constantly read newspapers and local papers looking for new performance venues?**

Don't just rely on the local clubs down the street. There are many more hidden places for performance opportunities.

ALWAYS be automatically on the lookout for any music gathering (writers' or music business conferences, etc.) and openings of new establishments with or without music. Jot these down and make a list for your efficient follow-up calls. Be a gig detective and spy for potential venues as you drive down the road or when examining the media (newspapers, TV, local papers, etc.) in your hometown. Think outside the box. Is there a local cooking show on TV- perhaps you can provide some music? A new opening of a restaurant or business? Is there an over 55 condo nearby? Open your eyes and get busy!!!!

Be persistent if you cannot get through to the booking manager at first. If you see a potential place for your music, stroll in looking great with your promo package and say, "Excuse me, may I speak to the person hiring your musical entertainment, please?" Say this with a friendly and steady voice then begin your pitch (more on this later). Remember that first impressions can last forever so make yours the best.

Keep copious lists of places to send your promo packages with bi-weekly follow-ups. Always precede a mailing with an introductory phone calls. Follow up once every two weeks and keep in mind you may not be their top priority so just be cool. Be easy on them and give them a reason to be excited about hiring you. Make them come to you, if possible.

Learn to network and hang out in songwriters' bars and music venues. Do not fear networking or looking for gigs. Just be real friendly, but laid back and non aggressive with an inquisitive and sincere nature. Do not appear pushy, needy, overly talkative, drunk or arrogant, just aware, considerate and sober.

Do not make getting the gig your absolute priority during these networking moments. Instead, concentrate on getting to know people and learning about their lives and the business. Remember that we have two ears and one mouth—listen twice as much as you talk! It is common sense that most people like to hire people they like- so be likeable!!

### **10. Do you know hundreds or thousands of songs in your repertoire?**

+ Learn new songs each week. You can never know too many songs. Be sure to veer out of your comfort zone and play songs that are challenging to you. Playing the jazz standards like "The Girl from Ipanema" or the pop standards like "Sitting on the Dock of the Bay" has made most musicians more money than playing "Stormy Monday" ever will. I believe the more popular songs one knows, the more gratification and gigs you will receive. Although one can make a living playing artistic and original music, (Howard Levy, Robert Bonfiglio, etc), I believe that you will make more money playing songs that people know than songs people do not know. Familiar sounds trigger memories in our listeners. Trisha Yearwood once sang "The Song Remembers When" to explain how powerful

songs can be as reminders of where we were when we first heard the song. Make your audience smile, feel, cry and dance and they will appreciate you for it. This does not mean you should stop performing original music. On the contrary, you must perform and write original music. Just remember to intersperse some familiar songs throughout the setlist.

Let's say you want to know the top songs in the jazz genre, the top songs in the blues genre, then the pop genre, etc. Well, in addition to keeping the radio on all day, buying lots of CD's and music books, learning to sight-read, and hiring someone to train you in repertoire, I have another nice suggestion: See if your local TV cable company offers the DMX digital radio. For ten bucks a month or so, you can have 30-some channels of music sent to your house without commercials and the title and artist of the song is visible on your TV. They are divided into neat categories (jazz, blues, reggae, etc.). I also have XM radio which is amazing. Internet radio is great if it gives you the song and artist information. I subscribe to Live365.com and Spinner radio as well. You have to live with these songs 24/7.

Buy a minidisc player (for the random access memory feature) to record the ones that you want to learn and get to work studying the songs. Keep lists, learn the melodies (heads) and be prepared to solo (in any key, if possible).

BANDINTHEBOX (PGmusic.com) is perfect for learning songs. You can sequence the songs yourself, find them on the internet for free or buy the sequences at Norton@nortonmusic.com. Live to learn to learn!

Create songlists for each genre (Jazz, Dance, Blues, Rock, Pop. etc) and keep them updated as you grow. If you don't dig jazz, try listening to Miles Davis' award winning "Kind of Blue" CD. If you don't dig blues, get Paul Butterfield's double live album. Attempt breeds familiarity breeds facility.

### **11. Are you easy to work with and professional?**

+ This is vitally important. Find great role models and emulate their best qualities. Rob Paparozzi, Jellyroll Johnson, Tommy Morgan and Howard Levy are superb examples of professional conduct and musicianship. Most people who do not work usually have a reputation of being too difficult or just not fun to be around. Be careful before you speak unkindly about anyone because it can open the door for others to gossip unkindly about you. Do not complain to anyone about anything unless it has the possibility of leading to change and see the positive in every single occurrence, especially the ones that look "strange". Gossip may seem like "innocent fun, but can backfire on you before you know it.

### **12. Do you know the key of any new song within 7 seconds?**

+ This will show your fellow musicians that you are a professional. You must be able to hum the tonic note and find it on your instrument. If you have difficulty, you can take an ear-training course, and study your II-IV-V's (and other essential music theory progressions).

### **13. Can you do a solo gig?**

+ It is a shame to turn down those \$75 or \$100 gigs. Like it or not, the one-man-band business can be very lucrative. If you have a great solo act (with or without tracks), you will always increase your chances of find a gig. It is truly an economics reality that these solo gigs are attractive and affordable to many establishments that ordinarily cannot have full bands due to space or financial limitations. And you can use the one-man-band as a precursor to larger, more ambitious gigs and bands.

Create a solo gig playing your instrument with a sequencer, drum machine, keyboard (with optional automatic accompaniment), guitar, Boomerang device or minidisk/karaoke/computer system with hundreds of songs. Vocals or secondary instruments are a big addition.

The advantage of the sequencer system is that you have real time control over keys, instruments, tempo, etc., on the gig. The advantage of the minidisc is that you can use acoustic based tracks and you do not have the hardware and software headaches of sequencers and modules. I prefer minidisc so that I may have the best of both worlds (sequenced and acoustic). I caution against using CD's, they can scratch. Playing with machines is not as bad as it sounds if you haven't tried it. Once you learn the arrangement, you can really be quite experimental, innovative and expressive with the tracks. Plus you can learn new songs that would take weeks of rehearsing with a real band. It is a fast learning tool until you can go to the "next level" of playing with real musicians.

If you still think it is "selling out", perhaps you just haven't seen a system like this in the hands of a professional. I personally thought it was crass until a sax player friend of mine named Tony Hayes showed up in town with his state of the art system. He had these hip jazz/pop/acid jazz tracks and would set up his portable P.A./minidisc system. He performed at many restaurants on Lincoln Road and Ocean Drive in Miami Beach with his funky Michael Brecker sax sound and put on a great show with his "one man band with tracks" gig.

He was working 5 nights a week (plus parties), with an awesome sound and he has earned the respect of the music community. Weekly, he could make a grand. He is a sax virtuoso, and he sings on about 20 percent of his songs. Plus, his attention garnered him studio work and he sold lots of CD's at his gigs.

Do not judge solo performing with technology as "evil". You most likely have not heard it with state of the art equipment in the hands of a professional.

Where do you get your background music? Buy your tracks from the karaoke stores, produce your tracks with friends, download your midi tracks from the Internet (use [www.cybermidi.com](http://www.cybermidi.com) (the best!!), <http://www.petersolleyproductions.com>, [www.trantracks.com](http://www.trantracks.com) or Singasong (in Hollywood, FL) -Talk to your local karaoke guy. He might even turn you on to a few starter tracks.

There are many more options to obtaining and producing tracks is beyond the scope of this little book. Converting midi tracks to audio is an art in itself.

Consider this- Would you rather be at home wishing you were performing or out gigging solo? Keep I mind that performing as a solo artist with or without tracks or technology can be part of the wonderful journey and not necessarily the destination. It can be part of the wonderful recipe called "success".

#### **14. Do you have workable duos or trios?**

+ When I lived in Nashville, Tennessee, I had the tremendous opportunity to study with Howard Levy. Always an enlightened fountainhead of music and spirit, he taught me that one of the best things I could do for my education and career would be to form a duo. One of the best advantages of the duo format is that it can rehearse easily and can most efficiently gig around town (like Adam and Satan, Sonny Terry and Brownie McGhee, Steve Baker, Madcat, etc.). A duo can play places that bands cannot due to budgetary or space limitations.

Bands can be financially unfeasible so use the solo/duo/trio format to play everywhere, college drafthouses, pizza parlors, churches, hospitals, private yachts, and openings of new buildings and condo renovations, etc. I have even done gigs in Bloomingdales. You can never have too many duo partners for all genres of music. You can host jam sessions or songwriter circles in your home, bar or church and invite musicians to meet and participate. Teach music at your local music store and you will meet lots of other pro teachers and students for networking.

Consider using a simple drum machine (or sequences) with your duo. Be wild and daring. If you have a trio or duo, consider adding a bass player, guitarist, drummer, sitar player, percussionist, drum machine, a DJ, whatever...Even consider adding a drummer to your harmonica trio!! Make sure he can play soft and tasteful, of course. Feel free to experiment with new and unusual ideas. If you do not change what you do, is it fair to expect the world to change to accommodate YOU?

When you are prepared, the best time to try to find your first gig is around holiday time, like Christmas, New Year's Eve, or Valentine's Day, etc. because live entertainment is more valued at this time. Market your way into the gig. For example: "We play music for lovers" on Valentine's Day; "We do Christmas songs," etc. But make sure to back up your claim. Your reputation is priceless and must be cultivated and nurtured.

#### **15. Can you put together almost any type of band or ensemble for any situation – even hiring a complete band for a special project?**

+ Let's say the client/agent/clubowner wants a duo. You got that! He wants a trio or a quartet or a full band with dancers if they want 'em? You got that. They want a background jazz quartet and then funk'n dance music? "Yes sir, I have it. Would you like to hear the demo?" They want Brazilian music or hip-hop? "No problem, ma'am, we have that as well." Try to associate and collaborate with as many musicians as you can. Of course, never promise something you cannot pull off (unless you just want to be a booking agent and hire outside bands for a commission).

This suggestion requires you to master most styles of popular music and be able to put together a set list for each style of gig - not an easy task, but certainly attainable..

Here are a few examples of customized entertainment.

**EXAMPLE ONE-** I received a call from an agent to provide the entertainment for the opening of the IMAX Theatre premier presentation of "EVEREST", the 3-D tour up the

mountains. The producer of the film was flown in to attend the black tie function. I only had a few days to put it together, so I purchased the Planet Drum CD (featuring live percussion grooves from around the planet). I hired Jimmy Ruccolo, the great guitarist (who also had a sitar) and a percussionist and we jammed on harmonica, guitar, sitar, percussion and drum/bass tracks during the opening cocktail hours before the show. It was a very mysterious and incredible sound and felt that the guests were actually embarking on a trip up the mountain. The agent and guests were very happy.

**EXAMPLE TWO-** Another time I was called to open for a band at Jazid, a oh-so-hip nightclub in the heart of Miami (Southbeach), Fl. I hired a DJ and Delmar Brown (the wild electric keyboardist for Miles Davis). The DJ spun the most amazing grooves and Delmar and I jammed and made the club come alive. We both dressed up in neon colored clothes and performed with a black light and strobe. Outasite, man.....

**EXAMPLE THREE-** In college, I created and organized the first “NO CAR DRIVE IN MOVIE”. I had 50 white bed sheets sewn together by a team of volunteers and hung them on the outside of a five story dormitory covering one entire side. I rented a special movie projector and showed the movie “The Bride of Frankenstein” on the side of the building!! Of course, my band played as an opening act for the movie as everyone brought beach chairs on blankets to the lawn. It was wildly attended and became a yearly tradition.

In other words, you are limited by your imagination, not by your environment. Become an optimistically accomplished versatile musician who entertains, knows business and keeps his word and you can join the ranks of the permanently employed.

## **PART 2**

### **KICKING IT OFF**

Be heard ...

One of the best places to get started is to find an innocuous background music gig at a quiet restaurant or noisy bar. Because you are not the main reason that people are there, you can develop your act and get paid to do it in a no-pressure environment.

**FOR EXAMPLE-** Before Victor Wooten (the world famous bass player) got his big break, I used to listen to him playing background solo bass (with a small Boomerang device) in a small vegetarian restaurant called the Slice of Life in Nashville because he knew people in the music industry often eat there and inadvertently hear him. He was subsequently discovered and he is now one of the most famous bass players in the world.

Get your music out there where it can achieve the most visibility and profit. Live music gigs can be quite scarce (depending on where you live) and the supply of musicians willing to work on the cheap is increasing thus depressing the market. That is why you can live in a music Mecca like Nashville and find the world’s greatest and famous musicians playing for tips!!

This means that the more ingenious, versatile, adaptable and equipped you are, the better gigs you will get. I like to say that the worst day at a music gig is better than the best day at a straight job.

All successful musicians must devote many hours to finding work and advertising services just like any other business. You must devote more time to finding work versus the time you spend on everything else. I have been informed that McDonald's spend 30 cents of every dollar on advertising. How much time and money do you spend preparing and looking for work? If a tree fell in the middle of the forest, (on your instrument), would anyone hear it? You have to get the word and the music out there.

### **THEORY OF DIMINISHING RETURNS---** **LET'S GET DOWN TO THE MUSIC BUSINESS**

Too many musicians spend 95% of their time practicing music and only spend 5% of their time acting like a business. Excessive concentration on only one or two areas can produce negative results that can cripple your life. What is your ratio of music to business concentration?

How accurate are your bank and tax records? Make sure to hire a great accountant and stay organized. You never want to miss a payment on anything and sabotage your credit rating. Keep track of your payments to other musicians so you do not pay the taxes of others. Keep your records scrupulously honest and organized so that you will never fear an audit. There are wonderful accountants that will, for a small fee, organize your desk area and file cabinets so that you will always be able to find anything anytime. NEVER owe money to anyone without paying them back. Your credit rating can be as fragile as your reputation. One or two wrong moves can subtract years from your progress and cost you thousands of dollars.

### **BE OBSERVANT ...**

Keep your eyes open for all sorts networking opportunities, like joining all of the trade associations you can (Musicians Union, NARAS, Songwriters' Guild, Spah, Chamber of Commerce, Breakfast club, etc.). If you do not have the money to join, volunteer your services to meet the businessmen and then, market/pitch yourself to them. Take out an ad in the company or trade newsletter where you work or volunteer and keep yourself in the loop.

**OTHER IDEAS-** Hang out, volunteer, take tickets at the gala music events, be presentable, network and learn, asking all the questions you can muster. Be the guest musician for your local school or pops orchestra. Consider nursing homes, condos, look at the big picture. Become a roadie or soundman and attend the SPAH and Buckeye conventions, and other trade shows.

### **BE PROFESSIONAL ...**

Cultivate respect and your reliable reputation (always return calls and never fail to keep your word). Being on time is essential both musically and in business. Be helpful, even helping the leader pack up his PA system when you are a sideman. Do not be prone to exaggeration, boasting or negativity. Do not come across as self centered and merely focused on your own needs. Fulfill the needs of those around you and you will get what

you need as long as you do not let them abuse you or take advantage of you. Do not let your emotions make you ever regret your actions or words and hurt someone in the process- including yourself. Focus on obtaining fishing poles and learning how to fish, not just how to eat the fish.

### **BE KNOWLEDGEABLE ...**

Also, once you are able to hire musicians for gigs that you book, it gives you a savvy that can't be beat. Plus, they are likely to hire you for their gigs, especially if you can sing, entertain and provide the PA system and/or light system. Let potential musicians know that when they hire you, they get to use your PA system for a small fee, perhaps. No ballgame without the bat, they say!

### **CONNECTING**

#### **Agents ...**

Once you have your performing unit(s) rehearsed, do the promo thing and let the agents in town know you are ready for business. They may be skeptical at first, but if you are persistent (not overbearing) and commercially viable, you might persuade them to use you. Have different promo packages for different ensembles. I have two bios, one accentuating my original Harmonica Dreams project and another accentuating my cover band(s).

Remember that the reputation of a prospective employer depends on your professionalism and musicality, so they are naturally protective and skeptical. Therefore do not expect instant gratification from these agents. It can take years of hard work and luck to cultivate a trusting relationship with them. They usually need to hear you first because there is a lot on the line when they hire a musician for a client.

Do a half-price gig for them if necessary. Find a small venue or restaurant, pack the room with your friends and invite the agents. Set up in their office. Agents are great and can help you find work. Make sure you are in the Musicians Union and sign Union contracts - they will offer you free legal advice should something go wrong. Plus, they can offer performance and music equipment insurance, gig and legal advice, Trust Fund gigs, contacts and contracts. Call your local musicians union today.

### **THE MUSICIAN LIFE ...**

All of this can take years of training and preparation. In the meantime, learn a trade that keeps you in the company of music professionals while you do your day job. This way you can apprentice and absorb the intricacies and politics of the music business. Learn to be a soundman and get the house or sub gig doing sound in your local club. (I did this in New York City in the 1980s at the Lonestar and other clubs). This way you get to learn thousands of new tunes (and if you play harmonica, you can also practice quietly behind the board) as well as getting to sit-in with your new musician friends.

Hang out in live-music venues and study stage etiquette. If you feel you shouldn't sit at the bar without drinking, you can work around this etiquette problem if you do not drink alcohol or if you are low on money. Order coffee, soda, non- alcoholic beer or bottled water and leave the bartender a nice tip. Explain you are checking out the band. Sit in the corner if you cannot take up a place at the bar. One never knows, the bartender or your

neighbor might be your future musical collaborator. The art of social drinking will show you how to nurse a glass of wine, cognac, virgin margarita cheap beer or wine spritzer for a long time. Find a low alcoholic favorite drink with lots of water. Stay away from the Long Island ice teas, martini's and anything that will make you drunk.

## **IN THE RIGHT PLACE AT THE RIGHT TIME**

I worked for a number of years as a night manager of the Power Station Recording Studios in NYC (the #1 studio in the 1980's), and wound up playing on Blondie's Eat to the Beat album, plus other sessions for other artists. They even used me prominently in the video (I was the first session musician ever featured in a music video according to the AFM).

Opportunity and talent is a great mixture. Work in a music store, a recording studio (as a go-for), music association, sound company, repair shop, booking agency, rehearsal or performance facility. You can volunteer (intern) for Billboard, AFTRA, SAG, BMI, ASCAP, NARAS or other worthwhile organizations.

## **BETTER MUSIC THROUGH BETTER LIVING**

Have something to say with your music. (Remember when surfing meant riding on surfboard?). Tithe time and money. Go the library and borrow some books or CD's. Get out of the house and take your kids to the park! Network for fun and "prophets"! Clean a dojo and learn to martial arts and meditation or yoga. Take that self-help class or exercise course that you have been promising yourself. Go hiking, swimming, mentoring –anything that brings about positive change!! Smell the roses, get out of your cave, learn a new skill, TURN OFF THE TV and get a life that is worth living. When the learning stops, so do you.

John Williams wrote: "There is more music to be found in poetry and in the quiet contemplation of nature, than in studying music itself."

Get involved and cleanse your life of everything that makes you prematurely older. Stop smoking and watch your diet, get that physical checkup you have been postponing. Stop whining and take massive action to make massive change inside yourself to see change around you take place. Houdini had a technique that we all can use. If he only could move one small part of his body when immobilized by restraints, he would use that as leverage to initiate his escape. Therefore, if you feel that you are frozen, start with improving something that you can control, like your health. Learn a new skill and value continued education. Help someone other than yourself and you will reap tremendous benefits. Give it all you can.

"We must become the change we wish to see"- Ghandi

## **LEARNING OR LACK OF.....**

If you are in a musical rut, go to music school. If you cannot find a good teacher for your instrument, you are not looking hard enough. Find, for instance, a sax player or pianist or any other instrumentalist to teach you. You might learn much more this way. You will have to spend money to do this, but it is an investment in yourself that no one can steal. I

went through five teachers to find one I liked, so keep trying until you find your match. If you have no money for education, think again. Can you really afford not to study professionally, unless you want to progress the slow way? Being broke is no excuse for a lack of learning. If you have no money, try to be more creative -- barter, prioritize or volunteer. Get the music degree.

While I was earning my music degree at New York University, I studied with the great Robert Bonfiglio at the Turtle Bay Music School. I thought he was completely insane when he told me I had to sight-read and learn my patterns and scales in all 12 keys. Little did I know at the time how important this would be to be to me. Thank you, Robert!! You are brilliant!

## **ROLE MODELS**

Another example of role models (or lack of) became apparent at a local jazz jam session a few months ago. Students from the voice department of the most prominent university would come and sit in with the band. We could not help but notice that these students, (1) often times did not know their keys or tempo of the song (2) did not follow the form of the song (3) would sometimes start singing in the middle of someone's solo. Since they were jazz vocal students, I decided to ask them if they knew who were Lambert, Hendricks and Ross, IMO, the greatest jazz vocalise improvisers. To my surprise, none of them knew them! Eric Clapton once said, "Don't study my playing— study the people that I learned from, the old guys". In other words, know all of the original masters of your instrument because there is something there that is totally real, relevant and pure.

## **READY, SET, READ!**

Read everything you can about music, business and life in general. Have something to say with your life and find places to apply them. Become a clip-aholic and pick up all the entertainment guides in your city and scour the newspapers. Cut out all of the networking opportunities and potential gigs and get organized.

The organized mind sets the stage for an organized and healthy life. Here is a tip I learned from my brother Bruce about 20 years ago. Take a notepad and write three columns. Column one is "PEOPLE TO CALL". Column two is "THINGS TO DO". Column three is "PLACES TO GO". Using this template (or variations of your own), write down everything you want and need to do and prioritize them. You will be amazed how much you can get done once you can see it all in front of you. There is great satisfaction in watching the tasks melt away. Set goals for yourself and keep track of your progress.

## **IF AT FIRST YOU DON'T SUCCEED.....**

If you still are not making headway, perhaps you are making the mistake of trying to do it alone and you are not sufficiently disciplined for solo study. In that case, get a teacher. If you cannot afford a teacher, look in the newspapers and find a church or place of worship where one can find plenty of free classes, advice, inspiration and companionship. If you keep doing the same methods without result, you must abandon or modify those methods to get a different result.

## **PART 3**

### **PRACTICAL EXAMPLES**

In our brave new world, there are many unemployed great musicians who wish to blame their ills on the outside world. However, many of the reasons to explain these ills can be found on the inside.

The cliché of the ill-schooled and irresponsible musician does not contribute to our collective reputation and the supply of available gigs. Many gigs have been lost to DJ's because agents and clients have been burned too many times by inconsiderate musicians. Also, DJ's have found a way to entertain all ages as they usually come prepared for any circumstance or song request. Not to mention, some DJ's charge as much as a whole band or more!!

For those who are highly musically proficient, the lack of business sense can cripple your musical dreams and derail your destiny. There are scores of musicians with talent, experience, and a solid reputation just begging for a job, but find themselves spending too much time at home when they would prefer to be gigging.

Here are four true case studies that have worked around the obstacle of insufficient gigs for prepared musicians in times of need.

#### **TRUE CASE STORY #1**

A few years back, while scanning the classifieds, I noticed an audition for a guitar player for a classic rock/society band. I answered the ad, said I did not play guitar, but I was the best harp player who knew all the songs and could make them come alive. I coaxed them into letting me audition. I auditioned, did a great job and they hired me on the spot (my harmony singing helped me nail the gig). I continue to work for them to this day performing at upscale events, anniversaries, pubs/bars and yacht clubs in South Florida. The lesson learned is to see yourself as a musician, not just a \_\_\_\_\_ ( fill in the blank with your instrument).

#### **TRUE CASE STORY #2**

I was at a Songwriters Night here in Miami when a new artist took the stage and played a hauntingly beautiful song. I knew in my heart that it was perfect for a harmonica solo so I took it upon myself to speak to his producer, Desmond Child (one of the biggest producers in the world). I introduced myself and told him that I had an idea for his song utilizing my harmonica and if he allowed me in the studio to show him this idea, he would be pleased. Otherwise, he could throw the track out and would not have to pay me for the session. He agreed and I called his office to schedule the session.

When I arrived, they rolled tape and I overdubbed my part. As I had hoped, they loved it and used it on the CD thereby receiving union scale. This led to other sessions including Billy Meyers, Steven Marly and Julio Iglesias (for whom I have done 6 sessions. Lesson learned is to be bold when your heart says "Go".

#### **TRUE CASE STORY #3.**

In 1995, I had just moved to South Florida and went looking for gigs. Since I worked as a soundman in NYC, I got a gig doing sound in a popular jazz club called the Van Dyke. In addition to learning lots of great new songs, meeting the awesome musicians and studying proper stage etiquette, I had the opportunity to sit in frequently. Toni Bishop, the star vocalist, took a liking to me and my harmonica and featured me on her evenings. I continued to work for the club for a few years, doing sound, learning and sitting in.

She eventually opened her own state-of-the-art jazz club on Las Olas in Ft. Lauderdale (featuring weekly national entertainment like Chick Corea, Larry Carlton, etc.) and hired me to be in the house band - not as a soundman, but as a musician. Lesson here is to get as close as you can to the outskirts of your dreams and prepare yourself until you are invited to participate.

#### **TRUE CASE STORY #4.**

Working with songwriters is a great way to make music. In Nashville, back in the '80s, I had the opportunity to gig with an unknown guitar player/songwriter, playing for tips in songwriter hangouts and pizza parlor open-mike nights. When he got his record deal, he called me to play harp with him in the studio. His name is Garth Brooks and the rest is history.

Being a "songwriter sidekick" has led to my performances with artists like Emmylou Harris, Pam Tillis and Marty Stuart. And I am quite sure that we can learn much from Kirk "Jellyroll" Johnson. When he is performing on the stages and studios of Nashville, he is the epitome of professionalism, grace and musicality. Lesson here is to be friendly to everyone. You never know who anyone may be.

## **PART 4**

### **GETTING AHEAD-----INTENSIFY YOUR STUDIES**

In an ideal world, the day would end when "musicians" find themselves unprepared at gigs or jam sessions, only know one or two styles of music, proceed to overplay, play in the wrong key or can only play a few cliché licks over and over.

For example, how precise is your rhythm? Can you keep perfect time with a metronome or play 3/4 over 4/4? If you cannot keep time with a metronome, how can you expect to keep time with a band and be a "groove master"? When you hear a melody, can you play it immediately back on your instrument? When you bend a note, is it completely in tune throughout the entire bend?

I find it interesting that the most interesting musicians (i.e., Adler, Wonder, Levy, Weltman, Gallison, Toots, etc.) all play a secondary instrument. What does this mean? Consider broadening your musical horizons by learning another instrument. The ability and benefits of reading music and of ear training on another instrument cannot be overstated. You will be glad you did. Remember that Toots Thielemans got his first professional musical opportunity not by playing the harmonica, but by playing guitar for George Shearing. Had George Benson only played guitar and not sang, where would he be today? Use all of your gifts and give them all.

Are you achieving your growth potential? If not, why not? Sometimes, only 10 minutes a day can change your life. A journey of a thousand steps begins with ONE.

## **FINDING OPPORTUNITIES THROUGH GROWTH**

Don't pass up any opportunity for growth. We should adapt to everything instead of demanding that everything adapt to us. We cannot afford to miss anything. Necessity is the mother of invention but don't wait to change until you are forced to change. As Kenny Werner says in his great book "**Effortless Mastery**", (to paraphrase), we must practice as if we were studying to do the high wire act - one mere mishap and the tightrope artist would fall to his death. Total concentration and discipline with assignable goals.

In other words, our practice must be as intense and concise as that of an airline pilot or any other exacting occupation, says Kenny. Do not take your practice time for granted. I find the best time to practice is to wake up early and do it before my head gets full of "World" stuff, or just before I go to sleep. Studying 10 minutes a day is better than one hour a week. If you are having trouble practicing, just tell yourself you are only going to play for five minutes and watch what happens then. You may not be able to stop (thanks, Kenny, for this idea-you can find his book, "EFFORTLESS MASTERY at amazon.com).

When you are practicing, keep this thought in mind at all times.

"I long to accomplish a great and noble task, but it is my chief duty to accomplish small tasks as if they were great and noble."

Helen Keller (Thank you Randy Fuchs for this contribution)

Make your practice periods as focused and efficient as you can.

## **CAN'T FIND A PARTNER, USE A WOODEN CHAIR**

In the "old days", it seemed that it was easier to find musicians to jam with and gig. Nowadays, everyone seems to be too busy making a living to hang out. This absence of interactivity makes it that much harder for musicians to become accomplished. If you cannot find any musicians to interact with, use electronic devices like the AKAI RIFF-O-MATIC (or software equivalent), online tutorials, BANDINTHEBOX, a drum machine, midi files, karaoke tracks, instructional CD's/DVD'S/videos and your home recording studio to make practicing fun. You can pick up a cheap four track digital studio (with reverb) for a few hundred dollars.

Another effective technique for organizing rehearsals with busy musicians is this—Get the gig first and then rehearse the band. If your band mates know that they are rehearsing for a specific gig, it can be a lot easier to get everyone together to practice. Visualize the destination.

## **CREATING OPPORTUNITIES- seek and you will find**

There are many gigs for the enterprising player, if you can put together custom shows for alternative venues. Coffeehouses, bookstores, condominiums, hotels, vacation resorts, busking locations, old-age homes, foster homes, cruise ships, condos, nursing homes,

bar mitzvahs, bookstores, rehab centers, preschools, schools and perhaps even prisons and half way houses all are potential clients. Contact your local trade associations, your day job or chamber of commerce local and offer to play for their events. You can even combine your music with an educational partner to create your brand of "Edutainment" (education mixed with entertainment).

**FOR EXAMPLE**--I am in an "edutainment" program with Lanny Smith ([www.earthman.tv](http://www.earthman.tv)). We have created a pep rally for the environment and have performed our environmental concert in front of a quarter of a million elementary students in the last several years with our 7 piece live band comprised of local session musicians. We have a children's version and an adult version and also do this show at the music festivals in South Florida. We are partially funded by government grants and the Musicians Trust Fund.

Go to your local music store and offer to be a teacher of your instrument and help them conceptualize a marketing plan. Offer to give an in store seminar on your instrument and let them advertise this free introductory lesson/seminar to the city. Encourage them to advertise this in their promo.

### **CHARITY EVENTS-**

Be on the lookout for any charity events in your city. If you spot one, contact the activity director and offer to provide your entertainment for free. Keep in mind that they may turn you down because they feel music might distract from their business. You can reassure them that your ensemble is accustomed to playing at low volumes and would add to their event.

### **FOLLOW THE MONEY TRAIL**

One of the new rules is this- Just because an industry or market does not utilize or emphasize live entertainment, it doesn't mean they are not potential clients. Create a custom concept and be useful to society. There is a direct correlation between the enhancement of your skills and finding the markets to apply them. We must be of service to society and help others to get what they need if we hope to be successfully happy.

Blackie Shackner says, "Just being a great player AIN'T ENUF' You've got to follow the money trail. ... And if it means a Bar Mitzvah or a supermarket opening ... don't be proud ... Keep working ... It all comes in handy in the long run." Be original yet commercial

Keep in mind that opportunities whisper. Be aware of the hidden and overlooked opportunities and accept any chance to grow and become experienced. Besides, it may be the friend of a friend of a friend that leads to the open door. Talk to those around you and learn to enhance your communication skills. Seek to learn and not just to explain or noisily justify your existence. Everything you do and learn will come in handy one day.

### **REACHING YOUR GOALS AND DREAMS**

Commercial conformity can create a stepping stone to your larger musical dream. Always keep your goals in mind as you focus on the present. It can be an exercise in futility to ask for a record deal if you have not taken all the steps to this and paid your dues. How can we ask for more if we do not utilize what we have?

## **BACKGROUND OR CENTER OF ATTENTION?** **YOUR STAGE PRESENCE DECISION**

At some point, you will have to make the conscious or unconscious decision to be a background musician who performs without much physical fanfare or to be the star that holds everyone in rapt attention. The choice is a personal decision for you to make. Yo-Yo Ma and John Entwistle (bassist for the WHO) are superb musicians who are successful without jumping around on the stage because they have undeniable charisma. On the other extreme, KISS used to fill buckets (that were labeled "fire") with confetti and throw them at the audience for attention. Elvis and his hips, Ozzie and his bird head meal, Janet Jackson and her "wardrobe malfunction" on TV, the Chilli Peppers with their third sock, anything to get and retain your attention! Unfortunately shock sells and the bar is getting higher. I hope that you can find ways of entertainment without sacrificing your morals and the morals of others. I believe we are all role models whether we know it or not.

The more exciting show you produce, the more commercially successful you can be. For example, Harry B. is a master showman and he performs the harmonica, entertaining year-'round. He is possibly one of the busiest harmonica players in the world and does not sing or play another instrument on stage. Why? He plays masterful, exciting music and has a big show that makes his audience laugh, cry and reminisce. I once asked him why he wore a huge diamond ring (not sure if it was real or not) on his left hand. He told me that he wears it so that the reflected light would shine off of his harmonica. In other words, keep a balance between "show," as well as "music".

Learn some great showstoppers songs. Perhaps perform a classical piece performed to a boogie rhythm. Have you ever seen Rod Piazza jump on the bar and play solo harmonica for ten minutes with sunglasses? Saxmen playing on their back, acoustic bass players playing bass in unimaginable ways, guitarists playing upside down, setting their instruments on fire, etc, you know what I am talking about. Be entertaining and commercial, but don't forget the integrity of the music. Always be careful not to risk hurting anyone or using fire in a way that is not accordance with local fire regulations. Don't risk your career or your life on a stunt.

There is an invisible wall between you and the audience. You must break this down. If you can make the audience laugh, cry, dance, sing or feel, you are half way there. Talk to the audience between songs, introduce background info on your songs, welcome individuals by name in the audience and take requests. On your break, go into the audience and thank at least three people for coming.

One of the most effective and least utilized of attention getting techniques is simply going out in the audience with your wireless mike while you are singing or performing. Yes, it is cheesy, yes it is a form of "pandering", but IT IS EFFECTIVE. Just because you may not like it, your average listener will appreciate that you have walked over to them, even for five seconds, looked them in the eye (wink!!) and moved on. The ladies swoon and the guys will respect you that you stopped by, but kept moving!! And for the small minority that does not like it, do not give them your time of day. Do not let them dampen this experience for the majority who will remember you fondly for this.

## **BACKGROUND MUSIC GIGS- playing for the love of it**

Though you prefer to be the center of attention, there is one tremendous benefit of having an ensemble that performs background music- you can play many more places that normally would not have music. There are many events for which background music is required. I enjoy these performances as I am "paid to practice" and get a chance to perform more artistic music. I like to say that, at these background gigs, if they notice you, you are playing too loud!! Just kick back and play for the love of it!!

## **THE ONE HIT WONDER**

Do not let the show overshadow your music unless this is what you specifically want. Find a way to be artistically commercial to become the whole package. Most people listen with their eyes and want all of their senses to be entertained. And since most people have seen it all, you may be tempted to go over the top. Don't fall for this trap in which many of today's most successful musicians emphasize shock and sex only to pander to the lowest of all demographics and intellects. Record companies love to manipulate artists into demeaning situations in order to keep them under their control as it is easier to sell "image" than it is to sell "music". Record companies love to coerce the artist to compromise their integrity because shock sells and it preferable for a company to make huge profits from the recoupable expenses from inexperienced bands than it is to nurture a band until it matures (and make more demands for higher percentage). The one TV show you never want to be on is VH-1's "Where Are They Now?" Pay careful attention to the quality of your music, image and money handlers.

## **GRATITUDE AND OPPORTUNITY**

Ask yourself how many opportunities you have had to gladden your heart but turned down? Don't pass up the tiny shells that may contain the pearls, the sand that becomes diamonds and a neighbor can be your best friend. A single bird in the hand is worth two birds in the bush. Aspire less for the record deal and aspire more for the skills and experience that are associated with the deal. Become the person that you want to meet.

To every problem there is an answer. It may not be the exact answer your ego wants, but it may very well be the answer that is required. As the Rolling Stones sang, quite succinctly, "You can't always get what you want, but if you try sometimes, you just might find, you get what you need." Pretty wise stuff from such young lads! Being thankful for everything opens the door for miracles to enter.

**CONSIDER-** A sailor sees not his destination for a full 99 percent of his journey. Keep the course and stay centered though you may be weary. Visualize your desired outcome and see it fulfilled. But be prepared - we cannot control the exact arrival of our destiny (destination). So therefore, be thankful for every opportunity and every breath of air you breathe because you never know when your ship has come in and you don't want to be hanging out at the bus station when it does. The tools for your solution are closer than you think.

Instead of only wishing for that record contract, concentrate on getting the gig at Joe's Pizza Hall, mastering the intricacies of your instrument or any other fine "smaller"

accomplishments until your "ship" comes in. Learn some martial arts, volunteer and improve the relationships you have with your friends and family. You must initiate internal change for outside change to occur. If you are bored, it is a sure sign that you must have some type of lesson that is yet to be learned.

In a state of preparation, recognition and cultivation of small opportunities grow into large opportunities. Many acorns fall to the ground, but few of them become trees. How fertile are your seeds? Be grateful for everything because even discomfort and discontent can be the blueprint for positive change.

We all have more blocks to our dreams than we realize. Find your blocks to love and life and knock them down.

### **REPUTATION AND INTEGRITY-- YOUR MOST VALUABLE ASSETS**

Tend to your reputation for it is the road to your success. When it is damaged, it can take years or decades to repair. Reputations can be created instantly by first impressions as it is said that first impressions last forever. When someone looks at you for the first time, there are hundreds of unconscious evaluations that the person will process about you. They will look at your smile, complexion, shoes, clothes, neatness quotient, hair, body language, voice, etc and arrive at a first impression that can take just a few seconds and last forever. This perception is combined with your reputation to make or break a relationship.

Therefore the need for integrity, good social skills, cleanliness, humility and optimistic outlooks are your tools since our **reputation** is what people are actually buying. Can they trust you to fulfill their expectations? Your talents plus professional experience and perception equal your reputation. Build your reputation through solid experience instead of convincing and coaxing words (B.S.).

### **SELLING IT**

Always have a product for sale. Even if you do not have the resources to go into a studio and record a state of the art CD, there are ways around this. You can record your live performances, edit them and release them on a CD. I have a friend ([michaelbianco.com](http://michaelbianco.com)) who records his gigs on mindisc and prints up CD copies and liner notes at his house before every gig to sell. He has 11 CD's of original and cover songs for sale. He tells me that his cover CD's outsell his original CD's so do not let the excuse that you are not a songwriter keep you from taking this important step. If you want to license the cover songs on your CD, go to [songfile.com](http://songfile.com).

You can also do an acoustic cd with a friend or two at the house. There is no reason every musician should not have a CD for sale. It is your calling card and serves to legitimize yourself.

Make sure the CD cover is clean and professional. Print up t-shirts, tank tops, or any merchandise with your name, logo and contact information that you can sell or give away free for promotion.

### **YOUR DEMO CD- LESS IS MORE**

Make sure your demo CD is short and to the point. For example, my CD audio demo is comprised of 12 song highlights, each no longer than 60 seconds. We are trying to "close

the deal”, and not entertain a busy executive inundated with other projects who may be holding our fate in his hands. Once they determine they like the song, you have accomplished the job. Let them move on to the next song. Demos should be excerpts of songs, not the entire selection.

Oftentimes, I do not send my demo CD and promo package to a prospective client. I just refer them to my website. I hope you have one, with a professional bio, sound samples and current songlist. Try to keep the web address to “yourname.com” and make sure your email address is simple and impossible to misspell. Forget those overly creative and confusing web and email addresses. Keep it simple.

## **HELPFUL HINTS AND COMMON SENSE**

+ Keep a checklist of your fears that you have always wanted to overcome and goals that you have always wanted to reach, but were too fearful to do so. Check them off as you progressively reach for your dreams.

+ Find a way to be useful to society (and get paid in this process). Are you ready to pay the price, however? Do not expect to get if you are not willing to give (what it takes).

+ Remember that success is not just musical talent alone. Add wonderful dashes of wisdom, personality, business smarts, positive attitude and luck.

+ Forgiveness plays a tremendous factor in success and happiness. Don't burn your bridges. Being fired from a gig or other loss can be the best thing for you in the long run. For example, being excused from a gig can show you what skills need to be improved or help you to look for a much better job. Being dismissed from a gig can be the best thing ever to happen to us as one closed door leads to an open door with the right attitude.

+ Cultivate optimism and find the love and understanding in every moment. Live your life not solely in dreams, but in experience. Arise, waken and throw out (or fix) everything that is not healthy or does not function in your life garden. Commit random acts of kindness. Practice living the truth in everything you do and say and cleanse your body and mind so that you can hear your heart when it speaks. Walk the talk. Don't rely on telling anyone how good you are- just show them so that they can make their own decision. Become a “magnet” instead of a “shovel”.

+ Ask yourself if your life is any better than it was 2 or 4 years ago. If not, it is time to make some changes because your best years can be in front of you, if you are ready, willing and able.

+ Don't blame the world or others for your lack of money, experience or happiness. Your thoughts and subsequent experience will determine your direction. Attitude determines your altitude. Change yourself before asking the world to change. If your phone is not ringing, it is a sure sign something needs to be perfected. You can wait to get lucky or do something about it now.

+ It is never too late to try to clear up past debts or repair broken relationships. It will help you immeasurably. Trust me on this. Don't let your emotions keep you from moving ahead or swerving haphazardly down the road.

+Don't give in to the depressing state of mind which occurs when your mood or self-esteem is determined by how well your GIG, how much money you have or how a specific event transpired. Don't be on the emotional boat that rises and falls with every tide. There will always be someone in worse shape that has triumphed over adversity. Find a confidence that radiates from a sense of permanency and love. Once all is realized through your preparation, and progressively achieved goals, the GIG can be the outcome of your universal mojo - a self-fulfilling prophecy to the transcendence land of your dreams.

+Money is not the goal. It is a byproduct, a barometer of how much we are being of service. Find out what you would do for free and find a way to get paid for it.

+ It takes a lifetime to build a reputation and only a few seconds to destroy one.

+ KNOWING AND DOING ARE TWO SEPARATE PROCESSES. It is not enough to know these things and not do, and it is not enough to do and not know. We must know AND do. I know lots of cooks that know lots of recipes but cannot bake a great tasting cake that will sell. Or else, they just cannot seem to finish baking one single cake. Just doing tells the story better than any words.

We are forever in the development and refining skills in our life. When the learning stops, we stagnate and die.

Whatever it is, I hope these concepts here will help you on your personal and illuminating journey.

Best wishes.

Randy Singer  
[www.randysinger.com](http://www.randysinger.com)

---

Here is a review that I wrote endorsing a product to enhance the sound of harmonicas.

22

**22 22T22H22E22 22D22I22G22I22T22E22C22H22 22V22O22C22A22L22 22322022022**

22

22

22T22H22E22 22D22I22G22I22T22E22C22H22 22V22O22C22A22L22 22322022022  
22h22a22s22 22e22v22e22r22y22t22h22i22n22g22 22y22o22u22 22c22o22u22i22d22  
22w22a22n22t22 22f22o22r22 22g22e22t22i22n22g22 22a22 22g22r22e22a22t22  
22h22a22r22p22 22s22o22u22n22d22 22i22n22 22a22 22l22i22v22e22  
22e22n22v22i22r22o22n22m22e22n22t22-22f22a22s22t22 22a22n22d22 22e22a22s22y22.22  
22I22t22 22i22s22 22d22e22s22i22g22n22e22d22 22f22o22r22 22v22o22c22a22l22  
22m22i22k22e22s22 22a22n22d22 22s22i22n22g22e22r22s22 22s22o22 22i22t22 22i22s22  
22s22u22p22e22r22 22c22l22e22a22n22 22o22r22 22s22a22t22u22r22a22t22e22d22,22  
22d22e22p22e22n22d22i22n22g22 22u22p22o22n22 22y22o22u22r22 22c22u22s22t22o22m22  
22s22e22t22i22n22g22s22.22 22T22h22e22r22e22f22o22r22e22,22 22i22t22 22i22s22  
22a22n22 22e22a22s22y22 22t22r22a22n22s22i22t22i22o22n22 22f22o22r22  
22h22a22r22m22o22n22i22c22a22 22p22l22a22y22e22r22s22 22t22o22 22u22s22e22  
22i22t22.22

22

23l23t23 23i23s23 23a23n23 23a23l23l23 23i23n23 23o23n23e23  
23f23l23o23o23r23b23o23a23r23d23 23u23n23i23t23 23a23n23d23 23h23a23s23  
23f23o23o23t23s23w23i23t23c23h23e23s23 23t23o23 23s23c23r23o23l23l23  
23t23h23r23o23u23g23h23 23y23o23u23r23 23c23u23s23t23o23m23 23s23o23u23n23d23s23  
23a23n23d23 23a23 23v23o23l23u23m23e23/23e23x23p23r23e23s23s23i23o23n23  
23p23e23d23a23l23.23 23 23l23t23 23h23a23s23 23e23v23e23r23y23t23h23i23n23g23-23-23  
23M23i23c23 23p23r23e23 23a23n23d23 23v23o23i23c23e23  
23c23h23a23r23a23c23t23e23r23s23,23 23c23o23m23p23r23e23s23s23i23o23n23,23  
23E23Q23,23 23n23o23i23s23e23 23g23a23t23e23,23 23c23h23o23r23u23s23,23  
23f23l23a23n23g23e23r23,23 23p23h23a23s23e23r23,23 23t23r23e23m23o23l23o23,23  
23v23i23b23r23a23t23o23,23 23s23t23r23o23b23e23,23 23d23o23u23b23l23e23r23,23  
23e23n23v23e23l23o23p23e23,23 23p23i23x23e23l23a23t23o23r23,23  
23d23e23t23u23n23e23,23 23p23i23t23c23h23,23 23W23h23a23m23m23y23,23  
23d23i23g23i23t23a23l23 23d23e23l23a23y23,23 23a23n23a23l23o23g23  
23d23e23l23a23y23,23 23p23i23n23g23-23p23o23n23g23 23d23e23l23a23y23,23 23823  
23r23e23v23e23r23b23 23t23y23p23e23s23 23a23n23d23 23m23o23r23e23.23 23l23t23  
23c23o23m23e23s23 23w23i23t23h23 23323823 23f23u23l23l23y23  
23p23r23o23g23r23a23m23m23a23b23l23e23 23s23t23u23d23i23o23  
23q23u23a23l23i23t23y23 23e23f23f23e23c23t23s23 23(23u23p23 23t23o23 23723  
23e23f23f23e23c23t23s23 23a23t23 23o23n23c23e23)23.23 23T23h23e23 23b23u23i23l23t23-  
23i23n23 23e23x23p23r23e23s23s23i23o23n23 23p23e23d23a23l23 23c23a23n23 23b23e23  
23a23s23s23i23g23n23e23d23 23t23o23 23c23o23n23t23r23o23l23 23y23o23u23r23  
23c23h23o23i23c23e23 23o23f23 23u23p23 23t23o23 23323  
23p23a23r23a23m23e23t23e23r23s23 23i23n23 23r23e23a23l23-23t23i23m23e23.23  
23O23n23c23e23 23y23o23u23 23f23i23n23d23 23a23n23d23 23f23i23n23e23  
23t23u23n23e23 23y23o23u23r23 23f23a23v23o23r23i23t23e23 23p23r23e23s23e23t23s23,23  
23y23o23u23 23c23a23n23 23u23s23e23 23t23h23e23 23l23e23d23 23d23i23s23p23l23a23y23  
23t23o23 23c23a23l23l23 23t23h23e23m23 23a23n23y23t23h23i23n23g23 23y23o23u23  
23w23a23n23t23.23  
23  
23l23t23 23o23n23l23y23 23w23e23i23g23h23s23 23323.23723623 23l23b23s23,23 23i23t23  
23h23a23s23 23a23 23C23D23 23l23n23p23u23t23:23 23l23/23823 23i23n23.23  
23T23R23S23.23 23l23t23 23h23a23s23 23v23e23r23y23 23g23o23o23d23  
23c23o23n23v23e23r23t23e23r23s23 23A23/23D23/23A23:23 23223423-23b23i23t23,23  
23t23h23e23 23s23a23m23p23l23e23 23r23a23t23e23 23i23s23 23423423.23l23  
23k23H23z23,23 23t23h23e23 23i23n23p23u23t23s23 23a23r23e23 23q23u23a23r23t23e23r23  
23i23n23c23h23 23a23n23d23 23X23L23R23 23l23!23!23!23 23T23h23e23  
23o23u23t23p23u23t23s23 23a23r23e23 23s23t23e23r23e23o23 23q23u23a23r23t23e23r23  
23i23n23c23h23 23T23R23S23 23a23n23d23 23M23o23n23o23 23X23L23R23.23  
23  
23P23l23u23s23,23 23t23h23i23s23 23t23h23i23n23g23 23i23s23 23b23u23i23l23t23  
23l23i23k23e23 23a23 23t23a23n23k23.23 23l23t23 23a23l23s23o23 23h23a23s23 23a23  
23m23a23s23t23e23r23 23o23u23t23p23u23t23 23s23o23 23i23f23 23t23h23e23  
23d23u23n23d23e23r23h23e23a23d23 23e23n23g23i23n23e23e23r23  
23d23o23e23s23n23'23t23 23g23i23v23e23 23y23o23u23 23e23n23o23u23g23h23  
23m23o23n23i23t23o23r23,23 23y23o23u23 23j23u23s23t23 23r23e23a23c23h23  
23d23o23w23n23 23a23n23d23 23c23r23a23n23k23 23u23p23 23t23h23e23  
23m23a23s23t23e23r23 23o23u23t23p23u23t23 23k23n23o23b23 23a23n23d23 23y23o23u23  
23w23i23l23l23 23h23a23v23e23 23p23l23e23n23t23y23 23o23f23 23v23o23l23u23m23e23.23  
23S23e23t23u23p23 23i23s23 23a23 23b23r23e23e23z23e23,23 23p23l23u23g23 23i23n23  
23t23h23e23 23m23i23k23e23,23 23p23o23w23e23r23 23i23t23 23u23p23 23a23n23d23  
23s23e23n23d23 23a23 23c23a23b23l23e23 23t23o23 23t23h23e23 23m23i23x23e23r23.23  
23T23h23e23 23a23s23s23o23r23t23m23e23n23t23 23o23f23 23e23f23f23e23c23t23s23  
23a23n23d23 23v23o23l23u23m23e23 23p23e23d23a23l23 23g23i23v23e23s23 23y23o23u23  
23a23n23 23e23d23g23e23 23t23h23a23t23 23g23u23i23t23a23r23 23p23l23a23y23e23r23s23  
23 23h23a23v23e23 23u23t23i23l23i23z23e23d23.23  
23

24l24 24h24a24v24e24 24t24r24i24e24d24 24s24o24m24e24 24o24f24 24t24h24e24  
24g24u24i24t24a24r24 24e24f24f24e24c24t24s24 24u24n24i24t24s24 24o24f24  
24o24t24h24e24r24 24m24a24n24u24f24a24c24t24u24r24e24r24s24 24w24i24t24h24  
24l24i24m24i24t24e24d24 24s24u24c24c24e24s24s24.24 24l24 24h24a24v24e24  
24f24o24u24n24d24 24t24h24a24t24 24t24h24e24y24 24c24e24r24t24a24i24n24l24y24  
24c24o24u24l24d24 24o24v24e24r24l24y24 24c24o24l24o24r24 24a24n24d24  
24d24i24s24t24o24r24t24 24m24y24 24s24o24u24n24d24,24 24a24n24d24 24i24f24 24l24  
24w24a24n24t24e24d24 24s24u24p24e24r24 24c24l24e24a24n24 24s24o24u24n24d24s24,24  
24t24h24e24 24f24r24e24q24u24e24n24c24y24 24r24e24s24p24o24n24s24e24 24o24f24  
24s24o24m24e24 24o24f24 24t24h24o24s24e24 24g24u24i24t24a24r24 24u24n24i24t24s24  
24w24e24r24e24 24l24a24c24k24i24n24g24,24 24 24T24h24e24r24e24 24a24r24e24 24n24o24  
24p24r24o24b24l24e24m24s24 24w24i24t24h24 24t24h24e24 24d24i24g24i24t24e24c24h24  
24v24o24c24a24l24 24324024024 24-24-24l24 24b24e24l24i24e24v24e24 24t24h24i24s24  
24b24a24b24y24 24r24u24n24s24 24224024-24224024,24024024024 24h24z24 24s24o24  
24t24h24e24 24t24o24p24 24e24n24d24 24i24s24 24s24u24p24e24r24 24c24l24e24a24n24.24  
24 24P24l24u24s24,24 24t24h24i24s24 24i24s24 24a24  
24f24o24o24t24c24o24n24t24r24o24l24l24e24d24 24u24n24i24t24 24s24o24  
24a24c24c24e24s24s24i24n24g24 24y24o24u24r24 24s24o24u24n24d24s24  
24b24e24c24o24m24e24 24a24 24b24r24e24e24z24e24.24 24 24Y24o24u24 24c24a24n24  
24e24v24e24n24 24u24s24e24 24t24h24e24 24v24o24l24u24m24e24  
24c24o24n24t24r24o24l24 24a24s24 24a24n24 24e24x24p24r24e24s24s24i24o24n24  
24p24e24d24a24l24 24t24o24 24c24o24n24t24r24o24l24 24t24h24e24 24a24m24o24u24n24t24  
24o24f24 24d24e24l24a24y24 24o24r24 24r24e24v24e24r24b24,24 24f24o24r24  
24e24x24a24m24p24l24e24.24  
24  
24T24h24e24 24o24n24l24y24 24d24r24a24w24b24a24c24k24s24 24t24h24a24t24 24l24  
24c24a24n24 24f24i24n24d24 24i24s24 24t24h24a24t24 24t24h24e24 24b24y24p24a24s24s24  
24s24w24i24t24c24h24 24i24s24 24p24l24a24c24e24d24 24t24o24o24 24c24l24o24s24e24  
24t24o24 24t24h24e24 24e24x24p24r24e24s24s24i24o24n24  
24p24e24d24a24l24.24.24b24e24 24c24a24r24e24f24u24l24 24n24o24t24 24t24o24  
24h24i24t24 24i24t24 24a24c24c24i24d24e24n24t24l24y24.24 24A24l24s24o24,24 24t24h24e24  
24q24u24a24l24i24t24y24 24o24f24 24t24h24e24 24r24e24v24e24r24b24s24 24a24r24e24  
24f24i24n24e24 24f24o24r24 24l24i24v24e24 24p24e24r24f24o24r24m24a24n24c24e24,24  
24b24u24t24 24l24 24w24o24u24l24d24 24n24o24t24 24u24s24e24 24t24h24e24s24e24  
24r24e24v24e24r24b24s24 24i24n24 24t24h24e24 24s24t24u24d24i24o24.24  
24  
24A24l24s24o24,24 24l24 24f24o24u24n24d24 24s24o24m24e24 24o24f24 24t24h24e24  
24d24i24s24t24o24r24t24i24o24n24 24m24i24k24e24 24p24r24e24a24m24p24s24  
24w24e24r24e24 24a24 24b24i24t24 24t24o24o24 24d24i24s24t24o24r24t24e24d24 24a24t24  
24l24o24w24 24s24e24t24t24i24n24g24s24.24 24l24 24f24o24u24n24d24  
24e24x24c24e24l24l24e24n24t24 24r24e24s24u24l24t24s24 24j24u24s24t24  
24t24u24r24n24i24n24g24 24u24p24 24t24h24e24 24i24n24p24u24t24 24k24n24o24b24  
24a24n24d24 24o24v24e24r24d24r24i24v24i24n24g24 24t24h24e24 24f24r24o24n24t24  
24e24n24d24 24o24f24 24t24h24e24 24u24n24i24t24.24 24S24o24,24 24w24h24e24n24  
24y24o24u24 24p24l24a24y24 24s24o24f24t24,24 24t24h24e24 24s24o24u24n24d24 24i24s24  
24c24l24e24a24r24.24 24W24h24e24n24 24y24o24u24 24b24l24o24w24 24i24t24  
24h24a24r24d24e24r24,24 24i24t24 24d24i24s24t24o24r24t24s24  
24a24c24c24o24r24d24i24n24g24l24y24 24a24n24d24 24n24a24t24u24r24a24l24l24y24.24  
24  
24l24 24h24a24v24e24 24a24 24m24o24n24d24a24y24 24n24i24g24h24t24 24g24i24g24  
24w24i24t24h24 24a24 24j24a24z24z24 24b24a24n24d24.24 24T24h24i24s24 24u24n24i24t24  
24s24o24u24n24d24s24 24u24n24b24e24l24i24e24v24a24b24l24e24 24w24i24t24h24  
24m24y24 24c24h24r24o24m24a24t24i24c24 24p24l24a24y24i24n24g24 24j24a24z24z24  
24s24t24a24n24d24a24r24d24s24 24a24n24d24 24t24h24e24n24 24g24e24t24s24 24a24s24  
24n24a24s24t24y24 24a24s24 24y24o24u24 24w24a24n24t24 24t24o24 24b24e24 24f24o24r24  
24t24h24e24 24d24i24a24t24o24n24i24c24 24b24l24u24e24s24.24 24P24l24u24s24,24 24l24  
24c24a24n24 24a24d24d24 24m24y24 24e24f24f24e24c24t24s24 24f24o24r24

25s25o25m25e25 25o25f25 25t25h25e25 25s25p25a25t25i25a25l25  
25c25o25m25p25o25s25i25t25i25o25n25s25 25a25n25d25 25l25i25f25e25 25i25s25  
25g25r25e25a25t25!25!25.25 25A25n25d25 25t25h25e25 25s25o25u25n25d25m25a25n25  
25l25o25v25e25s25 25i25t25 25b25e25c25a25u25s25e25 25h25e25 25d25o25e25s25  
25n25o25t25 25h25a25v25e25 25t25o25 25r25i25d25e25 25m25y25 25l25e25v25e25l25  
25f25o25r25 25t25h25e25 25b25a25l25i25a25d25s25 25t25o25 25t25h25e25  
25r25o25c25k25e25r25s25 25a25n25d25 25a25d25j25u25s25t25 25r25e25v25e25r25b25  
25l25e25v25e25l25s25.25 25A25n25d25 25t25h25e25 25E25Q25 25g25i25v25e25s25  
25m25e25 25t25h25e25 25s25m25o25o25t25h25n25e25s25s25 25o25r25 25e25d25g25e25  
25t25h25a25t25 25l25 25r25e25q25u25i25r25e25.25

25

25T25h25e25 25p25r25i25c25e25-25 25225025025 25d25o25l25l25a25r25s25.25

25

25Y25o25u25 25c25a25n25 25f25i25n25d25 25m25o25r25e25

25i25n25f25o25r25m25a25t25i25o25n25 25a25t25 25d25i25g25i25t25e25c25h25.25c25o25m25

25

25N25o25,25 25l25 25d25o25 25n25o25t25 25o25w25n25 25s25t25o25c25k25 25i25n25

25t25h25i25s25 25c25o25m25p25a25n25y25-25-25 25j25u25s25t25 25p25a25s25s25i25n25g25

25a25l25o25n25g25 25t25h25e25 25n25e25w25s25 25o25f25 25a25 25g25r25e25a25t25

25p25r25o25d25u25c25t25 25f25o25r25 25h25a25r25m25o25n25i25c25a25

25p25l25a25y25e25r25s25.25

25

25p25e25a25c25e25 25a25n25d25 25h25a25r25p25s25,25

25

25r25a25n25d25y25 25s25i25n25g25e25r25 200425 25

25

ps, there is a new model out called the VX400. You will have to determine yourself if the new features and upgrades are worth the extra price. T25h25e25 25n25e25w25

25v25e25r25s25i25o25n25 25h25a25s25 25u25s25b25 25o25u25t25p25u25t25s25

25a25n25d25 25a25 25r25h25y25t25h25m25 25m25a25c25h25i25n25e25,25 25p25l25u25s25

25a25 25f25e25w25 25m25o25r25e25 25g25o25o25d25i25e25s25.25

25-----

-----

25

251.-- excerpt "Reprinted from Bob Baker's The Buzz Factor, featuring marketing tips and self-promotion ideas for songwriters, musicians and bands on a budget. Visit [www.TheBuzzFactor.com](http://www.TheBuzzFactor.com) for details."

25

25