

A Desire to Conduct

He wanted to conduct. His conducting style, however, was idiosyncratic. During soft passages, he would crouch extremely low. For loud sections, he would often leap into the air, even shouting to the orchestra.

His memory was poor: Once he forgot that he had instructed the orchestra not to repeat a section of music. During the performance, when he went back to repeat that section, they went forward, so he stopped the piece, hollering, "Stop! Wrong! That will not do! Again! Again!"

For his own piano concerto, he tried conducting from the piano. At one point, he jumped from the bench, bumping the candles off the piano. At another concert, he knocked over a choir boy. During one long, delicate passage, he jumped high to cue a loud entrance, but nothing happened because he had lost count and signaled the orchestra too soon.

As his hearing worsened, musicians tried to ignore his conducting and get their cues from the first violinist. Finally, the musicians pleaded with him to go home and give up conducting, which he did.

He was Ludwig van Beethoven.

As the man whom many consider to be the greatest composer of all time learned, no one is a genius of all trades.

The truth is obvious. In Life Care, Century Park and Life Care at Home, we must recognize that each associate has unique abilities to bring to the workplace, and the combined performances, drawing on individual strengths properly conducted, produce a beautiful symphony of love and service.

--Beecher Hunter