

Point of Reference When Practicing

As we all know it can be difficult to break through a plateau when it comes to our trumpet development. Hopefully some of the thoughts below can help in our progression to becoming better trumpet players and musicians.

The concept of this article came to my mind a couple weeks ago while working through some Arban pronunciation and articulation practice. I was practicing through the simple articulation exercises in the beginning of the Arban book trying to clean up my attacks. In between exercises I found myself coming back to a simple excerpt, or ***Point of Reference***, to get me back on track. Here is the exercise:



When using this exercise and getting me back on track my practice became positive and I started to see results. When we are working through struggles I feel the mind needs to see development, progression and experience success. These simple exercises aid in that concept. This can be done in a myriad of ways and each individual needs to experiment, yes I said experiment, and find what works for them. Other ways to experience success is play things slower, slur, tongue or maybe in a different key. Find what works for you and helps you experience a success sooner than later. If we continue to beat our head against the wall and not work through things in this manner we are not going to progress as fast as we would like.

Another ***Point of Reference*** exercise was introduced to me by Mr. Jim Reed during a lesson at his house many years ago. At that time, my trumpet playing had a “hitch in my giddyup” between taking a break and starting a note. Mr. Reed was working me through this issue. He asked me if there was a musical exercise, song...anything...that I could play without the hitch in attacking a note. For some reason there was an Arban exercise I could play at the time with no hitch. To this day I still come back to this exercise. Here is a small portion of that Arban exercise:



At that time I was amazed by this. But, looking back I was having trouble truly detailing and have an impeccable mental thought of what I was about to play. For some reason, the simple Arban exercise was implanted deeply into my thinking and was very simple for me to play and recall.

Morale of the story, experiment and find a ***Point of Reference that works for you!***

At the 2017 William Adam Trumpet Festival I remembered or was reminded of these concepts. Our mind needs positive experiences to help us stay in the game. The two concepts above have helped me tremendously! Being in a community such as a trumpet festival can help us get to the next level. Talking about these concepts with other trumpet players, friends or co workers can help one get to the next plateau. I hope these help you!

Best,

Chris
#GetTrumpetActive

July 2018