

12 (well lots of) things to improve your worship team

musicacademy
OUTSTANDING PRACTICAL WORSHIP TRAINING

Microphone Technique

- Most microphones for church use are **directional**, so aiming sound at the side, top or bottom of the mic won't work.
- **Direct your voice into the middle of the microphone.** (like a Smartie tube)
- Proximity: **1-2 inches from your mouth** is enough.
- If you have a very dynamic voice, **pulling slightly away** will help on the big notes.
- **Holding your mic** - hold the handle of the microphone never the top. Cupping the mic in your hands will interfere with sound.
- Most mic technique is psychological, not physical.....if you have something to sing/say, **be confident to allow your voice to be heard.**

Microphone Technique - Techie Thoughts

- Keep the mic a **consistent distance from your mouth**:
Put it on your top lip if it helps / Take it out of the stand
- **Talk / Sing straight into the mic**; not over the top/sides.
- Every time you **double the distance** between mic & mouth, the volume drops by half



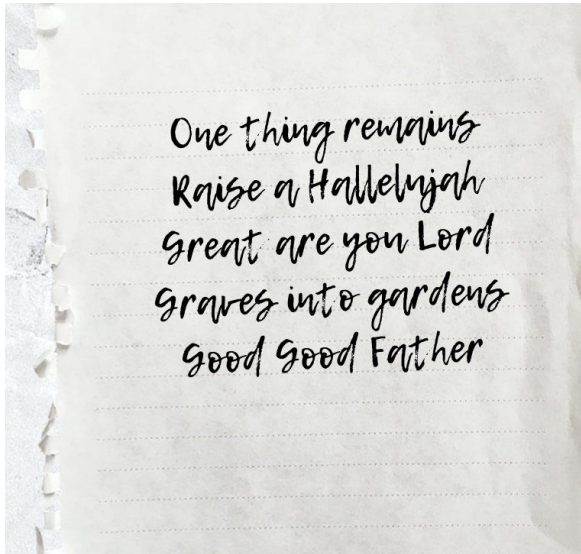
Nicki Rogers - Worship leading

- **Building a set** - Worship is a journey.
- **Themes and beyond.** Present to presence. Connection. Encounter.
- **Choosing keys** for the whole congregation.
- **Flexibility within a safe framework** - Building trust with your band and congregation.
- **Leading/taking control** - confident communication. Moments of change and introducing new songs.
- **Building a song** - dynamics, repetition, musicality and free response time.
- **Being sensitive to congregation/culture**
(Pentecostal vs CoE)
- **Preparation** - learn the songs well, warm up, prepare and practice your culture of worship style.
- What you do on the day is a result of relationship and familiarity.



How to build a set list

- **Scripture passage or theme for the service**
Select music that fits
- **What is the purpose?** What response are you seeking from the congregation?
- **Cater to your congregation** - keys, song choice
- **Start upbeat?**
- **Think through transitions**
- **Tempo and dynamics**
- **Leave room for flexibility and the Holy Spirit**
- **New songs**
Introduce one at a time and repeat regularly until it is learnt
- **“Time of worship” vs hymn sandwich**
- **What can your team actually play?**
- **Your ideas?**



One thing remains
Raise a Hallelujah
Great are you Lord
Graves into gardens
Good Good Father

Crowd Sourced Ideas - Worship leading

- **Treat your worship team as a Team** and not as a group of musicians that come together to make sung worship happen
- **Be a 'lead worshipper' in the congregation** as well as a 'worship leader' out front
- **You cannot make people worship.** That's a choice that the individual makes. You can, however, make a "place" for people to worship in. If you can worship in it, others will probably follow.
- **It's never a performance.** If the people at the front are worshipping, others will generally want and do join in.
- **Musical worship should be a collective activity.** The person in the third back row is just as important to God as the lead guitarist or keyboard player or sound tech, etc. We all worship together. Change the mindset from the beginning
- **Include your tech team**

Crowd Sourced Ideas - Worship leading

- **Pay attention to the congregation.** After a couple of times doing a new song, if they aren't getting it, consider something else.
- Trying to **make big changes** isn't going to happen if you try to do it all at once.
- **Try to be organised** because that helps the rest of the team and fosters smoother playing and practices.



Crowd Sourced Ideas - Worship leading

- **Get training and experience** so you can focus on God and less on the notes - it's complex playing an instrument and singing as well, especially when the primary aim is to help draw your congregation into encounter
 - Don't be too proud to **get singing (and/or instrumental) lessons**; even the most talented singers will learn better how to use and look after their voice.
- Focus on modern worship** and avoid more operatic styles



Nicki Rogers - Backing Vocals

- **Sensitivity to leader** - listening, supporting and enhancing.
- **Unify** - Beyond singing, and into creating one sound. How to listen and sing.
- **Dynamics** - building (unison, harmonies, inversion, silence)



Crowd Sourced Ideas - Backing vocals

- **Congregation need to hear melody** when learning a new song
- Unless the song has a really strong start, **let the WL do the first verse on their own**, and don't join in till the chorus. If you still want to sing, step right away from the mic.
- **Harmonies don't always sit perfectly a third up or a third below** the melody if you're not sure, ask your team for input. It'll depend on the chord progression underneath what you're singing.
- **Harmony above the melody draws the ear** so use sparingly and not too loud
- **Try not to double the melody** too often
- **WORSHIP rather than sing!** Your singing then becomes a conduit for the Holy Spirit to reach the congregation

Crowd Sourced Ideas - Backing vocals

- Sometimes there will be times where you would be stepping back from singing, such as in a quiet part of a song...use that time to **tune into God** and ask him to help you recognise what's going on for the congregation in those moments.
- **Being a backing vocalist is one of the hardest jobs in a worship band.** You have to understand the dynamics going on between sung words and the instruments, find the space where you can add depth, brightness and emphasis. You need to have a three way communication - what is God doing right now, where is your lead vocalist going, and how can you be a lead worshipper for the congregation. You need to be able to carry the tune and sing harmony, but only where it matters.

Mark Jones - Percussion - Finding your place in the band

- **Context** - Why it's important to consider where you play - home group, physical church building, where you play in the band and the size of your congregation
- **Talk to the drummer and sound team** - expectations, what you can bring, how much STUFF ie how much space you'll need - more than a shaker!!
- **Hybrid kit playing** - as a kit player - enriching your sound through adding texture.
- **Amplification** - knowing how much amplification each percussion instrument needs and where to position mics.
- **Percussion playing** - knowing your instrument and how to play it and how to add your instrument's voice to the band.

Terl Bryant - Tips for drummers

- **What does it mean to be a worship drummer**
- **Top tips** for skill and music development
- The **right set-up** for the type of band and space you're in
- Considering **technology vs the acoustic approach**
- How to **improve sound and manage volume**
- **Four things every drummer should do:**
 1. Pray
 2. Help the leader lead
 3. Know the song
 4. Know the tempo/dynamics
- The difference between a **professional and an amateur**
- Q&A



Tips for drummers - crowd sourced

- **Concentrate on timing and play simply.**
- In time and simple is easier to deal with loud than complicated and out of time
- **Serve the song**, this isn't Led Zeppelin, you're not leading or defining anything other than rock solid tempo, so learn to follow cues from the song leader.



How to do a Sound Check

What is a Sound Check?

- The techie's equivalent of tuning their instrument / doing a warm-up
- Setting the levels on the desk for each instrument (gain, EQ/tone)
- Setting monitor levels as required
- Going through one person at a time

Come to the session this afternoon for more details on sound checks :)



How to do a Sound Check: Techies

Do a **line-check in advance** - don't assume it's working. Fix buzzes & issues

Sound **reinforcement or replacement?**

Drive the sound check. **Communicate** with the team - use a talkback mic

Don't rely on headphones, unless you need to check for an issue

1. **Set the Master** fader. Now leave it alone
2. Input **fader up**
3. **Set the Gain by ear** - we are SOUND engineers. Then check for red lights
4. EQ: **roll off the bass** (HPF), except for kick drum, bass, keys & playback
5. Input **fader down**
6. Set the **monitor level**
7. Input **fader back up to check** that the monitor isn't louder than the PA

How to do a Sound Check: Musicians

- **Get yourself ready:** instrument set up & in tune. Music ready. In position.
- This is **not a time to practise**
- When it's your turn, **perform!** Give it some!
- If you're asked to turn down, please **be gracious**
- PA levels will be set first, then monitors
- Are you happy with levels? **Communicate with the techies**
- **Wait patiently**
- **Trust the Techies** to create a good mix



How to do a Sound Check - Crowd Sourced

Advice for musicians

1. Be there
2. Wait your turn silently.
3. Learn to hear yourself in the mix not solo
4. Give a consistent clean signal (instrument) or voice (mic technique, position etc)
5. Don't compensate for problems - if you seem to be too quiet don't sing louder, if anything sing quieter so that they notice and fix it.
6. If they don't fix it, it doesn't matter just let it go.
Allow others to be responsible.

And there are **over 20 comments** on the post in the **Musicademy Facebook Group**
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/musicademy>

Who should stand where?

- The rock band vs the banana



Tim M - Be yourself, be smart, be kind

- **Know yourself** - skills, ability, preferred styles, strengths and weaknesses
- **Work within your own limitations**
- Allow and encourage others to **work within their limitations**
- **Know your context** - your church and community - size, style leaders and people
- **Lead within the limitations of your context** - range, octave jumps, instrumentation, song choice, set length etc.
- **Don't play/sing too much** - know your place in the group
- **Allow your church to be your church...** every community is different
- **Speak and act honestly and kindly** - work with others not against them
- **Be humble and be yourself**

Tim M - How to use backing tracks

Options:

- **MultiTracks** - Wavs - need a DAW (Digital Audio Workstation) like Ableton or the Worship Backing Band Player
Change key and tempo, mute instruments, the track fills in for missing musicians
Download from Worship Backing Band (other, more expensive options, available)
- **Split Tracks** - play on any device
Karaoke-style with vocals set from 0-10
On-screen words
Download or rip from DVDs



Over to you - what are your questions?

- What is your worship team currently struggling with?