

RESOURCES FOR STUDENT MUSICIANS

The Musician's Lifestyle Quiz

Career decisions have an enormous impact on musicians' daily lives. Here are some multiple-choice questions to get you thinking about the lifestyle choices that could make you happy and productive. There are no right answers. Any answer could be right for you, but some choices might work better than others in certain roles and careers. Some of your expectations and requirements may change as the years go by, and others will be more consistent. Take the quiz to learn a little more about yourself. You may be surprised!

LIFESTYLE QUIZ

1) My ideal workday would:

- a) Start at 9:00 a.m. and end at 5:00 p.m.
- b) Start at noon and end at midnight
- c) Be different every day

2) My ideal schedule would include:

- a) Travel as much as possible
- b) Occasional travel, but mostly working in one town
- c) Work that gets me home to my own bed every night

3) I would be willing to take the following number of auditions before I landed a performing job:

- a) 1 - 3
- b) 4 - 10
- c) As many as it took

4) It's December. I'm a professional performer with a family to support, so I:

- a) Refuse to accept holiday shows (it's the holidays!)
- b) Pick and choose a few gigs and sacrifice a few presents for the family
- c) Postpone family holiday activities to get as many paying performances as possible

For each of the following questions, choose the statement that most accurately describes your attitude:

5) I prefer to:

- a) be the master of my own schedule and priorities
- b) take direction from others
- c) work as part of a team
- d) work with small groups
- e) work with larger groups
- f) work alone
- g) work with the public clientele

6) My lifestyle preference is:

- a) The good life – nice car, eating out at restaurants, owning a home
- b) Whatever works – driving a 10-year-old beater, mac 'n' cheese, renting a cheap apartment
- c) Movin' on up – starting out on a shoestring is okay, but I want the best eventually

7) I thrive in the following environment:

- a) High energy, high stress situations
- b) Laid back and safe situations
- c) A changing environment that isn't too crazy but isn't guaranteed peace and quiet, either

8) I would be happiest with:

- a) A regular pay check (both amount and frequency) and steady work
- b) A free schedule that doesn't tie me down even if it doesn't guarantee steady income
- c) A steady part-time job that doesn't pay all the bills, but it's a start

9) My attitude toward compromise is:

- a) I'm really easy-going; whatever people need is fine
- b) I'm pretty set in my ways once I've made up my mind
- c) I've got strong ideas, but I'll listen to yours
- d) I don't

10) I take rejection and:

- a) Work even harder (it challenges me)
- b) Back off to recover (rejection is hard for me)
- c) Keep on going as if nothing happened (it doesn't bother me)

11) My organisation skills are:

- a) Unbelievable – I always know where every scrap of paper is, where I need to be and when
- b) Not so hot – I can get by with a great performance, so who will notice if I'm late?
- c) I'm working on them
- d) I'm random and at peace with chaos

REVIEW YOUR ANSWERS

- Is the security of regular hours and a regular pay important to you?
- Do you enjoy lots of variety and freedom?
- Do you work best with clear structure and expectations?
- How resilient are you?
- How motivated are you?
- Can you accept the fact that performing musicians work mostly weekends, evenings and holidays, the times many other people are playing?
- What is your interpersonal style, that is, how well do you 'play with others'?



This resource comes from Life in the Real World: How to Make Music Graduates Employable, published by Common Ground in 2012. Purchasers of the book are permitted to download all of the tools and resources.

If you have yet to purchase the book, please order it from [here](#).

This resource was contributed by Janis Weller (McNally Smith College of Music).

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