Tom Alsip

Tjalsip@gmail.com
Teaching Philosophy

My approach to teaching is based around practicality. I want my students to be prepared for what they will face in the world of professional theatre. I call my approach the D.I.G approach. It is a step-by-step guide to help students become successful performers. The steps are: Development, Instruction, and Guidance.

The first step is developing the students' skills. As performers, they need to develop their bodies and voices, which are the key tools of their trade, and they need to learn to use them effectively. Various class exercises will help students get in touch with their physical tools and help them gain valuable experience performing in front of others. The key is in being grounded. Few things are harder to do than stand in front of a group of people and be a human being. And once a student masters that, the rest falls into place through practice and repetition.

The second part of my D.I.G philosophy is based around instruction. A class is a gift, as professional actors have few opportunities to work on their craft in a safe, non-working environment, so instruction time is key. Instruction can include working on scenes, songs or monologues or even discussing styles or theatre history and trying to find unique ways to cement that information in students' minds. Practical experience in any field is one of the best ways to understand and utilize skills or information obtained in a classroom setting.

The last part of my D.I.G philosophy is based around guidance. As a teacher one of my main jobs is to guide students down the path to success. To do that, I think it is paramount to share any practical information a student could use to succeed when it comes to working professionally. I will draw upon my professional experience to lead a daily dialogue about the business because young actors know less about their business than people in just about any other profession. And I think changing that is one of the biggest steps to becoming successful.

My teaching philosophy is built around the concept of repetition. The more students work on each element of their craft, the better they will be. This includes performance skills, but also class discussions. I use the D.I.G. philosophy for teaching everything from acting to vocal performance, from audition technique to voiceover performance and even to courses such as theatre history and introduction to theatre. I think that students work best when given goals to accomplish. And with each step of my D.I.G. philosophy the student is given the tools they need to succeed and conquer those goals to excel in and out of the classroom.