

Lessons in Leadership Discussion Guide: Sarah Ioannides

Lessons in Leadership is an interview series sponsored by the Center for Leadership & Social Responsibility designed to share leadership insights from successful leaders in local and regional organizations. In the series, we talk with diverse business leaders across various industries to explore the lessons they have learned that can enrich our understanding of effective leadership and social responsibility.

[Watch](#) the interview with Sarah Ioannides, Music Director for Symphony Tacoma.

1. After viewing the Lessons in Leadership clip, what leadership skills does Sarah possess as a Conductor?
2. Sarah is one of 10 or so female conductors who have made it to the upper levels of her profession. What are some of the unique challenges that come with being a female leader in a male-dominated field?
3. Sarah touches on the challenges of balancing family and a demanding career. What are your thoughts regarding current societal supports for working parents? What possible solutions might increase support for working parents?
4. Sarah shares about the importance of connection and trust in her work: "Is it about connecting with people that brings them into the moment." How does Sarah build rapport with her musicians? What strategies do you utilize to build rapport with others?
5. Nonverbal communication is used often in Sarah's line of work. Where do you use nonverbal communication in your life? How often is it used throughout your day? When and where is it effective and ineffective?
6. Is Sarah passionate about what she does? Support your answer with a quote or explanation.
7. How important is passion in the workplace? Think of the leaders you have experienced in your life - how passionate were they, and what impact did that have on you?
8. Self-care is important for us all. Sarah mentions the measures she must take to be her best self, which include "knowing how much rest I need in order to go into something with 300 percent." Besides rest, share 5 self-care ideas that help you be your best.
9. Sarah shares regretting the decision to perform Beethoven in Vienna. She realized that wasn't the best call for the musicians, as they would have enjoyed something novel and more interesting to work on. In leadership, how important is it to admit mistakes and failures? Why?
10. If you had the opportunity to ask Sarah an additional question about leadership, what would it be?