DUMB PLAYERS AND SMART PLAYERS
BY GENE POKORNY

Smart players are:
* alert
* aware
* creative
* open to suggestions they think might work
* open to suggestions they think might not work
* child psychologists
* focused
* sensitive (musically as well as to the human asset)
* dogmatic about doing a good job even in difficult situations
* musicians that keep quality playing as a top priority
* thinking and innovative
* surprising in an “aha!” type way

Smart Players:
* keep ego in check especially when dealing with the music
* keep ego in check especially when dealing with colleagues
* have a knowledge and respect for music history
* have a knowledge and respect for tradition
* have the courage to question music history and tradition before changing the performing practice
* have good taste in executing a musical idea

Dumb Players are:
* right all the time
* always heard (especially in soft passages)
* changing what is on the page at random for no other reason than to stroke their ego or a particular playing strength they have
* not prepared
* poor followers
* too self-important to need to follow

Dumb players:
* play louder on stage when boyfriend, girlfriend, wife, lover, critic, students, colleagues from another orchestra are in the audience
* are comfortable in a very narrow range of dynamics
* play everything in the same style
* complain a lot
* listen but do not hear
* refuse to become ensemble players
* refuse to recognize that successful ensemble playing is at least as difficult as successful solo playing
* don’t find it important enough to stay alert (sometimes even awake) during a concert
* play the printed dynamics, regardless
* are unaware that their musical and physical appearance are not just a reflection of themselves but a reflection of the group they are representing on the stage and off