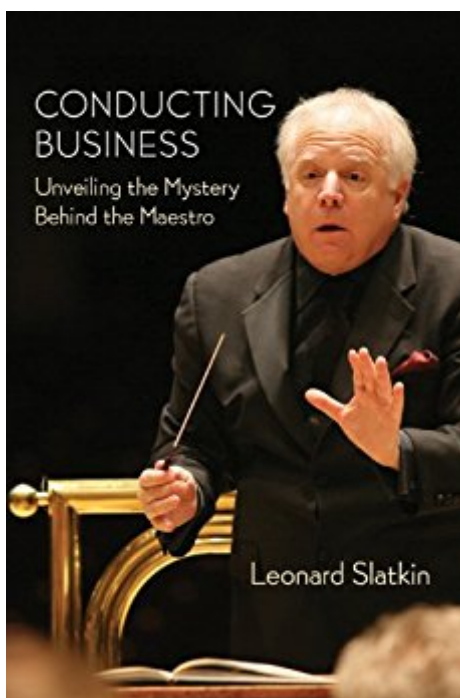


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# Conducting Business: Unveiling The Mystery Behind The Maestro



## Synopsis

(Amadeus). Conducting an orchestra is something that is seen as well as heard, but it is quite misunderstood when it comes to knowing what this person actually does for a living. This most mysterious of jobs is brought to life for the music lover as well as for the aspiring maestro in a new book by Leonard Slatkin. Drawing on his own experiences on and off the podium, Slatkin brings us into the world of the baton. He tells tales of some of the most fascinating people in the musical world, including Frank Sinatra, Leonard Bernstein, and John Williams. He takes the reader to the great concert halls and orchestras, soundstages in Hollywood, and opera pits around the globe. Mr. Slatkin recounts his controversial appearance at the Metropolitan Opera, his creation and direction of summer music festivals, and a shattering concert experience that took place four days following 9/11. Life in the recording studio and on the road as well as health issues confronting the conductor provide an insider's glimpse into the private world of public figures. Covering everything from learning how to read music to standing in front of an orchestra for the first time, what to wear, and how to deal with the press, *Conducting Business* is a unique look at a unique profession.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Whether you are looking for a book that is autobiographical of Mr. Slatkin, looking for great thought provoking musical tips for conductors, or a practical "behind the scenes" look at what a conductor goes through, this book has it all. Mr. Slatkin is honest, thoroughly knowledgeable, and has stories that are totally captivating. If you know Mr. Slatkin only through his conducting, you will be amazed. If you thought you knew him personally, you'll be surprised. Highly recommended for conductors, musicians who are not conductors, and even non musicians fascinated by conductors.

The book seems to serve two audiences: aspiring conductors and laymen who simply love classical music. Even though I knew Maestro Slatkin during his years in Washington, I had no idea how much goes into the business of conducting. In delivering on his promise to unveil the mystery, he ranges from the psychological (how to handle different members of an orchestra) to the practical (is the baton really needed)? He makes it clear that conducting is indeed a business as well as an art. But beyond that, the anecdotes alone are worth the price of the book. He seems to have known almost everyone in the music business from Sinatra to Heifetz. Slatkin relates his own career and is surprisingly candid about what he regards as his failures. The book is long on the human side. If he were not conducting, he would like to be broadcasting baseball. His father, an accomplished conductor, instructed him not only about music of all kinds but about the superiority of the National League and, in particular, the St. Louis Cardinals.

This book is focused on details of conducting a symphony orchestra. It provides first-hand information about all aspects of conducting, except very professional & musical details. This makes the book very interesting for anyone who's sat in concerts, wondering how the whole thing works. It's not for a general reader without a deep concern about classical music. I've attended countless concerts, especially in my youth, sitting behind the orchestra, facing the conductor & trying to follow all his movements going through the music. Leonard Slatkin has included enough autobiographical details as to connect various threads together & fill in so much missing information about the orchestra.

WORTH READING.

Leonard Slatkin's *Conducting Business: Unveiling the Mystery Behind the Maestro* is an uneven mixture of autobiography, job description, and technical analysis, with a few amusing and/or moving

anecdotes tossed in. Slatkin's autobiography is interesting but presented in a rather incoherent fashion. His childhood was happy, except for an emotionally distant alcoholic father. Wives come and go without much explanation. He takes jobs and leaves jobs, again without much explanation. The lack of a coherent life story, at least as given in this book, makes for a disjointed reading experience. Fortunately the insider descriptions of conducting and working with great orchestras are better written. And the final chapters are quite good. These include examples of the technical score analysis that conductors have to do, as well as answers to common questions, and a final assortment of anecdotes and thoughts.

excellent story love it

I am on the board of a symphony orchestra--and their on-stage spokesman as well--and really had to have more knowledge of the various performing entities. I started here. A fine book with the kind of insight that has helped me. Recommended to you if you love serious music, either as a performer or, like me, as an enthusiast.

Entertaining and forthright. Slatkin gives us some very amusing anecdotes, and plenty of good advice for the budding conductor. Enjoyed this more than I expected to.

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