

From “The Professional Balancing Act”

The Magic Wand

Professional Level Bassoonist

Example by Jacob Kohut

1. **If you could wave a magic wand and accomplish anything, what would it be?**

After I began teaching, I still wanted to explore my bassoon ability. I didn't want to leave teaching to play for a living, but I wanted to play at a “professional level.”

2. **If you had an infinite amount of money, how would you put it towards accomplishing that goal?**

For performance on any instrument, studying with master level players and teachers in addition to engaging in as many performance opportunities as possible is the best way to develop.

3. **What's a realistic way to accomplish that?**

I couldn't afford to stop teaching to pursue a degree in bassoon performance with top ranked people in the world. So I split the difference and doubled down my work ethic practicing, performed as often as I could and played for anybody better than me who would listen. I went to concerts and tried to meet the bassoonists afterwards to get insights. I would play for them if the situation allowed. When I traveled I used the opportunity to try to meet new bassoonists. After 18 months of this and 2-3 hours of practice before and after the teaching day, I found myself having several performing engagements with professionals who gave me their blessing of peer respect.