

Ten things to DO

1. You must internalize the music. You must love the music and know it in your bones.
2. You must reflect the music in the way you move. You are an object of focus for the musicians of the orchestra. They need to see the music reflected in you, in your gestures.
3. You need enough technique that you are able to begin and end the music. Everyone's technique is different, but you must be clear enough to be understood. When do we start? When do we stop?
4. Your depth of knowledge and feeling of the music must be communicated. You must have a great ability to bring the music out of the musicians.
5. You must have music somehow emanate from you. Through the eyes or the hands or some other way. Everyone is different. You can be a conductor and not have eye contact. One conductor I know of kept his eyes closed and he was making tremendous contact — something was emanating from him.
6. Your musicianship should inspire the players — that's so important. My idea of preparing is to focus on the music, on what I am doing, how I am going to rehearse. I spend a lot of time studying.
7. You must be an organizer.
8. You must become the face of the ensemble with the ability to convince people of the greatness of the music they are making.
9. Enjoy something else. My enjoyment is reading.
10. Know what is important to spend time on. For me it's my family and the music.

Five things to AVOID

1. Players don't like conductors who just talk. My great teacher, the French conductor Pierre Monteux, said, 'Never speak more than 10 seconds, otherwise they'll be bored'.
2. Dress the part. Don't make a slovenly impression in front of the orchestra. It may sound superficial but it's true.
3. Don't be negative. Even when you know an orchestra well, it's important to be positive. The impression you make as a leader matters.
4. Don't lose yourself in self-promotion.
5. Don't lose the mystery.