

# Ask Mike!

*Stressed about an upcoming gig? Work got you singing the blues? Columnist Michael Goode can help!*



BY LOCAL 10-208 MEMBER  
MICHAEL I. GOODE

In my last column, in July, we talked about how to get real consistency in your playing. Today, we are going to revisit an old subject; how to deal with bad people in the music business. Here's August's Q&A:

**Q: In my orchestra, I told the assistant principal trumpet he could get subs that we needed while I was on vacation. So he doesn't say anything, but he gets two subs he knows everybody hates and when I ask him about**

**it he says "you told me I could get anybody I wanted." I am furious about this. How do I handle it?**

A: You really have to be careful when you delegate authority in your section and make it VERY CLEAR what and who you want and be VERY SPECIFIC. Otherwise, you could get really burned, or at the very least get very upset. It sounds like this guy just wanted the opportunity to get under your skin with a very petty and immature power move. Unfortunately, some people don't know about anger letters and don't do their homework, so they have so much emotional baggage they think that grabbing control in a petty manner such as this will help them distribute their misery onto somebody else rather than honestly facing their own demons through the anger letter process. We all have a responsibility to face up to our own negative Person B baggage, not dump it on others. Such behavior really messes up the musical chemistry and wreaks havoc with our ability and the group's ability to make great art at the highest level. I would write a very specific anger letter about this person in great detail to drain this person's negativity to get it out of your life. If you then feel like confronting them further about the issue after that,

do it, and if the person gets hostile, ask them, "What angers you the most about this situation?" and see what they say. That question is a great way to defuse their anger and the intensity of the situation. If the person blows up after that question, then he is very toxic and I would make a complaint with the union steward about his behavior with the substitutes and his attitude in general. For the greatest art, people have to cooperate. There should be give and take, not tyranny! Too many times, we see it as weakness to confront people at the musical or artistic workplace. This is wrong and very inefficient for the musical process. A rotten apple drags everyone down eventually and has to be dealt with. Hang in there and keep us posted as to how it's going!

**Q: Geez, I am trying to book my band at gigs and it is driving me crazy!! People are calling me at the last minute and not showing up for rehearsal, double-booking themselves. What's going on? I've always been responsible. What's up with people in this biz?**

A: Unfortunately, some of our fellow musicians haven't done their anger letters and resolved their personal prob-

lems and become selfish and think only about themselves. They think nothing of double-booking and of backing out of a gig at the last minute if they get a better deal. Part of it is because there is so much competition for gigs. But sooner or later, people who double-book will sooner or later be despised by their musical peers and stop getting calls for gigs even if they play great. I've seen it happen a number of times. If you do your anger letters and are centered because of it, you will think of other people and will be considerate and responsible when you book and attend gigs. Write some very specific anger letters about this situation and it will point your consciousness to more responsible players that you can count on. We work hard enough at this business; you shouldn't have to deal with bad people, and the anger letters will help solve that problem!

*Send your questions to: Ask Mike!, Trumpetworks Press, 715 Lake Street #269, Oak Park, IL 60301, or you can check out my website at [www.trumpetworkspress.com](http://www.trumpetworkspress.com) and see information on my book, "Stage Fright in Music Performance and Its Relationship to the Unconscious." All names are confidential and will not be published.*

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