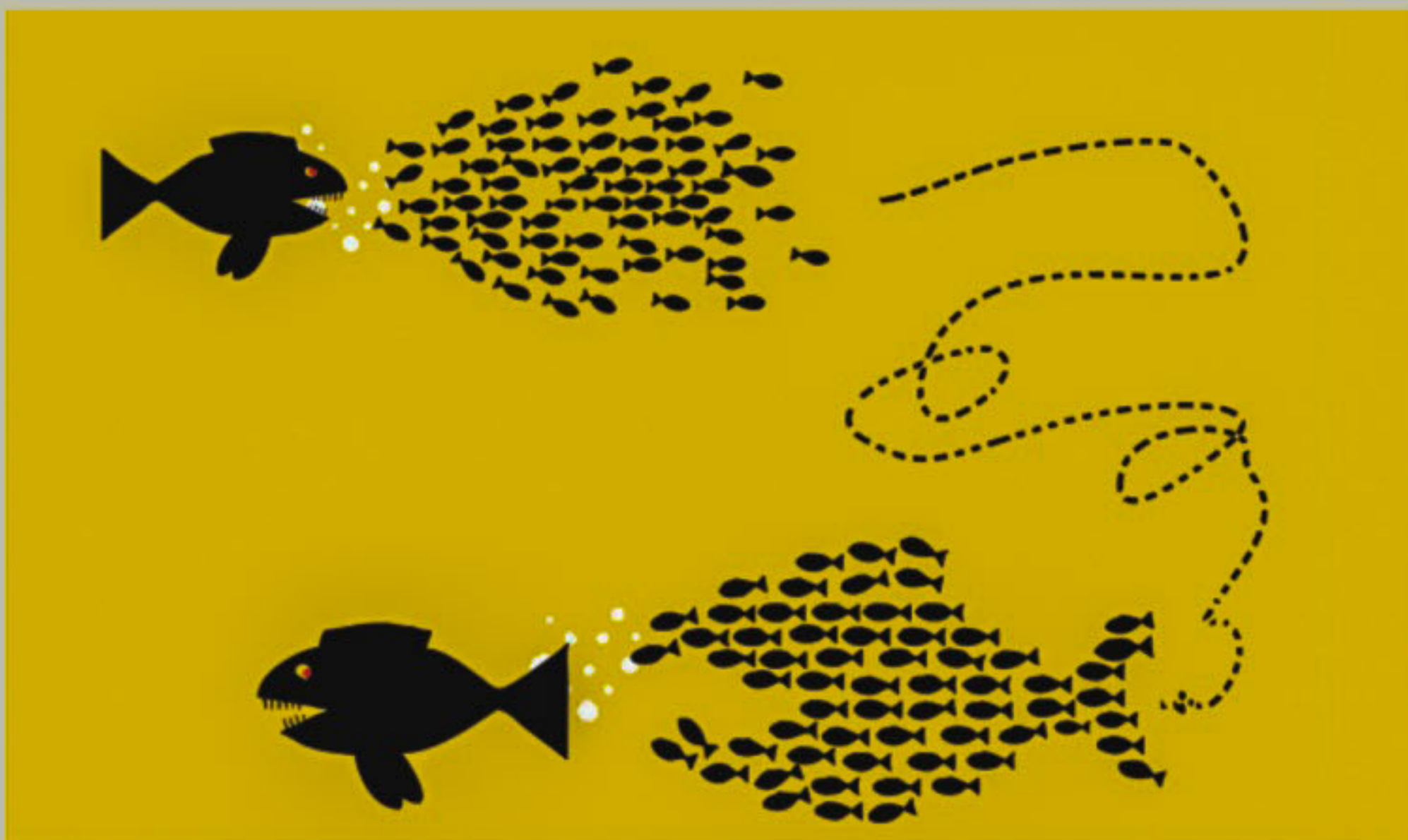


NEXT STEP

Get more done

If it can be done tomorrow, do it later. Unfortunately, this never gets anything done. That means chaos and scattered panic attacks all over the place. The trick is to organize all the little annoying, scary, nagging tasks and build them gradually into one single masterpiece.



Managing those finite hours

But there's only a finite number of hours per day. How do some people do it all? With only 24 hours a day, you can't work all of them. Put in really long hours, you miss on sleep, relaxation, recuperation - essential for the brain to function normally. Continue and you risk a burnout.

We take a 2-step approach. List and prioritize. Once you itemize everything that needs to be done, decide on what comes first. Being able to reference a list is a great way to stay on top of your progress. Great exam takers look over what chapters they've finished and what they need to hit next. Others just panic and pray.

Prioritize by setting your goals

As a bank cashier, what are my next two steps at the least? Bank robber or bank manager? Decide what's important so you know what to spend your time on. If being a manager is

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the thing to do, go handle the angry customer, forget the tea break. Same goes for finishing up a set task or homework assignment. Angry Birds Eating Candy Crush can wait.

Keep correspondence brief

Phone calls and emails are like meetings. Deal with any urgent email immediately and create folders for important emails you'll need to come back to. On the phone, be clear about your expected outcome. The listeners on the other end will know it is business and not a hangout.

Sometimes you need minions

Delegate tasks to save time. Even if you're not the boss of you, share work among colleagues. Setup an IOU system if necessary. Make sure the entire team you work with knows of your tasks. Let the team members know you are delegating them and their input is valued. Otherwise they just resent you and leave your computer mouse unplugged each day to annoy.

But then there are pitfalls to watch out for

In the office space, everybody wants things done 'right now'. You try to do everything right now, you lose the whole game. So push back and set concrete deadlines instead of 'ASAP'.

You might think multi-tasking will get you through. Except two weeks ago this page ran an article showing multitasking isn't a very good way to go about life. Imagine a planet conquering alien during a planet destroying mission. And he's on the phone arranging a birthday party for a slime monster friend in another galaxy. Focus on one task, do a bit of it, do another one. You can't do everything at once. Ever tried focusing a death ray on a planet while trying to take a high res snapshot of it with your other tentacle? Both activities suffer.

So break it up, rearrange, keep things brief and get more done.

WORDS: E R RONNY
ILLUSTRATION: CATNINJA

FASCINATING FACT

In Japan sleeping on the job, is actually a way for an employee to show how committed they are to working. "Inemuri" means "sleeping while present" and people sometimes fake it to earn extra points.



Crying himself to sleep at the office because Lost ended.

SHORTCUT

LOSE THE MULLET

At a job interview, you have roughly 15 minutes to sell yourself as the perfect person for the position. It's likely all other applicants are better than you in qualifications, presentation and anything else that you might think counts. But there's a catch here. All of these can be compensated for, if only you have the right approach about it.

As far as your qualifications go, you wouldn't be applying for the job, if you didn't fit the criteria. If you do, you're obviously not too bright and you're going to die alone.

On interviewing some of the senior directors at the company that I was lucky to avail an internship at, I've come across some interesting quirks that easily backfire and cost you a sure thing.

For example, did you know that your appearance isn't really of much importance in the Bangladesh service industry? Don't get me wrong and don't you dare show up in t shirt and shorts, but if picking the right tie is making you late for your interview, you might as well stay home. Because we're in Bangladesh and most of your employers won't care if you wore stripes with stripes.

For those of you, loading up your cv with one job after the other to make it look impressive, stop! Find a job and stick to it. Your employers want stability and they're going to look for your future prospective in their company. Telling them you plan to go abroad and make it big, won't impress them.

As for the cold, strictly business demeanor that is advised in almost every corporate guide book (Or as most of you gather from movies and tv shows), I'm going to remind you again, that this is Bangladesh and we're only at the beginning of pseudo-division of labor. Your employers are going to look for someone whose a team player, and easy to work with. So yeah, against all advices, be warm.

The last piece of advice I have to give you is to know your place in the food chain. You need to do enough research and know what you can ask for. Asking for too much will backfire just as much as asking for too little. Barring all these reasons, there's always a chance of your interviewer just hating your face so much. In which case, you're on your own, toots!

INMA SUMAITA RAHMAN

Say it right

Your thoughts come out jumbled when spoken? Avoid foot-in-mouth situation with these simple steps.

"I have a lot of ideas to share, it's just I don't think my boss likes me much. To make it worse, I get really nervous while presenting something to my superiors" says Arifur Reza (24), who's recently joined as a trainee.

This happens with many of us. Somehow, even before we get to mingle with colleagues and our boss, there's a huge blockade. Why is it so? Do you say things you should not? Do you not get the jokes your colleagues crack? Are you a nervous fellow? You definitely need to know the basics of effective communication skills if your answers are "yes" for all of the above questions.

Think, think, and think

How much time do you really spend thinking? Most executives I know are so action-oriented that they barely wait for a moment with the "casualty" of thinking. That, to begin with, appears to be a problem at times. You can always end up saying something you should not, or something that your organizational structure doesn't allow you to. So, think before you speak. Don't blabber a lot if your boss doesn't like to talk much.

Take a Deep Breath

Breathing is the moment at which you take in your surroundings: look around, consider who is present, and what they need from you. Prepare to share the space with them and to be present mentally. As it turns out, deep breathing is not only relaxing, it's been scientifically proven to affect the



heart, the brain, digestion, the immune system — and maybe even the expression of genes. Some people I know have a tendency to speak faster than their capacity out of sheer nervousness! End result, no one understood a word. Don't speak

so fast that you barely have time to catch a breath. If you are presenting something in front of a group that includes your boss, superiors, colleagues and you need to bowl them over, carry cue cards. Write some bullet points and carry the cue card to

the stage. Breathe in between your presentation. It also allows you some time to think more.

Finally, Speak!

Speaking is what most people work on. They forget the thinking and the breathing and

You can always end up saying something you should not, or something that your organizational structure doesn't allow you to. So, think before you speak.

instead try to occupy space with sound. But if you've taken the nanoseconds required to think and breathe, what you say will matter to your listeners.

Everything else is noise. Follow the first two steps, and then engage in speaking. Wasting a lot of words is never wise. Speak to the point. If you know how your colleagues and boss reacts to jokes and if it's positive, land a few to lighten up the mood. Once you can think, breathe, and speak accordingly, you can expect to have a smooth work relationship with your colleagues.

WORDS: ASIF KAMAL
ILLUSTRATION: CATNINJA

CONNECT TO NEXT STEP

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