

How you're helping out the wrong way

RASHEED KHAN

Helping other people out regardless of what detrimental effects it could have on themselves is second-nature for some people. Even more admirable is that it doesn't even necessarily have to be loved ones; occasionally people help strangers because they can. However, sometimes people are terrible at assistance, either because they don't really want to help but are too chicken to say it outright, or because they're just... well, bad at helping. If you're the second type of person who wants to help but just aren't good at it, I hope this piece of writing helps you step up your game a bit and be more of a help than a burden.

1. EXCUSES

You know you're downright inefficient if you keep making excuses about not helping the person out properly because of 'this or that', even after you've explicitly told them you would help. A good rule of thumb is to either flat-out say you can't help if you know you're going to make excuses, or pull your socks up and stop messing around.

2. PRETENDING

This is the absolute worst thing you could do apart from actively trying to sabotage them, but *pretending* you can help is honestly worse than making excuses for yourself and frankly, it's basically indirectly sabotaging them. You keep giving them



the impression that they can rely on you, until they finally figure out that they definitely shouldn't rely on you. Waste your own time if you will, but not theirs.

3. LAZING AROUND

For their sake, don't wing it. It's incredibly annoying if, say, you told someone you're going to explain a certain topic of maths

that they're having trouble with, then proceed to not really reviewing that chapter well enough yourself. In the time frame that you kept clumsily stumbling around, they could have just gone to someone else and gotten the job done properly.

4. ULTERIOR MOTIVES

If you have ulterior motives about helping

someone, then say it, no matter how bad it might make you look. There's no shame in the whole 'give and take' idea because you can't always give something the whole time. It's incredibly irritating if you help them out, not telling them you want something in return and keep poking and prodding afterwards.

5. MISCELLANEOUS POINTS

Don't postpone helping them out, especially if they're short on time. Don't ask 'what do you mean' when they say ASAP, because they mean 'ASAP'.

Follow instructions to boot. Write them down if you think you can't remember, and definitely don't do the usual 'Naw, it's good, I'll remember it' if you have a history of forgetting. If you're planning on straying from instructions, you should definitely tell them.

If you're confused about something and you've got questions, no matter how dumb it seems to you, ask. It's better if they get irritated at you for asking dumb questions rather than screwing up your job.

And finally, if you don't want to help, just say so from the start. Don't beat around the bush. Start trimming it. You'll do both you and the other person a favour.

Rasheed Khan is a hug monster making good music but terrible puns and jokes where he's probably the only one laughing. Ask him how to pronounce his name at aarcvard@gmail.com

The procrastinator's guide to writing a term paper

AATEEYA SAABEEN

I'm sure if I had to pick between finishing my due assignments after having eight hours of sleep and going to class with bloodshot eyes with a coffee in my hand after pulling off an all-nighter, hands down I will go for the second one. There's something about the frenzied deadline-induced panic that improves my ability to take on pressure, or at least that's the excuse I give myself for not doing my work on time. Being the procrastinator that I am, I'd probably procrastinate if I had to write an essay on procrastination and wait until the last hour. These are some of the guidelines that I follow that I think might help people who are almost as good at procrastinating like me:

Promise yourself to not procrastinate this time and wait until the deadline: I know we've all been there, but promising yourself this is the most crucial part. I've always wondered if it's just me who had "no procrastination" in her constant new year's resolution list that never got achieved, or does that happen to everyone at some point? Tell it to yourself once more and then wait till the deadline approaches. At first, the four-week deadline seems more than enough to write term papers for all the courses, but being the lazy person you are, procrastinate till there are 24 hours left. Wait till it dawns on you that 20% of your grade depends on this.



Dig out outlines: Now you have less than 24 hours and you know you're going to waste 3/4th of it away by thinking about why these things happen to you instead of actually getting to work but start with reading the instruction handout.

Binge watch a series (NOT): Now that

you know how to write the paper, the first thing you'd want to do is to reward yourself. Although this might seem like the most alluring thing to do, re-watching that episode of The Office for the fifth time is not going to help you when

you're failing the course.

Research: Get down to business and collect information from all the sources you can manage, be it google or paraphrasing another term paper. Use terms like "dynamic team synergy" to reach word limit and to make it sound like you've put a lot of thoughts and time in it. Cut ties with friends who refuse to send pictures of their assignments that they finished a week ago. They don't deserve to be your friend anyway.

Recheck instructions: This is the step where you find out that you've overlooked a lot of steps the professor required and there's little time left for you to cover all of those, so you decide to go with just a few major points. This is also the step where you mistakenly don't save the only copy you used to write a 2000-word essay on, so beware!

After a generous of self-loathing, and a few episodes of The Office too, an eerie sense of calmness comes over you and you finish the assignment on time. But you swear to yourself to not procrastinate ever again, only to wait until the next term paper comes along and you realise you've did it once again.

Aateeya Saabeen, who scarily resembles a koala in looks and in sleeping patterns, likes to take day-long walks with her lobster. She believes her Hogwarts letter got lost in the mail because they misspelled her name. Leave her a message at www.facebook.com/aateeya.saabeen