

A time comes when every office worker looks around and says, "This is not how I planned it."



Your neighbouring colleague has been clearing his throat non-stop since November. Your inbox is full with memos "Effective Immediately." Your manager is already at your desk, but you can't hear him over the smell of his breath.

Your smart friends are already living the dream life: voluntary redundancy. They won't return to work until they are sick of Trisha.

When your careers advisor asked about your future, there was no talk of using the word "task" as a verb. Yet here you are in a climate-controlled, health-and-safety-compliant cubicle, having been given 25 years-to-life for not being rich. So it goes.

Fortunately, there are things you can do to ease the pain. Please find here an itemised list; effective immediately...

- Wherever you go, walk fast and carry a document. No one ever questions the speed walker. You could be delivering Valentine's cards and still get a pay rise...

"That Jonathan is so diligent. How much are we paying him?"

- Record your sick-day excuses to avoid this sort of muddle...

YOU: "I won't be in this week because my brother, sadly, has passed away."

BOSS'S PA: "Your brother died last year. On 7th June."

Awkward silence.

YOU: "Oh. Then I've just got the flu."

SO IT GOES

BY JASON LOVE

- Establish early on that you married into a Jewish family and will be observing extra holidays, which you would specify if you could only pronounce them.
- Spend at least one holiday day at your desk to let others know that you can't help them. Bring a trashy novel and a coconut drink; this is your day.
- You know that Alt + Tab switches program screens. Exercise your Alt-Tab fingers regularly so that you're quick on the draw should someone walk in and find you watching YouTube. Alt-tab, alt-tab, alt-tab. Practice makes perfect.
- When you are ready to resign - and it shouldn't be long - give three weeks notice. This allows extra time for surfing the Internet and talking about life on The Outside.

Studies have shown that personality loss comes from long-term exposure to fluorescent lighting. Well, that and holding your wind in. Your only defence is to get a little eccentric...

Seven Ways to Salvage Your Personality from Fluorescent Lighting

7. Wear a sign that reads, "Out of Service. IT called."
6. On Dress Down Friday, bring your teddy.
5. Whenever someone hands you work, ask if they want fries with that.
4. Slip and fall. File a lawsuit. Watch Trisha.
3. Every time the aforementioned co-worker clears his throat, clear yours twice.
2. When management asks you to assume a new role, tell them that you never assume.
1. Put a bit of clear tape over the mouthpiece of everyone's phone.

Meanwhile, back in the 'boredroom', managers are "connecting" over biscuits and great questions.

"That's a great question. Let's schedule a meeting to discuss our meeting schedule."

Management can spend weeks deciding a temperature for the thermostat. We call them chairpersons for good reason:

They're always sitting around. Imagine how much work they could get done if they weren't always talking about how much work they could get done. All I'm saying is that the next time someone uses "task" as a verb, that should be grounds for a workers' compensation lawsuit.