

Staffing Issues

Even though Rob had only been with the bank a few months, he quickly noticed what each of his new colleagues were continually talking about when it came to Nathan. Nathan was one of the more senior analysts on the investment banking team and had been at the firm since graduating from a prestigious Ivy league university. He frequently went to lunch with his direct superiors and could usually be found in their offices informally throughout the day.

While Nathan was adept at navigating the social maze with his superiors at the firm, over the last two years he had lost the respect of his analyst peers. The primary reason for this was Nathans strong aversion to being staffed through the standard staffing process and uncanny ability to always be too busy for additional projects. Over the last year, Nathan was the only analyst on the team that hadn't been on the receiving end of a nightmare staffing on a Friday night that ruined an entire weekend.

The staffing process was unscientific, and could be unfair at times, but in general the process allowed everyone an equitable share of the great and not so great projects the group's senior members were working on. The head of staffing, a vice president at the firm, would ask everyone via email their level of availability. Each analyst would respond back to these emails with an accurate description of their current projects and any older projects that might come back up. Nathan had come to believe, unlike the other analysts, that questions regarding his availability should include anything he had on tap for the weekend outside of the office.

Rob had only been at the firm for a few months when Nathan's staffing aversion was on the verge of effecting him directly. At 6pm, only a few hours before Rob was scheduled to board a plane to Florida for his friends wedding, a call came from the head of staffing for a high priority, time sensitive project that would require a full weekend to complete the first few steps of the assignment. As Rob looked around the desks, most of the other analysts had already been placed on new projects or were working diligently on existing projects. Out of the corner of his eye he saw Nathan surfing the web and beginning to pack up his things to head to the Hamptons for weekend, his fourth trip there in as many weeks. He knew that the staffing decision was going to go the way it always did and would likely require him to miss the wedding. While Rob knew he was "unofficially" more junior than Nathan, they held the same job title and he knew it was unfair the way he was continually dodging the worst assignments the bank had to offer. As Rob watched the clock on his computer slowly tick, he couldn't help but wonder whether he should head straight to head of staffings office and try to head off the impending project and explain the situation with Nathan. While he worried that he might not receive a favorable response, he knew this was not a sustainable way for the analyst team to continue to function.