

Why I rue the day I invited an old mate for a brief stay over

Mozee would come in late and proceed to vigorously engage in bedtime activities with a female companion

I am a very cranky person when I have not had enough sleep. Last night, just like the other three nights before, I got only four hours of sleep. This situation is making me very annoyed and miserable.

The gallons of coffee I am consuming this morning are not having any effect at all. As if this is not bad enough, I am expected to sit in the disciplinary session to discuss the errant ways of some of my staff.

According to my security manager, there is a theft syndicate being run using company resources. The man was dying to send the report to head office, but I told him to wait till I investigate into what is really happening.

Ordinarily, I relish these sessions but something unexpected happened to me early in the week. On Tuesday, I got a call from a former college mate who was in town for some work at the port. He told me that he would like for us to hang out and catch up. In all honesty, Moses (or Mozee) as we called him in college, was not my very "tight" buddy

MAN-ABOUT-TOWN

OFFICE DANDY

in college. However, I have learnt that people can become your tight buddies depending on your station in life.

So, there I was hanging out and treating Mozee as if we were joined at the hip. On the first day, Mozee and I met at his hotel where we proceeded to

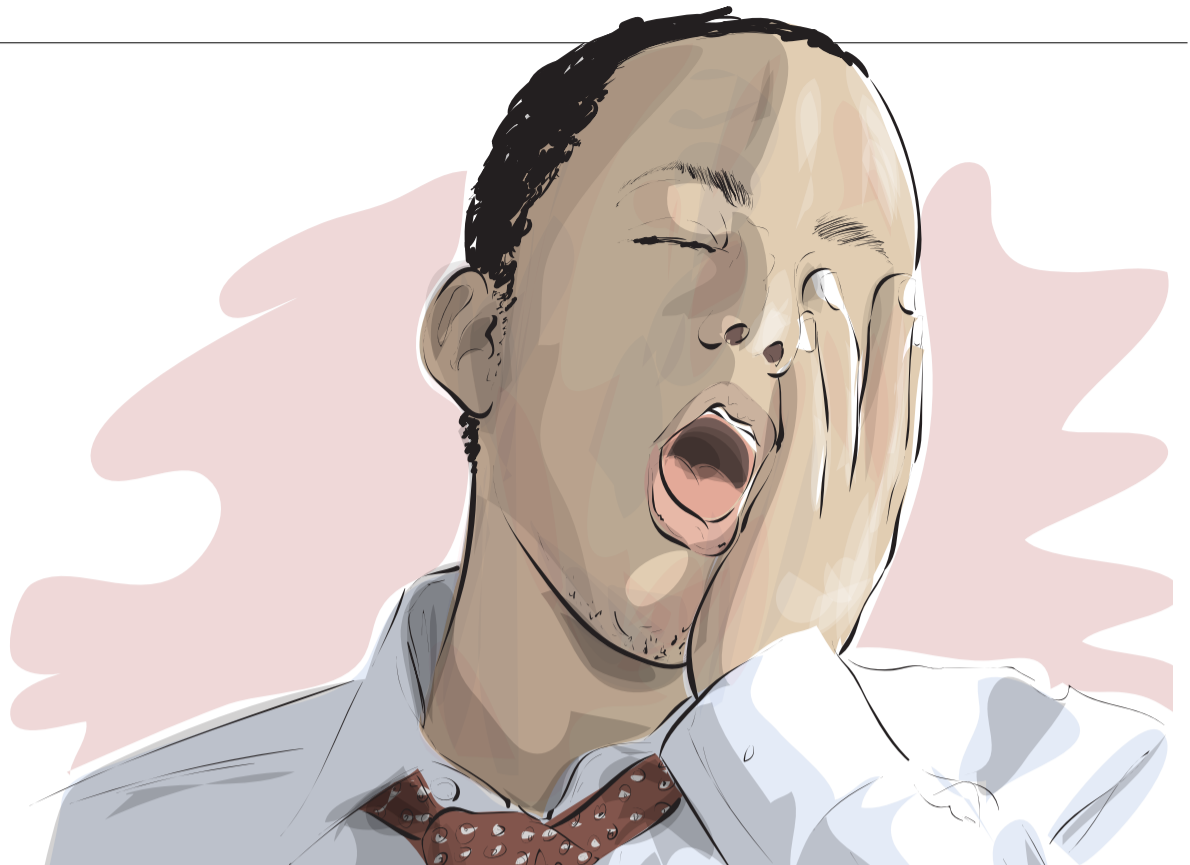
cause serious damage to his company credit card.

He told me that his multinational employer did not breathe down their necks over what drinks they consumed — since one can justify the spend as company entertainment.

Therefore, the second day found me once again with Mozee and while drinking, I casually mentioned that he should consider coming to live with me instead of spending his time at the hotel.

All I needed to do was tell my cleaning lady to prepare sumptuous meals every day and Mozee and I would just warm it and eat. I was determined to

How I wish I could sleep instead of dealing with petty thieves — I cannot wait for Mozee to leave



When Lydia returned from the "ladies room" She had changed into a long dress that concealed everything, save for her lovely face.

show him that I also had made serious progress since I left college. Mozee jumped on the offer and after we had had quite a number of drinks, he took his belongings and moved in.

I refused to venture out

On the third night, I refused to venture out since I had a lot of stuff I needed to catch up with. The end of year is nigh so I am being asked to send all forms of end-year reports back to head office. By the time I went to sleep, at 11pm, Mozee had not shown up.

This did not unduly worry me since I have given him a spare key into my house. With the benefit of hindsight, inviting Mozee to put up with me was not a wise move as he was clearly a man with a different agenda.

For the days he stayed in my house, he would show up in the wee hours of the morning. Instead of going straight to bed, Mozee would proceed to vigorously and loudly engage in bedtime activities with a female companion.

This would mess up my sleep since the walls of my house are so thin that one can hear a mosquito breathe in the next room. Every morning, when I woke up, Mozee and his companion would be sound asleep and I would be left to suffer from a sleep deficit.

Today is such a day. I rue the day I invited Mozee to stay with me. I have a lot of stuff to read before the disciplinary session so that I can be up to date with matters. It appears that there has been a lot of theft going on behind my back. The recent arrest of the mes-

senger and the sounds of protestation from my PA were really part of a huge cover-up of things going wrong.

The security manager launched an investigation that has unleashed a can of worms. It would appear that most of my employees have been stealing one thing or another from the business.

If I weren't the boss I would have found the thefts funny. According to the security report, people have been stealing paperclips, files and even bin bags.

Frankly, I cannot understand this wayward behaviour. I must deal with the issue firmly, for it may start to reflect badly on my performance. How I wish I could sleep instead of dealing with petty thieves. I cannot wait for Mozee to leave.

Passat franchise owners should strategise on positioning brand



RICKY'S MYTHS
RICHARD GITONGA



The Volkswagen (VW) Beetle was apparently the longest running and most produced automobile of a single design. Throughout the 60s and the early 70s, the car's popularity soared and in 1971, the annual production peaked at 1.7 million units. Some say the VW Beetle was popular because it had a childlike countenance and those who owned one felt that it was a projection of their personality.

It is said that cars project personality because they look like human faces when viewed head on. In the same breadth, the personality of a car is further augmented by its colour. Presumably, a car with a lime green or orange colour projects a sunny countenance

while one with a blue or black colour projects seriousness and officialdom. Sports cars such as such Porsches and Formula Ones' tend to ooze testosterone. It is no wonder that Formula One fans, who are predominantly male, will wake up at odd times of the night to watch cars speeding around race tracks endless times. Apparently the experience drums up their adrenaline to a significant high.

The debate over the last couple of weeks over which cars our colleagues in Parliament should be driving has taken an interesting twist with people focusing more on the engine capacity rather than the personalities of the vehicles.

The reality of the matter is that those MPs who have refused to return the

so called gas guzzlers probably see the vehicles as an extension of their own personalities. In this regard, obliging the MPs to change their cars is like requesting them to change into different clothing, which in their view may be either ill fitting, or inconsistent with their personality.

As far as they are concerned, being driven around in a Mercedes-Benz or in a three thousand litre 4X4 is a projection to their constituents and side-kicks that they "have arrived". It obviously does not bother their conscience that the vehicles they are chauffeured around

in are all paid up and maintained by tax payer money. As far as the average tax payer is concerned, there is scant difference between a Mercedes Benz and VW Passat.

It's analogous to trading down your drink preference from a Jameson to a Famous Grouse. It may hurt a bit but

your still pretty much hanging around the same category.

A friend once quipped that if you want to be with the lions, you had better be wearing a mane. Woe unto you if you show up in antlers. If you are considering purchasing yourself a Range Rover Sports, prudence indicates that you are most unlikely to be on a salary and working for someone else but most probably have a healthy personal balance sheet with plenty of passive income flowing in.

The MPs, some of whom have a sense of entitlement, definitely feel that giving up their official guzzlers is like shaving off their manes and giving them antlers in re-

placement. It is not quite clear whether the VW Passat has established a personality in this country but the franchise owners need to think strategically how they are positioning their brand in the longer term. Chances are that not too many aspiring Kenyans will be willing to pur-

chase a vehicle brand that has been officially endorsed as the car of choice for Government big wigs. The element of association and personality profiling may be too much to take in, bearing in mind that most private citizens driving such vehicles are independent types and pride themselves in acquiring assets (or liabilities for that matter) that distinguish them from the crowd.

Ultimately, the individuals who will enjoy the outcome of this shopping spree are the drivers. They are the ones who will enjoy the power and the comfort of the new models as they chauffeur their bosses around strapped tightly to their back seats.

As their bosses get used to the comforts of the new ride and continue to entrench their sense of entitlement, it is hoped that they are able to acquire, maintain, and sustain the same kind of assets when they are forced into retirement.

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For the average tax payer, there is scant difference between a Mercedes Benz and VW Passat