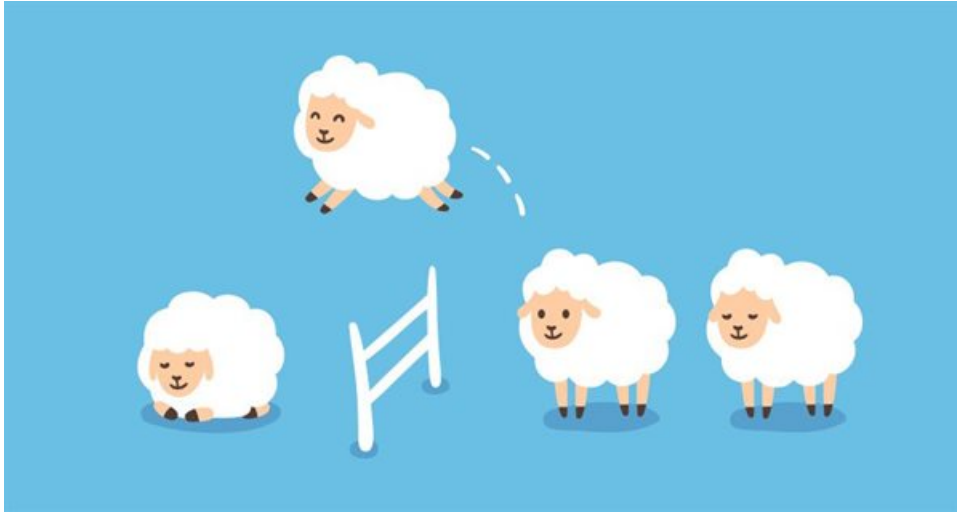


# Sleep: your secret survival weapon

By [Abdul Sykes](#), issued by [Dentsu](#)

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*In a letter to his younger self, Abdul Sykes, Associate Creative Director at [DAN Tanzania](#), offers his five top tips for surviving (and thriving) in the advertising world.*



Let me start by saying, Younger Me, “Wait! Calm down!”

I know this is a letter from the future but I’m not writing to warn you about some big decision you’re about to make that will set the future (my present) down some cataclysmic course that will bring it to an unforeseen (and untimely) end.

Quite the opposite. Instead, Younger Me, I just wanted to give you some advice that’ll get you to now a little more easily.

## Learn at every turn

Learn from your co-workers, your neighbours, your friends, even your pets. Learn from anecdotes, jokes and scientific research. Learn from the past, what’s happening now, and what the future is starting to look like. Learn from music, movies, nature and culture. Gather insights and find inspiration for the work – it’ll truly set you apart. It will also allow you to work with global giants like Vodacom, Pepsi and Smirnoff to bring fresh and exciting perspectives to their brands in your totally unique market.

## You don’t need to be a writer to tell a story

Every brand has a story and you can tell it in just as many ways as people will want to interact with your brands. Tell a story with words, with pictures, with sounds, with colours, with emotion. There’s a world of stories out there and you’re about to have a blast telling every one. You’re going to be working with telecoms, banks, soft-drink brands, alcoholic beverage brands and vehicle brands (all at the same time). Each brand will have a story you must tell, and it’ll be up to you to discover the best way to do so.

## There isn’t enough time in the world for you to be a master of everything

Instead, get into the habit of surrounding yourself with true masters of their craft and recruiting them to help bring your ideas to life. You might have a great idea, but it’ll mean nothing unless you have the right production experts to execute it. Then, once you’ve got your remarkable piece of art, you’ll need the right people to get it on TV and adapt it to radio and

allow it to come to life in print and at activations. Then, sometime in the future, you'll discover that those stories will also have a place in the digital space (and that's where things get really interesting).

## Roll with the punches

There's no greater high than winning, but there's nothing more valuable than taking a loss. There are going to be times where you'll feel absolutely invincible in your work and that there couldn't be anything that could bring you down. But you will come down. Many times. That's where the magic will really come from.

## Sleep

A lot. You're going to dedicate a lot of your time and energy to the work that you love. Sleep will be something you'll sacrifice to get the job done and maybe that's why you'll get to where you're going. But if ever you find a moment and you have the chance, sleep.

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