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LARRY DAVID’S JOB SECURITY

When comedian Larry David joined the writing team of the weekly TV comedy program Saturday Night Live in 1984, he lamented it was the first time in his life that he couldn’t make a friend. No one seemed to notice him or even wanted to go have coffee with him. Even worse, very few of Larry’s sketches were used. The volatile performer, who sometimes screamed at unresponsive audiences during his stand-up routine, finally reached a breaking point. One Saturday night right before show time, Larry told producer Dick Ebersol that SNL stunk and he quit! But when David got home, he realized that he would miss his fifty-thousand-dollar-a-year salary. On Monday morning, Larry returned to work pretending nothing had happened. The incident later inspired David to create a similar episode for his alter ego, George Costanza, on the hit TV show Seinfeld.

Extra: When forty-three-year-old Larry David co-created the Seinfeld TV show (1990-1998), the comedian stated that he was a nice guy, but if he did all the rotten things he’d really like to do, he would be George Costanza. Thirty-one-year-old Jason Alexander who played the neurotic, selfish and self-loathing George on the small screen, sometimes questioned the credulity of David’s writing. Like the time George bought a cashmere sweater for a female friend as a thank-you gift and then she accidentally found out it was a hand-me-down. Or what about when Costanza quit his real estate job because he was forbidden to use his boss’s private bathroom? What happened to George could not possibly take place in real life. And even if it did, no one would react like he did. David told Alexander that the wild things in the Seinfeld scripts really did happen to him and that George’s reactions to them were exactly like Larry’s.