Another version of the idiom is “量力而行” (liang4 li4 er2 xing2). The opposite of “量力而為” (liang4 li4 er2 wei4) is “不自量力” (bu2 zi4 liang4 li4), literally “not self-estimate strength,” meaning “to go beyond one’s depth,” “to overestimate one’s capability.”

The English expression to “bite off more than one can chew” also means “不自量力” (bu2 zi4 liang4 li4). Figuratively it means to take on more than one can deal with, overconfident. “Out of one’s depth” means taking up a task that is beyond one’s competence. If you get into water deeper than what your aquatic (水上的) skills can handle, you drown!

Terms containing the character “力” (li4) include:

- 力量 (li4 liang) – force, power, might
- 马力 (ma3 li4) – horsepower
- 人力车 (ren2 li4 che1) – a rickshaw
- 無力 (wu2 li4) – to lack strength, to feel weak