

**BRAND QUALITY**  
**A PRESENTATION AT THE 29<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL ACCED-I CONFERENCE**  
By Matt Orlins, Director of Hospitality Services  
University of Redlands  
March 22, 2009

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**THE BRAND QUALITY ROLLER COASTER**

*How to achieve consistent, sustainable performance  
of your institution's Brand Quality standards.*

**Brand Quality – A Definition**

1. The image your institution projects to students, faculty, staff, administration, alumni, your local community and the national and international community.

**Brand Quality – The Role of Conference and Events Directors**

1. To present your department and institution as professionals at all times

**Brand Quality – The Challenges**

1. Constant turn-over of student workers
2. Lack of time for strategic planning and training
3. Lack of time for financial and operational analyses
4. Competing priorities and missions from various user groups

**Brand Quality – The Roller Coaster of Outstanding Performance to Poor and Back Sgain**

1. Correct the symptom not the root cause.
2. Root causes don't scream and shout.
3. Another day, another training class.
4. Incomplete transfer of knowledge and lessons learned.
5. Being proactive and vigilant takes energy.
6. The airplane won't fly.

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**CHALLENGE #1:**

**CORRECT THE SYMPTOM NOT THE ROOT CAUSE**  
**OR**  
**“SAME CIRCUS, DIFFERENT ANIMALS”**

	<b>The Boss</b>	<b>The Employee (George)</b>
<b>Greet and Smile</b>	Smile George	George smiles
<b>Own the Problem</b>	Pick up the dirty dishes, George	George picks up the dirty dishes
<b>Look the Part</b>	Tuck in your shirt, George	George tucks in his shirt
<b>Deliver the WOW</b>	George, it is pouring rain outside. Take the electric cart and an umbrella. Meet the Commencement key note speaker at her car and escort her to the Greek Theater.	George meets the speaker, keeps her from getting wet, so she arrives dry and fresh to deliver the graduation speech.

**What is wrong with the GOLD?**

- a. The Boss is a mean gorilla who never gives George a moment of peace and quiet.
- b. The Boss truly believes George is a monkey with no ability to think for himself.
- c. George’s life is simpler with less hassle because he lets the Boss do all the thinking.
- d. George is afraid of his boss.
- e. All of the above.
- f. Some of the above.
- g. None of the above.

**Exercise:** List one real life example of George and the Boss.

**Solution:** Empower and reward your employees through training and accountability for their actions.

**Lesson Learned:** As long as George is kept in his cage and never allowed to evolve into a self-sufficient, independent, intelligent human being, George will continue to make the same mistakes. The boss will continue to correct the symptoms. The Boss and George will never become a team that identifies root causes. The Roller Coaster will continue.

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**CHALLENGE #2:**

**ROOT CAUSES DON'T SCREAM AND SHOUT**  
**OR**  
**“THE MAÑANA SYNDROME – DON’T DO TODAY**  
**WHAT YOU CAN PUT OFF UNTIL TOMORROW”**

**The Boss’ Things To Do Today List or A Day in the Life of the Boss**

7:30 am	Enter office. Hang up coat. Open the blinds.
7:35 am	Log on to the office computer.
7:40 am	Retrieve voice mail, if any, make notes about the messages
7:45 am	Logon to Microsoft Outlook. Read emails. Respond immediately to the easy answer, 1 liner type. File, delete or keep active the remainder that will take more time for a response.
8:00 am	Morning hand over reports – read, print out action items, file electronically.
8:15 am	Review and finish the notes for the morning team meeting.
8:30 am	Morning team meeting
9:00 am	Inspect storage rooms
10:00 am	Send email to Facilities coordinator with inspection results
10:20 am	Bathroom break
10:30 am	Work on the financial report due to the Assistant Dean tomorrow.
11:00 am	One on One weekly meeting with Manager A.
11:30 am	One on One weekly meeting with Manager B.
Noon	Lunch Break
12:30 pm	Work on emails and other paperwork.
1:30 pm	International Siesta Time
3:30 pm	Shower, clean-up, switch to business suit.
4:00 pm	Return to office, more voicemails, emails and paperwork.
5:00 pm	President’s Reception – check to make sure everything is going smoothly
6:00 pm	Dinner in the dining hall
7:00 pm	Brief walk around campus to check on other events
7:30 pm	Check on President’s Reception
8:30 pm	Paperwork, emails
9:30 pm	Meet with night duty supervisor
10:00 pm	Turn off computer. Go home.

**Exercise:** List everything you did between 8:00 am and 9:00 am this morning.

**Solution:** Root Cause Analysis

- a. Must be scheduled into your daily activities list.
- b. Involves input from your team and others.
- c. Is a form of strategic planning.

**Lesson Learned:** Don’t ignore or forget root cause analysis. Failure to be ever vigilant for root-cause analysis could literally kill you or a co-worker.

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**CHALLENGE #3:**  
**ANOTHER DAY, ANOTHER TRAINING CLASS**  
**OR**  
**“I’M LATE, I’M LATE FOR A VERY IMPORTANT DATE”**  
 -- THE WHITE RABBIT IN ALICE IN WONDERLAND --

**Formal Training**

“There is never enough time for training of employees, supervisors and managers. I never have any quiet time to reflect, think about and incorporate what we were taught in Developing Leaders class.” – The Boss to a Co-worker

**Informal Training – The “Take 5 Principle”**

- a. 5 minutes of one-on-one training of your employee on a specific issue is more effective than the employee attending a one hour group training class.
- b. Train 5 employees, 5 minutes a day. If you do this daily, at the end of the month you will have had 150 personalized one-on-one training sessions that only used 30 minutes of your time daily.
- c. Develop a personalized training schedule that lists the topics to be covered and who needs to learn or relearn the topic.

**Example:** Week 1 Topic: How to correctly transport tables and chairs.

	Employee #1	Employee #2	Employee #3	Employee #4	Employee #5
Sunday					
Monday					
Tuesday					
Wednesday					
Thursday					
Friday					
Saturday					

Week 2 Topic: Setting up the room based on the work flow diagram

Week 3 Topic: Cleaning products and their proper usage

Week 4 Topic: The Devil is in the details –First impressions. Are the linens, silverware, glasses, centerpieces set properly to create a positive and welcoming ambiance. Is the food ready ?

**\*\* Important Tool** – Save the training schedule. It is useful during performance appraisals and handovers to measure the progress of individuals and the group.

**Exercise:** Create your own Week 1 Topic and training schedule.

**Solution:** Training occurs every day

- a. Must be scheduled into your daily activities list.
- b. Should be employee and position specific.

**Lesson Learned:** Personalized, one-on-one training is more effective and produces greater, long-term results than group classroom instruction. Group instruction should be reserved for teaching principles and theories – not the details of everyday work.

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**CHALLENGE #4:**  
**INCOMPLETE TRANSFER OF KNOWLEDGE AND LESSONS LEARNED**  
**OR**  
**“THE HANDOVER NOTES DID NOT TELL ME ABOUT THIS”**

*“Incomplete handovers are the single, most important factor in determining the speed, direction and duration of the Brand Quality Roller Coaster” – A very wise manager*

**Handover Notes – The Requirements**

- a. Shift supervisor sends an email to the other supervisors and the boss at the end of their shift.
- b. List the names of all students who worked the shift, the names of the no-shows and any personnel issues.
- c. List all tasks completed by the team during the shift.
- d. List any tasks not completed and why they were not completed.
- e. List any repair or missing items issues.
- f. List tasks to be accomplished on the next shift.

**The Handover Cycle to Success and Profitability**

- a. The boss electronically files all the email handover sheets under the supervisor’s name.
- b. The boss takes action on any items needing the boss’s attention or intervention.
- c. The boss keeps an on-going list of all action items and their status.
- d. The action item list is distributed to the entire team –including the students.

**The Impact of the Handover**

- a. The time spent on handovers is repaid multiple times over through increased revenues, increased ratings and increased guest and employee satisfaction.
- b. Constant communication between all levels in the organization is critical to the success of the operation and to the image your clients have of you and your institution.
- c. Example: Supervisor A can not complete a nighttime set up for an early morning meeting. The hand held microphone needs new batteries. Supervisor A neglects to include this information in the handover email. Supervisor B comes in the next morning and is unaware of the need for batteries and begins working on other tasks. Supervisor B receives an urgent and angry call from the President’s secretary about the microphone. The President is unhappy that once again your department has let him down and has once again presented an impression to the business leaders in the community that the President and his staff are incompetent and do not pay attention to details.

**Exercise:** When was the last time you had a comprehensive handover? Did it make a difference?

**Solution:** Successful handovers require detailed handover notes a daily activity.

**Lesson Learned:** Detailed handover notes are critical to your organization’s success and consistent Brand Quality.

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**CHALLENGE #5:**  
**BEING PRO-ACTIVE AND VIGILANT TAKES ENERGY**  
**OR**  
**“AN APPLE A DAY KEEPS THE BRAND QUALITY DIRECTOR AWAY”**

**Being a Manager or Supervisor requires huge amounts of energy – physical and mental.**

If at the end of the day you recounted every task you did that day you would:

- a. Have a heart attack and go home on medical disability.
- b. Become so demoralized you would go to the bar, get drunk and be fired at tomorrow morning's meeting with your boss.
- c. Take an after dinner walk around your neighborhood, enjoy the fresh, warm breeze, the beautiful sunset, the salt air and look forward to another day.

Your daily activities list must include personal time for you to recharge your batteries.

Examples:

- a. Take a walk
- b. Read a book
- c. Listen to music
- d. Work out in the gym
- e. Watch a movie
- f. Play a round of golf
- g. Work a couple of hours as a volunteer

**The “Baby Steps Principle of Management”**

- a. Set your goal for today to accomplish one small task. The task should be easily attainable. When you complete the task highlight it on your “To Do List”.
- b. Repeat this exercise tomorrow and every day thereafter.
- c. At the end of the month, look at all your daily “To Do Lists”. Take a few minutes to reflect on all the things you have accomplished.

**Exercise:** List two things you do to help you relax and recharge your batteries.

**Solution:** If every Manager and Supervisor followed the “Baby Steps Principle” and scheduled time to recharge their batteries, then your department would be in the Brand Quality Green.

**Lesson Learned:** You can't move a mountain in a day. You can move a mountain, one bucket of dirt at a time. It takes energy to move mountains.

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**CHALLENGE #6:**  
**THE AIRPLANE WON'T FLY**  
**OR**  
**“YOU CAN'T SEE THE FOREST FOR THE TREES”**

**From Micro Bak to Toilets and Back Again**

An employee should be focused on the details of a specific task. For example: Facilities Cleaner A is spraying Micro Bak on the handrails in the Student Union at 10:00 am.

A supervisor should be focused on the details of a series of tasks. For example: What every facilities cleaner is doing in the Student Union at 10:00 am.

A manager should be focused on the overall operation of the group. For example: What are all the facilities cleaners doing campus-wide at 10:00 am.

A senior Manager should be focused on the overall operation of a number of groups. For example: This morning the entire Facilities team is working on the following projects: sanitizing the Student Union with Micro Bak; repairing fire screen doors, unclogging plumbing lines and repairing the tiles in the athletic showers.

**What Elevation are you flying your airplane?**

100,000 feet	President / Chancellor of the University
75,000 feet	Vice President / Dean
50,000 feet	Director
25,000 feet	Manager
5,000 feet	Supervisor
Sea Level	Front Line Employee

An effective manager flies at a constant speed and altitude. On occasion, the manager must land the plane and refuel (resolve a specific issue) and then take off again.

**Exercise:** List one example of when you were not flying the plane and were on the ground.

**Solution:** An effective manager or supervisor concentrates solely on the issues important at his level of flight. If you are constantly landing, you are not being effective and need to train and develop your team.

**Lesson Learned:** Can you see the forest or only the trees?

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**Root Causes of the Roller Coaster**

1. Correct the symptom not the root cause.
2. Root causes don't scream and shout.
3. Another day, another training class.
4. Incomplete transfer of knowledge and lessons learned.
5. Being pro-active and vigilant takes energy.
6. The airplane won't fly.

**Solutions**

1. Empower and reward your employees through training and accountability for their actions.
2. Root cause analysis must be scheduled into your daily activities list.
3. Training must be scheduled into your daily activities list.
4. Successful handovers require detailed handover notes on a daily basis.
5. One Baby Step daily.
6. Fly daily at a constant speed and altitude.

**Lessons Learned**

1. As long as George is kept in his cage and never allowed to evolve into a self-sufficient, independent, intelligent human being, George will continue to make the same mistakes. The boss will continue to correct the symptoms. The Boss and George will never become a team that identifies root causes. The Roller Coaster will continue.
2. Don't ignore or forget root cause analysis. Failure to be ever vigilant for root-cause analysis could literally kill you or a co-worker.
3. Personalized, one-on-one training is more effective and produces greater, long-term results than group classroom instruction. Group instruction should be reserved for teaching principles and theories – not the details of everyday work.
4. Detailed handover notes in combination with an in-person 72 hour handover are critical to your organization's success and consistent Brand Quality.
5. You can't move a mountain in a day. You can move a mountain, one bucket of dirt at a time. It takes energy to move mountains.
6. Can you see the forest or only the trees?