



# progressing business

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# progressing business

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the official ezine of the Australian Organisation for Quality (Queensland) Inc (AOQ-QLD®)  
 ABN 53 322 327 143 is published 6 times per year.



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**Publishing**  
 Progressing Business Institute  
 PO Box 15205, CITY EAST, QLD 4002, AUSTRALIA

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# Management standard and organisational culture

Dr Dvir Peleg, Director at the Israeli Society for Quality

# SUCCESS



## INTRODUCTION TO MANAGEMENT STANDARDS

*“The quality management system approach encourages organizations to analyze customer requirements, define the processes that contribute to the achievement of a product which is acceptable to the customer, and keep these processes under control. A quality management system can provide the framework for continual improvement to increase the probability of enhancing customer satisfaction and the satisfaction of other interested parties. It provides confidence to the organisation and its customers that it is able to provide products that consistently fulfill requirements.”*  
([www.iso.org/iso/iso\\_catalogue](http://www.iso.org/iso/iso_catalogue))

Management standards are documented agreements, codes and principles containing structured components or other precise criteria to be used consistently as rules, guidelines, or definitions of characteristics, to ensure that managerial procedures, processes and services are effective. *(World trade embraces many opportunities and risks. In order to maximise the opportunities and reduce the risks, the industrialised nations, which are involved in the organisation of world trade, signed trade agreements. At the end of the previous millennium these agreements were based on mutual trust, considering that the quality of the products from these countries was unified in the various reasonable limitations.)*

The management standards have been developed to assist organisations of all types and sizes, to implement and operate effective quality/ safety/ environmental/ security or any other management systems.

## COMMON ELEMENTS OF ISO MSSS

The management standard is growing fast. Each organisational sub-system becomes a system, for example training was part of HR in the classical organisation structure, but since it strongly affects the quality, it was justified to develop special management standard such as the ISO 10015 - *Quality management - Guidelines for training*. Another example is ISO 10014 - *Quality management — Guidelines for realising financial and economic benefits*. Traditionally it belongs

Main subjects that are common to all MSSs	Common elements	Typical issues to be covered
<b>B.1 Policy</b>	<b>B.1.1</b> <i>Policy and principles</i>	<b>B.1.1</b> Policy to demonstrate an organisation's commitment to meeting the requirements related to the management system standard and to establish an overall sense of direction and principles for action. The policy should provide a framework for setting objectives and targets.
<b>B.2 Planning</b>	<b>B.2.1</b> <i>Identification of needs, requirements and analysis of critical issues</i>	<b>B.2.1</b> Identification of the issues which have to be controlled and/or improved in order to satisfy the relevant interested party(ies). The term "requirements" includes legal requirements.
	<b>B.2.2</b> <i>Selection of significant issues to be addressed</i>	<b>B.2.2</b> Prioritisation of the issues identified as a result of B.2.1.
	<b>B.2.3</b> <i>Setting of objectives and targets</i>	<b>B.2.3</b> Identification of clear objectives and targets (including time frames) based on the output of B.2.2, an organisation's policy and the results of management review (B.6).
	<b>B.2.4</b> <i>Identification of resources</i>	<b>B.2.4</b> Identification of resources needed and the availability of adequate human, infrastructure and financial resources.
	<b>B.2.5</b> <i>Identification of organisational structure, roles, responsibilities and authorities</i>	<b>B.2.5</b> Identification of the roles, responsibilities, authorities and their interrelationships within the organisation as far as needed to ensure effective and efficient operations.
	<b>B.2.6</b> <i>Planning of operational processes</i>	<b>B.2.6</b> The planning arrangements for the operational processes that may include actions effecting how the objectives and targets defined in B.2.3 are achieved.
	<b>B.2.7</b> <i>Contingency preparedness for foreseeable events</i>	<b>B.2.7</b> The arrangements that need to be in place to manage foreseeable emergencies.

Main subjects that are common to all MSSs	Common elements	Typical issues to be covered
<b>B.3 Implementation and operation</b>	<b>B.3.1</b> <i>Operational control</i>	<b>B.3.1</b> The operational control measures needed to implement the plan(s) and maintain control of activities against defined targets.
	<b>B.3.2</b> <i>Management of human resources</i>	<b>B.3.2</b> The management of employees, contractors, temporary staff, etc. (including qualifications and activities such as awareness building and training).
	<b>B.3.3</b> <i>Management of other resources</i>	<b>B.3.3</b> The operational management and maintenance of infrastructure, plant, facilities, finance, etc. which have an impact on the organisation's performance.
	<b>B.3.4</b> <i>Documentation and its control</i>	<b>B.3.4</b> The management of those documents which are essential to the successful implementation and operation of the management system.
	<b>B.3.5</b> <i>Communication</i>	<b>B.3.5</b> The arrangements for communications both within the organisation and to/from external sources.
	<b>B.3.6</b> <i>Relationship with suppliers and contractors</i>	<b>B.3.6</b> The formalising of arrangements for those who supply and contract their services to the organisation which have an impact on the organisation's performance.
<b>B.4 Performance assessment</b>	<b>B.4.1</b> <i>Monitoring and measuring</i>	<b>B.4.1</b> The mechanisms by which the organisation assesses its performance on an ongoing basis.
	<b>B.4.2</b> <i>Analysing and handling nonconformities</i>	<b>B.4.2</b> The determination of nonconformities and the manner in which these are dealt with.
	<b>B.4.3</b> <i>System audits</i>	<b>B.4.3</b> The audit of the management system.

Main subjects that are common to all MSSs	Common elements	Typical issues to be covered
<b>B.5 Improvement</b>	<b>B.5.1</b> <i>Corrective action</i>	<b>B.5.1</b> The mechanism for eliminating the causes of detected nonconformities both in the management system and the operational processes.
	<b>B.5.2</b> <i>Preventive action</i>	<b>B.5.2</b> The mechanism for instigating action to eliminate potential causes of nonconformities in both the management system and the operational processes.
	<b>B.5.3</b> <i>Continual improvement</i>	<b>B.5.3</b> The provisions made for continual improvement of the management system.
<b>B.6 Management review</b>	<b>B.6.1</b> <i>Management review</i>	<b>B.6.1</b> Management review of the system to determine its current performance, to ensure its continuing suitability, adequacy and effectiveness, and to instruct improvements and new directions when found necessary.

**TABLE 1: COMMON ELEMENTS OF ISO MSSS (ISO GUIDE 72)**

to finance issues, but since it affects the quality/safety/ environmental management a guideline is required.

### HOW THE MANAGEMENT STANDARD AFFECTS THE ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE AND STRUCTURE

Organisational culture consistently is the key for organisational change:

*“The one common denominator that led to failure in all our previous quality efforts was that we did not change the culture of the environment in which all these tools and processes were being used”* (Malone, in Detert, Schroeder, & Mauriel 2000: 850).

To answer this question we examine every element of the six common elements.

### POLICY AND ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE

The organisation’s explicit and tacit/ declared and undeclared policy is part of knowledge management in an organisation. Information flow is managed according to the FIFO system: today’s explicit knowledge is tomorrow’s tacit knowledge – a declaration which turns into behaviour and activity. Today’s policy will also become tomorrow’s activity.

The scientist and philosopher Polanyi (1958) was the first to explicitly set the term “tacit knowledge”, claiming we know more than we can express. Personal knowledge was defined by him as a product of experiences, and insights of the individual which have some connection with the cultural system within which he works. This cultural frame (language, costumes, world view, religion, organisational culture, etc.) and the way the individual acts within it are the tacit background which enables the individual to learn from his different experiences and create his personal knowledge through social construction.

- Tacit knowledge is personal in essence
- It is created through practical experiences
- It is context specific
- Often the individual is unaware of the knowledge he possesses
- Even if known, it is hard to express verbally
- It is often discovered during interpersonal interaction

According to Polanyi’s definitions, the tacit knowledge is completely inexpressible in formal language, and therefore very hard to locate for research or practical use. Other studies have described a hierarchy of tacitness of knowledge:

- Deep knowledge (unexpressed by owners, can be expressed)
- Tacit knowledge that may be partially explained
- Tacit knowledge that may be explained
- Explicit knowledge

According to this description it is possible to examine at least two “layers” of tacit information which can be expressed.

The policy is the top management navigator, stakeholders, managers, workers, customers and the communities are all affected by policy. An example of this is the recent months-long social protest in Israel. One of the issues was the differential between workers’ salaries and top management salaries. The Nestle CEO declared that social responsibility is the goal for this year.

What is the effect of the new policy? What are the explicit actions?

- The stake holders have to take decisions about the salary and the steps to take.
- The top management must focus on the declaration, on appointing management representative and making a plan of action.
- The Human Resource has to guide all the workers and sub-contractors and to make social plans in the organisation such as how to deal with discrimination, workers’ rights, child labour and so on.
- The workers’ union has to negotiate changing the salary.
- The community (community contain workers, their children, families, friends and so on) must be ready for the changes.

What are the tacit actions?

The tacit actions are the messages that every player transmits, the way he acts, his body language, the time that he giving it and so on. (The CEO can make a declaration on one hand, and lower the workers’ salaries on the other.)

## PLANNING AND ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE

Planning is to get constrictive and systematic. The according ISO guide 72, planning should contain:

- Identification of the issues which have to be controlled and/or improved in order to satisfy the relevant interested party(ies). The term “requirements” includes legal requirements.
- Prioritisation of the issues identified as a result of B.2.1 (see table).
- Identification of clear objectives and targets (including time frames) based on the output of B.2.2 (see table), an organisation’s policy and the results of management review (B.6).
- Identification of resources needed and the availability of adequate human, infrastructure and financial resources.
- Identification of the roles, responsibilities, authorities and their interrelationships within the organisation as far as needed to ensure effective and efficient operations.
- The planning arrangements for the operational processes that may include actions effecting how the objectives and targets defined in B.2.3 are achieved.
- The arrangements that need to be in place to manage foreseeable emergencies.

As for culture, there are many definitions of organisational culture, all of them focus on the same points: collective experience, routine, beliefs, values, goals, and system. (Wong Gary & Fung, 2005). All the planning actions are part of the cultural elements and all of them affect the organisational people: the managers, the Human Resource unit and the workers.

## IMPLEMENTATION, OPERATION AND ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE

Significant transformation – change (implementation) (Posner, Strike, Hewson, & Gertzog, 1982).

There is conflict of values when implementing and operating a new management approach (standard). The source of it is the recognition that change is needed/ wanted. To succeed this mission it has to be significant to the management, workers, suppliers, and other interested parties.

The majority of those who deal with the change in

cultural values today seem to agree that when a person (manager or employee) introduces a new approach, it will be handled according to existing knowledge. This may result in the rejection or the adoption of the new approach. The central question that the researchers try to answer is, what are the conditions - factors that cause a person to change his existing concepts and create a new conceptual approach? In other words, what brings a person to abandon his “old” approach in favour of the adoption of a “new” one (such as approach that introduce by an organisations consultant)?

Posner et al (1982) argue that there are three existing factors affecting how the approach is evaluated:

- 1 Ratio of the approach that seems to be understandable.
- 2 Ratio of the approach that seems to be reasonably plausible.
- 3 Ratio of the approach that seems to be productive.

We describe and demonstrate each of these terms:

### 1 To understand – intelligibility

Everyone would begin to test a new approach (or a new concept) only if he felt he would be able to understand its literal description, at least at a level of understanding language (a kind of “reading comprehension”). First, a sense of understanding of the new expression and its use in sentences, will be created, only if the expression will waken any personal significance within the employee (whether if this meaning matches the accepted meaning of the enterprise, or not). If these minimum conditions will carried out - sentences that describe the new approach at first sight will look to the employee as claims that can be treated intelligently given by him, in other words, the employee feels that he has the chance to understand the new approach. Therefore, he would be willing to relate to it and continue to think about it.

If we compare Posner’s theory in order to implement the IMS approach successfully, we look at the ratio of the ‘understandability’ of the process by members of the managements: Are all the terms we use understandable to them? Do they understand the logic underlying the approach? Do they understand the process - whether it is meaningful for them?

On the other hand, if the employee feels that he cannot assign any meaning to the terms that describe the new approach, he will feel that he has no chance of understanding its significance and will tend to memorise in a mechanical manner (such as, preparation for the meeting), or ignore and not relate to it at all.

The cause of the “can understand” is a first and necessary condition of a comprehension adaptation event, but it is not sufficient. It must be attached to the following cause:

### 2 Acceptable - Probable – Plausibility

For an approach to “seem to understandable”, considered for adoption by the employee or manager lacks any need for him, at first, to believe in its truthfulness, but it must look seem “possible” in reality (in other words, the employee should say to himself, “it may be really so in reality”). An approach will seem “possible” if the description it provides, compatibility with basic assumptions, concepts, and factual arguments (of the same world of content) are already known to the employee. An employee will not consider the adoption of an approach that appears to him to contradict his knowledge, in other words not being accepted in his mind.

In charge of our safety, for example, is an educator and supporter of the environment. He understands the idea; knows how to read output reports and the language is understandable to him. But at another level, he knew the internal relations of the organisation and the relations of forces in the factory; the workers’ committee will see it as an insult to one of their friends. He therefore believes that it is not possible to change the approach since the committee will block it. He does not think it possible for one person to take care of so many areas, so it cannot work.

Posner et al. (1982), note that other factors may be helpful to the approach to be considered. They may maintain that the possibility will increase for the execution the approach if it will afford:

- 1 Comparison of ideas familiar from similar content.
- 2 Samples from different content, but recognised for him.
- 3 Communication of his general beliefs about the job.
- 4 Communication of the employee’s epistemological engagement.

### 3 Fertility - Fruitfulness

If a new approach seems at first sight as non acceptable / unreasonable, then the employee or the manager may well dismiss it. On the other hand, it may seem possible (plausible), yet there is no necessity that it be adopted (while relinquishing the existing approach). In this case, there is an important role in the third party that Posner et al. (1982) define as fruitfulness (what comes out of it for me). This factor may support a tendency to prefer a new (understandable and reasonable) approach to an existing approach (that is also understandable and reasonable) and to adopt it. In order for the approach to appear productive the employee or the manager must be impressed that the new approach can bring better results in:

- Improving methods of work.
- Inventions, new techniques and technologies
- Providing explanations and reasons regarding the organisation's activities
- Creating and initiating new "challenging" ideas
- Promoting the employee in the system

An example of this is the person in charge of safety who will be promoted with rank and salary increase; methods of work will be upgraded, purchase for the organisation computerised knowledge management system that he wanted for a while will be implemented and so on.

How to exceed the status of the old approach to this new approach?

- 1 Reconciliation must meet the criteria of understanding (in order for a person to have an initial approach to examine and consider an alternative, and understand the arguments of the new approach).
- 2 The new approach should be accepted and seem more reasonable than the existing approach.
- 3 The new approach should look more productive (better chance to get to results: less wasteful, personal results) than the old approach.

Consequently, the acceptance of the new approach will be a greater than the existing approach. In this case, the worker sees no reason to change and he continues to hold the old approach.

### PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT AND ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE

Performance is the result of activities of an organisation or investment over a given period of time. Performance as same planning, improvement and all the management standard system are culture and part of culture. In another sense, performance management may be a system of evaluating employees to help them reach reasonable goals and thus ensure that the company performs better. This discussion will focus on the latter definition. Performance management of individual employees differs. It generally includes the following organisational culture: planning work, setting goals, offering feedback and reviews, offering opportunities to learn more in one's field, and rewarding employees who perform well.

### IMPROVEMENT AND ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE

Originally, quality improvement initiatives required high standardisation and low variability (Garvin, 1988) and had to be supported by an organisational culture (values) advocating attention to detail, precision, accuracy (O'Reilly, Chatman, & Caldwell, 1991), and compliance with rules and procedures (Naveh & Erez, 2004).

Improvement is a value by definition. This value forces the organisation to act, plan, and check, to guide and to control. Improvement-like risk must be managed.

Improvement also leads us to organisational learning.

### MANAGEMENT REVIEW AND ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE

Management review is the mechanism to organisational learning. Although researchers have defined organisational learning in different ways, the core of most definitions is that organisational learning is a change in the organisation that occurs as the organisation acquires experience (Argote & Miron-Spektor, 2011).

According to the Deming improvement cycle – PDCA method (Plan-Do-Check-Act) as the management standards bases) – the steps for organisational learning are:

- Plan to improve your operations first by finding out what things are going wrong (that is identify the problems faced), and raise ideas for solving these problems.

- Do changes designed to solve the problems on a small or experimental scale first. This minimises disruption to routine activity while testing whether the changes will work or not.
- Check whether the small scale or experimental changes are achieving the desired result or not. Also, continuously check nominated key activities (regardless of any experimentation going on) to ensure that you know what the quality of the output is at all times to identify any new problems when they crop up.
- Act to implement changes on a larger scale if the experiment is successful. This means making the changes a routine part of your activity. Also act to involve other persons (other departments, suppliers, or customers) affected by the changes and whose cooperation you need to implement them on a larger scale, or those who may simply benefit from what you have learned

Management review is the 'act' part in the PDCA method. In this section, the organisation learns from experience, checking the policy and updating it according to the learning findings, which lead us to learning organisation culture.

### SUMMARY

On 15 September 1904, the IEC adopted a report that included the following words:

*"...steps should be taken to secure the co-operation of the technical societies of the world, by the appointment of a representative Commission to consider the question of the standardization of the nomenclature and ratings of electrical apparatus and machinery."*

As a result, the IEC was officially founded in June 1906. Forty years later, 1946, the IEC committee met under the title "learning between equals". They established the international organisation for standardisation, which binds all the standardisation bodies.

They looked for a name for the organisation in English, Latin, and Greek and found the word ISO in Greek. ISO = "equal" in English. The ISO under technical committee would write management standards – 'tool box' for management. This 'tool box' promotes fair trade worldwide

*Improvement is a value by definition.*

and has become a strongly economic tool – a new international economic language

This new language is the base for the organisational culture. A culture of improving and learning that leads the organisation to success.

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# Disposal of confidential information

## Do you have a plan?

Help

**Roger Smith, R&ICT Consulting Services**



*Confidential information on your staff, clients and customers can be a problem when it comes to getting rid of the information. In the old days a cross cut shredder was all that was required and if you wanted to go a little better then dump all of the shredded paper into a bucket and just add water – instant paper mâché. No incriminating information for your opposition to get their hands on.*

It has all changed, today how do you get rid of the information that is now digital, can be copied with ease and is so very transportable. The transportability of the information means that it can get onto the internet quickly and spread just as quick. Just look at the impact that Wikileaks has had on the corporate skyline in the last two years.

As a small or medium business or a not for profit organisation how do you protect your business and not allow confidential or commercial in confidence information outside the business. The disposal of confidential information can have disastrous ramifications if not done correctly. Old hard drives in a land fill is similar to finding confidential files in the same place. If you want to attract the notice of the media than that is one of the best ways of doing it.

So the best way for the disposal of the confidential information is to totally destroy it. You need a total destruction policy for information on any digital format, hard drives, CDs, DXDs, blue ray disks, floppy drives and USB drives. This policy has to reduce the information to a common level that cannot be used in any way outside the business.

The introduction of a digital media destruction policy has to include all the processes, procedures and required check lists to ensure that every component of the business has no external information when the process is followed.

Destruction of digital data can be achieved in the following ways. The information on the electronic media has to be deleted, then copied over with a series of zero's or X's, a number of times, then the physical media has to be

destroyed. This final component can be done with a cross hatch shredder reducing the media to pieces no larger than 5 millimetres.

The destruction of digital data process has to include the destruction, sale or donation of old computers, lap tops, servers, storage and backup media. Again all digital records have to be erased, reformatted, and copied over with zeros and X's. Hard drives should be then removed from the computers and physically destroyed, we actually take the hard drives apart and physically destroy the individual platters and break the rest of the hard drive down into their constituent components for recycling. The actual computers (depending on age) can be sold or donated without fear of exposing your business IP to the outside world.

Another alternative, and one we use for USB drives, is to do the normal, format and zeros and X's then a good hot fire which destroys the information and the controller boards. The best protection for USB drives is to not have sensitive information on them in the first place and this can be achieved in a number of ways that does not allow information to be written to them from inside the organisation.

Digital information is hard enough to protect when it is being used, silly mistakes when disposing of digital media can be a major problem and expose your business to unnecessary risks. By creating a digital disposal plan for your business you are protecting your digital footprint going forward.

*More information request Smith 4.02 to  
progbus@pbinsitute.net*

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# Avoiding unfair dismissal claims continued...

**Dominique Lamb, McKays Solicitors**

*This is the second in a short series to help employers to minimise the risk of a time consuming, frustrating and (possibly) expensive unfair dismissal claim.*



*Step 2 is understanding if you are entitled to rely on the Small Business Dismissal Code*

## **WHAT IS THE SMALL BUSINESS DISMISSAL CODE?**

The Small Business Dismissal Code ("the Code") is a checklist designed to assist small businesses in complying with Fair Work Australia's requirements when dismissing an employee. This Code should be complied with by both employers of small business (employers with fewer than 15 employees) and large business (employers with 15 or more employees).

## **WHAT SHOULD SMALL BUSINESS DO?**

In accordance with the Code, employers should provide employees with the opportunity to have a "support person" present at any meetings with respect to warnings, performance or termination.

When an employer provides an employee with a warning, it is best practice to ensure that these warnings are in writing and are kept on the employee's file. The employer should give the employee the opportunity to respond to each of these warnings. This response should preferably be in writing.

## **WHAT TO WATCH OUT FOR**

The problem for employers is that employees often prefer to provide their responses orally.

If this happens to you, you should take notes, as detailed as possible, about those responses and keep them on file.

Whilst it is tempting to take a sound recording of the meetings in case it is needed for future evidence, you can only do this if you have the employee's consent and you provide the employee with a copy of that recording after the meeting.

## **WHAT ELSE TO CONSIDER**

You are also obliged to provide the employee with further training and to monitor the employee's performance. Naturally, this should be documented as part of your standard process. Ideally, a copy of these documents should be given to the employee.

## **MORE INFORMATION**

To read the Code go to <http://www.fairwork.gov.au/Termination-of-employment/Pages/Small-Business-Fair-Dismissal-code.aspx?role=employers>.

*More information request Lamb 4.02 to  
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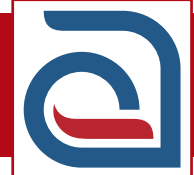
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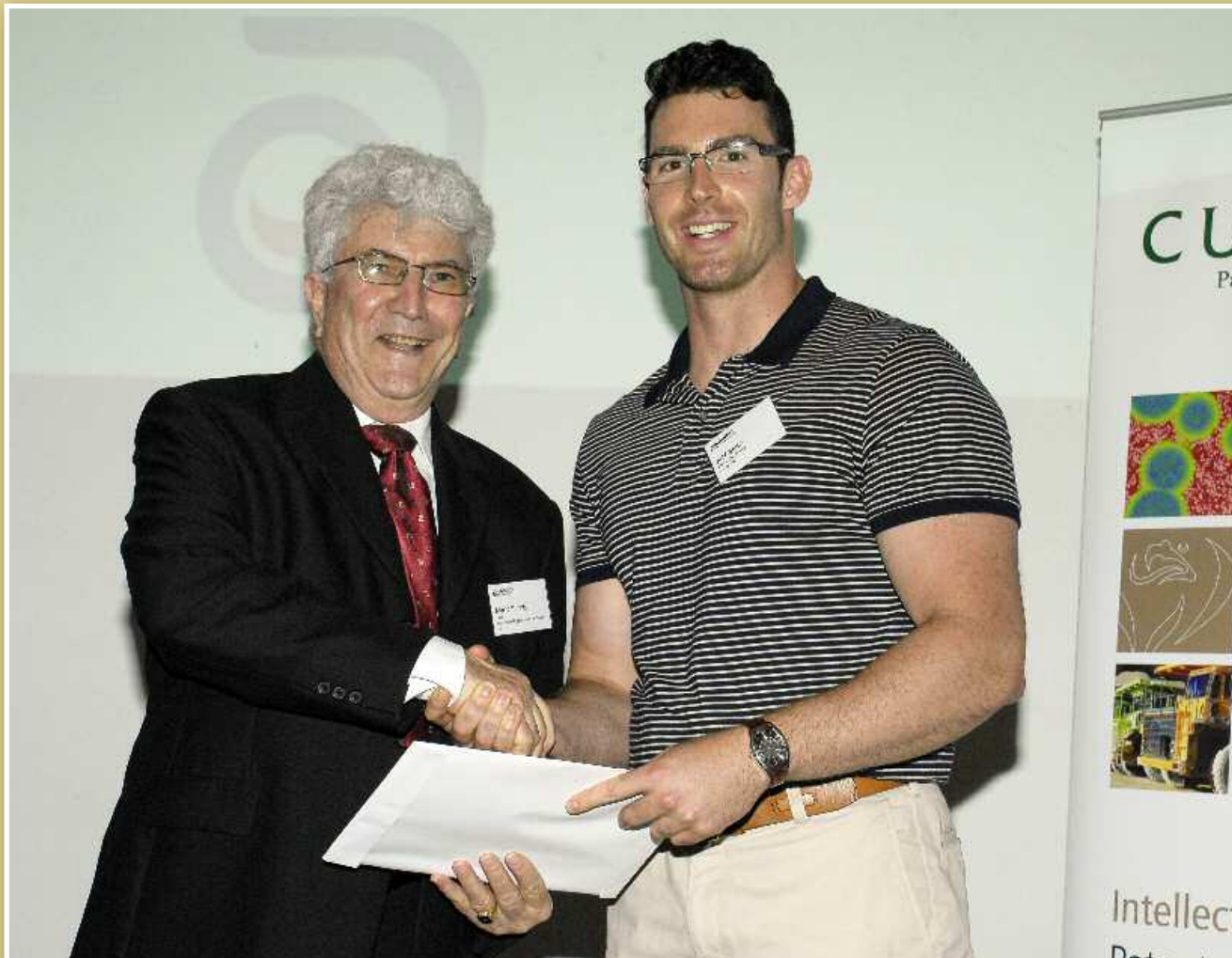
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Contact:  
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# AOQ-QLD Sponsored Griffith Innovation Challenge 2011



*Mario Pennisi (CEO AOQ-QLD) presents Jeff Beitz, team leader of 2011 overall winners Verve Inc. with AOQ-QLD Overall Winners prize*

*The Griffith Innovation Challenge is a competition for Griffith University final year undergraduate students and post graduate students who wish to obtain business skills. The competition is to determine the best Business Plan prepared by the students over a three month period.*

AOQ-QLD is proud to have been a sponsor of the Challenge since its inception seven years ago. In 2011 the value of the AOQ-QLD sponsorship was just under \$6,000.00.

Len Mahon, Chairman of AOQ-QLD, commented that the Organisation was very satisfied with the value of the sponsorship as it provided opportunities for AOQ-QLD members to mentor business students as well as provide judges for the process.

Teams of students (up to 5) prepare a business plan for a product or service. All entries are judged internally by Griffith University academics and 5 finalist teams are chosen. Each of the five teams make a 15 minute presentation to judges that represent academia and business (2 of each in 2011). The presentations are scored. Later, each finalist is required to make a three-minute elevator pitch and these are also scored. The two scores are added and the winner determined. The prizes are awarded at an Awards event.

The winning team Verve have already launched their product to the market.

AOQ-QLD and the Progressing Business Institute will sponsor the Program again in 2012.

*More information request Innovation 4.02 to [progbus@pbinsitute.net](mailto:progbus@pbinsitute.net)*

## Mario Pennisi presents finalist team prizes



*Mitchell von Itzstein,  
team leader of Visvidus*



*Theresa Hahn,  
team leader of Dry Cloth Pty Ltd*



*Peter Cook, team leader of Modus Operandi  
(trading as Global Alert System)*



*Nicolas Gomez,  
team leader of Well Placed Cactus*



*Kevin Mulholland (AOQ-QLD mentor), Jeff Beitz, Theresa Hahn, Mitchell von Itzstein, Nicolas Gomez, Len Mabon (AOQ-QLD Chairman) and Mario Pennisi (AOQ-QLD CEO)*

# Carbon price claims guide for business

## INTRODUCTION

### *About this guide*

The Australian Government has introduced a carbon price that will apply from 1 July 2012. Under the scheme, a carbon price will apply to certain greenhouse emissions, with some large businesses being required to purchase carbon credits.

The purpose of this guide is to assist you to understand your rights and obligations as a business operator when making claims about the impact of a carbon price. It focuses on prohibitions against misleading, deceptive or false claims under the Australian Consumer Law (the ACL) – part of the Competition and Consumer Act 2010 (Cth) (the Act).

## THE ACCC'S ROLE

The ACCC has been directed by the Australian Government to undertake a compliance and enforcement role in relation to claims made about the impact of a carbon price.

The ACCC's role will include:

- informing and educating businesses, including through issuing guidance, about their responsibilities under the Act in relation to these claims
- raising awareness amongst consumers about their rights under the Act
- investigating and, where appropriate, taking action against businesses who engage in practices that contravene the Act.

The ACCC's role will not include setting or restricting price increases related to the impacts of a carbon price. You are not generally required to justify or explain why your prices have increased – however, if you choose to claim that price increases are due to a particular cause, you should have confidence in your claim. This includes where you choose to link your price increases to a carbon price.

## CLAIMS ABOUT THE IMPACT OF A CARBON PRICE

You should ensure your claims:

- are truthful and accurate
- do not mislead consumers (whether individuals or other businesses)



- are based on reasonable grounds, and
- can be substantiated.

These are not new requirements – if you make a claim, you need to be sure it is right.

If in doubt, don't make the claim.

The Act prohibits you from making misleading, deceptive or false claims about the price of goods or services.

This includes claims and statements that you make:

- in television or radio advertising
- in catalogues
- on labels
- on websites
- in contracts (or contract negotiations) with both businesses and consumers
- over the telephone or in correspondence (such as letters or emails), or
- in person, such as on the shop floor or in meetings.

### PROBLEMATIC CARBON PRICE CLAIMS

Some examples of claims that will mislead customers are if:

- you represent that the whole amount of a price increase is due to a carbon price, when in fact only a proportion of the total price increase is attributable to a carbon price, or
- you overstate the impact of a carbon price.

These problematic claims might be made in a number of circumstances.

For example:

- representations made on your new price lists that incorrectly link all price increases to a carbon price
- comments by your sales representatives that incorrectly link the increase in the price of goods or services to a carbon price – for example, a sales representative saying 'It's the carbon price' in response to a consumer's query about the increase in price, when that is not the case
- exaggerating cost savings in your advertising if you encourage customers to buy before 1 July 2012 so as to avoid a carbon price impact.

### INFLATING OR EXAGGERATING THE CARBON PRICE

A hair salon displays a new price list on 1 July 2012, stating that all salon services will be subject to "an increase of 10% largely due to the carbon price".

In calculating the price increase, the salon is aware that a number of its input costs have gone up over the preceding 3 months. The rent on the property has increased, wages have risen and the cost of some of the products used in the salon have gone up. A month earlier, the salon received a notice from its electricity retailer indicating that there would be a new tariff from 1 July 2012. The salon estimates that based on its electricity usage, the new tariff will equate to about a 4% increase in its electricity costs partially due to the introduction of a carbon price. The salon has made a representation clearly overstating the impact of a carbon price on its business and the claim is misleading.

### POINT OF SALE ISSUES

The overhead costs of a restaurant have gone up for reasons unrelated to a carbon price. When explaining the restaurant menu to a customer, a waiter says:

*"All of our meal prices have increased because of the carbon price."*

The business has no factual basis or other knowledge to underpin or substantiate the waiter's statement that the price increase is due to a carbon price. This representation is misleading because although there has been an increase in the cost to the business of supplying the goods and services, this increase was not related to a carbon price.

### CLAIMS MADE BEFORE 1 JULY 2012

The new carbon price laws do not take effect until 1 July 2012 so most businesses are unlikely to see any impact of a carbon price prior to that date.

However, in the lead up to 1 July 2012, carbon price related claims might be made in the following situations:

- during negotiations for contracts that include the provision of goods and services after 1 July 2012. For instance, this may apply in the construction industry or where there are significant lead times for the delivery of particular goods and services

- when businesses announce future price increases which will include any period after 1 July 2012.

If you intend to make claims about the impact of a carbon price prior to 1 July 2012, you need to be careful that you do not wrongly suggest that a carbon price will affect the price of your goods or services before that date.

You might also be thinking of making more general statements before 1 July 2012 such as:

- 'Beat the Carbon Tax - Buy Now'
- 'Our prices will be hit hard when the carbon price comes in'
- 'Buy now before the carbon tax bites'.

While these statements may be legitimate in many circumstances, you need to be careful that you do not overstate the savings to be made by purchasing before the introduction of a carbon price. For example, if your business prices will not increase by much at all due to a carbon price you should be very cautious about making these types of claims. If your statements exaggerate the saving to be made, they will be misleading under the Act.

### SUPPLYING SERVICES BOTH BEFORE AND AFTER 1 JULY 2012

A large contractor enters into a one-year fixed term and fixed fee contract with a major hotel chain to service its linen for the period 1 January 2012 to 31 December 2012. The contractor suspects that on 1 July 2012 its cleaning costs will rise due to the introduction of a carbon price.

The contractor is unsure what the impact will be to the business, so it commissions a business advisor to make projections about the likely price impact. The advisor's report indicates that the impact of a carbon price is likely to equate to a 2% increase in the total input costs to the business. The report sets out a detailed explanation of the basis for the projections. This is consistent with information provided by government and with business calculators developed by the contractor's industry association. The contractor quotes the fixed fee for the contract on the basis of its standard prices plus a 2% increase on the fees for services to be provided after 1 July 2012. In negotiations with the hotel chain, the contractor attributes this price increase as being due to the 'projected' impact of a carbon

price. The hotel chain accepts this proposed increase to the fixed fee for the one-year contract. This is acceptable business practice. The representation by the contractor is not misleading. The contractor took care to project the likely impacts. The contractor was also able to establish there was a reasonable basis for those projections.

### **CLAIMS BASED ON INFORMATION FROM OTHERS**

You may consider information from a range of sources in determining the impact of a carbon price on your costs, and ultimately your prices. This information may include:

- your electricity or gas bills
- invoices from your suppliers
- statements made by your suppliers about their prices and the carbon price
- business calculators
- information from your industry associations and government.

When you assess whether it is reasonable for you to rely on this information, you should consider:

- how the impacts of a carbon price and the flow on price increases were calculated
- whether the calculations accurately reflect the cost of the inputs of your own business
- whether the price increases are consistent with the carbon price impact as predicted by other sources such as government, your industry association or other professional advisers
- if there are other factors (unrelated to the impacts of a carbon price) that have contributed to the price increase
- whether price increases incurred by your suppliers will be passed through to your business
- the impact of any carbon price related rebates or assistance available to you or your suppliers.

### **AN ACCURATE CLAIM**

On 1 July 2012, a bakery puts a sign up inside its shop alerting its customers that the price of some of its products will increase by 5 cents on 1 August 2012. Staff advise customers that the rise is due to the new carbon price. The bakery has taken care to base its claim on information from its suppliers that identify cost increases due to the

commencement of a carbon price. The bakery relies on the following information:

- a letter from an ingredient supplier dated March 2012 noting that the cost of its products will be increasing effective 1 July 2012 as a result of the commencement of a carbon price; and
- a notice from its energy retailer explaining there has been a price rise attributable to a carbon price.

The business has also compared its proposed price increase with information provided by the government and its industry association and finds its increase to be in line with expectations. By taking care to compare the information available from different sources the business has avoided the risk of misleading its customers.

### **SUPPLY CHAIN ISSUES**

A clothing manufacturer has decided not to pass on the cost of a carbon price to its resellers. However, one of its resellers makes representations to customers through in-store advertising that it has increased the price of its goods by 10%, advising that the price increase is due to a carbon price. When approached by the ACCC, the reseller explains that it faces increased transport delivery and energy costs, though the wholesale price of its clothing supplies has not increased. The reseller had assumed that these price rises occurred because of a carbon price. The reseller did not check whether these price rises were caused by the impact of a carbon price. The reseller did not ask its transport company any questions about whether the cost of its services were affected by a carbon price. It had not received any documents linking a change in transport prices to a carbon price. The reseller had not examined its energy bills or information from its energy retailer suggesting an increase related to a carbon price. When the ACCC makes inquiries of the relevant transport and energy companies, it is informed that transport and energy price increases are unrelated to a carbon price. When tested, the reseller's claim is found to be misleading.

### **RELYING ON OTHER INFORMATION**

The owner of a sporting goods shop tells customers its prices have increased 11% as a result of a carbon price.

The owner of the shop has not made enquiries with its

energy retailer or suppliers about the effect on energy and transportation costs. One of the shop's employees had a conversation with another local retailer who said that they think their prices will rise about 11% as a result of a carbon price. The owner decided that 11% was a good estimate. In reality, the impact of a carbon price on this particular business is less than 1%. This representation is misleading and the retailer has contravened the Act. The business should have looked at what was actually happening with its own costs and identified how much was due to a carbon price, then checked with government or industry information to see if their calculations were in the right range.

### **CARBON PRICE CALCULATORS**

A number of calculators have been developed to assist businesses and consumers understand the impact of a carbon price. These can be a useful tool to check your own calculations in considering your costs and what claims you might make about price increases. Any price rise explained as the impact of a carbon price should be based on your own costs. Calculators can be a useful tool in assisting you to check your calculations.

When using a calculator, keep in mind the following:

- does the calculator consider your own costs, or an estimate across the industry? As individual business costs vary, a calculator that relies on industry costs will produce a more general result than one that considers your specific costs
- what range of information does the calculator consider? The less information, the greater chance the result will be generalised and less specific to your circumstances
- what result does the calculator produce? Does it seek to provide you with an estimate of the overall cost increase to you or does it seek to estimate your carbon emissions (either in total or per unit you produce).

If what you have worked out is significantly different to what the calculator produces, it is a good opportunity to check your price claims before you make them.

### **CHECKING YOUR INFORMATION**

In September 2012, the owner of a veterinary clinic notices that since 1 July 2012 its outgoing expenses have

increased significantly. The owner is aware that the carbon price laws were introduced at this time. The owner of the clinic decides to increase her prices and would like to explain to her customers why her prices are going up. The owner makes inquiries with her suppliers and service providers to ask why her input costs have gone up but she is unable to get any answers. The owner suspects some of the increase might be due to a carbon price but is not sure. The owner visits her industry association website to see if there is any information on it about a carbon price. The information on the website is limited to predictions about the impact of a carbon price across the entire veterinary sector and does not state the basis for those predictions. The owner calls the industry association which confirms that although they are able to make an industry-wide prediction about the impacts of a carbon price they cannot say with certainty what the effect will be on every business.

The owner decides to increase her schedule of fees, but decides not to link this increase to a specific cause. One of her customers later asks her why she has had to increase her fees and she says it is because the overall cost of running her business has increased.

This is acceptable business practice and does not mislead her customers.

### TALKING WITH YOUR COMPETITORS

As you try to work out the impact of a carbon price on your input costs, you may be tempted to compare your circumstances with your competitors. While relevant industry information may assist you in your calculations, it is important that you set your own prices independently.

It is an offence under the Act for competitors to enter into any contract, arrangement or understanding relating to the price of their goods or services or any price adjustments including those attributable to a carbon price. For this reason, you should take great care when you engage in any discussions with your competitors about the effects of a carbon price.

### WHAT THE ACCC CAN DO

The ACCC may ask you for information that supports any claims you choose to make about the impact of a carbon price on price rises for your goods or services.

The ACCC can do this in a number of ways – for example:

- by making a written request to the business for information
- by issuing a substantiation notice on the business in relation to a carbon price representation.

A substantiation notice is an investigative tool that the ACCC can issue to a business requesting documents and information that ‘substantiate’ claims the business has made in its promotion or advertising. The benefit of substantiation notices is that they can be issued at an early stage of an investigation – this means that the information provided can assist in determining quickly whether a representation can be substantiated or whether consumer laws may have been contravened. If you receive a substantiation notice, it does not mean that the ACCC has determined that you have made a misleading claim – rather, it allows for the ACCC to consider the basis on which claims have been made in order to make this assessment.

If you receive a substantiation notice, you must provide the ACCC with the information and documents that substantiate the claim within 21 days. This means that if you choose to make a claim about the impact of a carbon price on price rises for your products or services, you should keep all documents, including invoices and communications with your suppliers and other parties that you rely on.

In line with its Compliance and Enforcement Policy, the ACCC will give priority to complaints that reveal significant or widespread consumer detriment, or that demonstrate a blatant disregard for the law. Under the Act, the ACCC has a range of investigative and enforcement options for addressing misrepresentations and contravening conduct related to the carbon price. These include seeking financial penalties.

### MAKING A COMPLAINT

Businesses and consumers with concerns about carbon pricing claims can lodge a complaint via the ACCC website or by contacting the ACCC Infocentre or the ACCC Small Business Help Line.

### FURTHER INFORMATION

- 1 Australian Competition and Consumer Commission

- 2 Infocentre 1300 302 502
- 3 Small Business Help Line 1300 302 021
- 4 Indigenous Infoline 1300 303 143
- 5 For information in languages other than English, call 13 1450
- 6 TTY users phone 133 677 then ask for 1300 302 502
- 7 Speak and Listen users phone 1300 555 727 and ask for 1300 302 502
- 8 Internet relay users connect to the NRS (see [www.relayservice.com.au](http://www.relayservice.com.au)) and ask for 1300 302 502
- 9 [www.accc.gov.au](http://www.accc.gov.au)

For more information about the ACCC’s Compliance and Enforcement Policy, see [www.accc.gov.au/content/index.php?id=867964](http://www.accc.gov.au/content/index.php?id=867964)

For more information about the carbon price, go to the Clean Energy Future website [www.cleanenergyfuture.gov.au](http://www.cleanenergyfuture.gov.au)

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- foster integration between organisational interfaces.
- offer opportunities to professionals at any experience level to share knowledge and solutions through access to leading academics and practitioners in the Division's industry
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- provide and promote networking sessions to other industry practitioners and academics
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- access to the wider quality/business excellence movement.
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- assist AOQ-QLD and the Progressing Business Institute in the fostering of mutually beneficial relationships with relevant quality assurance and quality management organisations

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# How to G.R.O.W.! as a leader



Karen Schmidt, Let's Grow.



*If you are the type of leader that wants to see their team develop to its full potential then you need to do the same. The law of nature is that if a plant isn't growing, it's dying and I believe the same is true of people. Creating a highly engaged workplace begins with a highly engaged leader, the type of leader who is willing to step out of their comfort zone and grow as a person.*

Here are my five steps for how to do just that.

## **GET TO KNOW YOURSELF**

Self awareness, emotional intelligence, personal insight. Call it what you will but those people who are able to learn from their experiences and grow as a result are the one who know themselves. There are many ways to go about doing this . . . taking quizzes, reading personal development books and keeping a journal are just a few. If you are brave why not also enlist the help of family, friends and others who know you well to give you some insights.

## **RECOGNISE THE NEEDS OF OTHERS**

Once you understand yourself it is important to recognise that other people have different views on the world than you. Whether you are talking about cultural, gender, generational or personality based preferences you need to do all you can to learn more about the needs of others. The truth is that when you help others you grow yourself and that help starts with recognising their needs. Make it your mission to figure out ways to see the world from various perspectives by engaging people in conversations, observing human nature or reading about alternative views.

## **OPEN UP THE COMMUNICATION CHANNELS**

Don't just talk at people and pretend to listen in response. Find ways to really open up the communication channels so you can have richer conversations. Be willing to be more authentic and to tackle the difficult topics. Learn to read the subtext, to listen to how things are said and what is not said. Put in place mechanisms that allow you and others to communicate on the things that matter in a way that makes a difference.

**WORK TOWARDS AN ENGAGING GOAL**

Whether it is a personal or professional goal, if you aren't passionate about where you are heading then your chances of success are minimal. Figure out what engages you, what makes you want to get out of bed early and stay up late. If you can figure out what that is for you then it won't feel like work. Forget what the experts say or what you "should" be aiming for. Listen to your own instincts and create a goal that truly engages you.

**GIVE THAT SOMETHING EXTRA**

Just doing the minimum to get by is not going to cause

you to grow. Those people who are living lives full of energy and passion all tend to have something in common. They give that little bit extra, even if there are no short term rewards and even if no one will ever find out they did it. They do it because they want themselves, and the world, to be better. So what is your something extra going to be? Will you volunteer, document your knowledge to help others, be a mentor? The choice is yours but I can guarantee that whatever you choose to do giving more than you get will see you grow.

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# AGED CARE TBA 2012

THEME

**Optimising Knowledge Transfer Through  
Effective Management Systems**

STREAMS

*Quality Management in Aged Care:  
Allied Health Services-Removing Road Blocks  
Responsibility of Aged Care Facility to the Consumer*

DATE

TBA 2012

LOCATION

Griffith South Bank Graduate Centre, Brisbane, Queensland

CO-HOSTS

Aged Care Division  
Griffith Business School, Griffith University

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Telephone: 07 3816 2255

Email: [info@aoq.org.au](mailto:info@aoq.org.au)

[www.pbinsitute.net/AgedCare2012.htm](http://www.pbinsitute.net/AgedCare2012.htm)

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### LeanSixSigma2012

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*Technology:*

Lean, Six Sigma, Lean Six Sigma

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### AgedCare2012

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*Theme:*

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*Type of Presentation:*

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