

QBQ
Case Study I
“It’s Not My Fault”

Your supervisor has given you an important assignment. Your job is to develop and analyze a new initiative that your department may implement. Your deadline for submission is 4 weeks from today.

3 weeks before the due date

After beginning to write the report, you realize that you need the assistance of someone in another area to assist you with the business analysis. You contact the manager of the Business Operations department via email, and ask him to contact you regarding the project.

2 weeks before the due date

You have not heard from the manager of the Business Operations department. You decide to contact the person again (via email) and ask him to contact you regarding the assignment.

1 week before the due date

You comment to two individuals in the organization that you haven’t received the information from the Business Operations department you need to complete the assignment. One person indicates that they are surprised because they (Business Operations) are usually very responsive. The other person indicates that they have heard that there is difficulty working with that department.

2 days before the due date

You are becoming increasingly frustrated about the lack of response. You are continuing to complain to other people in the organization while continuing to work on the proposal, but realize you can’t finish it until you have the financial information. You call the manager of Business Operations in the afternoon and leave a phone message and ask him to call you as soon as possible.

Day the proposal is due

You call the manager of Business Operations again and receive a voicemail automatic response that he is out for the day. You do not submit your new initiate proposal to your supervisor because you have not completed the financial analysis portion of the proposal. When your supervisor asks about the proposal, you tell her that “It isn’t finished, because I couldn’t get the financial information from the Business Operations department.”

Answer the following questions:

1. What was the employee’s intention?
2. Was the employee operating in the victim or accountability loop? Provide examples.
3. Using the QBQ process – what questions could the employee ask and what action could the employee take to rectify this situation?

developed by
Debra L. Hammond
Executive Director, University Student Union
California State University, Northridge
debra.hammond@csun.edu