



The Advisory Alliance 60-Second Email™

Who's More Lost: You or Your Luggage?

April 21, 2011

In this month's 60-Second Email™, they can't find your luggage, and they certainly can't find you a better boss or a better self.

The man beside me at the counter was irate. He didn't yell, but you could see by the expression on his face and by his body language that he was incredulous.

We had been promised by the gate agent in Newark that our carry-on bags, which they required us to check at the gate, would be available to us in Atlanta. The flight out of Newark was more than 2 hours delayed, and many of us were guaranteed to miss our connections. "No worries," promised the gate agent. "They'll put your bags on the carousel in Atlanta. It's standard policy if your flight arrives *after* the last flight of the day to your destination departs."

Wrong.

"I'm sorry, sir, we can't go down and get your bags. We only have 3 people working down there and they're very busy. Plus we don't know where your bags are exactly."

"But we can provide you an overnight bag."

Faced with the prospect of sleeping in my clothes or wearing the equivalent of a hospital gown, I was not entirely happy.

The day had begun at 6:00, and it was now 12:30 the following day.

So, do we do the bivouac at the local basic hotel (which the airline would discount, but not fully pay for), or do we press on, get the rental car, and drive the 4 hours home?

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With luck and no traffic (hardly an issue at 1:00 a.m.), we'd be home by 5:00. Just in time to greet the woman who delivers our newspaper.

It was an easy choice. Road trip.

Customer service at Budget was friendly and compassionate ("If I may say, Mr. Harper, you look like you've had a long day." She had me at "hello"). Even the fellow who took my papers at the rental car exit was friendly: "Safe drive, Mr. Harper, and have a good night."

\$65 for a rental car (with satellite radio, a godsend when it's 3:00 a.m. and you're on I-16 in Georgia, somewhere between Atlanta and Savannah.)

\$655 for the flight and the pleasure of missed connections both ways (the flight to Newark was another adventure), "memorable" hotel accommodations, and equally memorable overnight kits.

The financial math didn't add up, and it didn't make sense.

What did make sense, though, was that you can't depend upon others to look out for your best interests. When it happens, it's great, and it's a wonderful thing to appreciate.

But you truly can't depend upon it. Stuff happens, and other people have their own lives and issues to deal with.

So you need to take things into your own hands.

If you're in a position where you're not getting the leadership, coaching, or management support you need (and quitting is not the best option these days), you'll have to get it yourself. Find someone inside or outside the company who can give you the counsel, wisdom, and expertise you need. Don't wait for them to find you.

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And if you're not currently being challenged by your manager, that's no security or safety zone. If anything, you'll be very vulnerable when a more capable leader replaces your incumbent manager.

So no use in complaining if you're not getting what you need. Sometimes it just works out that way.

The big question is, what are you going to do to get where you need to be? What's the decision you need to make, right now?

There are no overnight kits in these types of situations. Just missed opportunities. Missed possibilities.

So just like the ad says: Grab your bag. It's on.

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What are you doing to get what you need for your own leadership growth? Share your thoughts and examples with other readers on our [blog](#).

You can access all of our 60-Second Emails (TM), including the most recent issue, *Is Your Company Heading for Talent Bankruptcy?*, via this [link](#).

Until next month,

**David**

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**The Advisory Alliance** works with Fortune 500 & Mid-Market companies to identify and



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develop exceptional talent. Specifically, we help them refine their Leadership Development, Selection & Promotion, and Succession Planning.

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