Chapter 26

Golf Ball or Gulf Ball

Jerry Biberman

Keywords: formal and informal dress, perception, diversity.

Key OB Topics: cultural diversity.

The narrative:

John came in a tuxedo to a social event that the company in which he worked sponsored, called “The Golf Ball.”

John thought that the event was some kind of a formal event involving “The Gulf” that he thought called fSor formal attire—perhaps a fund raising event to honor either victims of the BP oil accident in the Gulf of Mexico or an event involving a different Gulf.

It turned out that the event was an informal event for company members and clients who like to play golf, and that the dress at the meeting was informal. John had misread “golf” for “gulf,” and thought that the event was a formal “ball.”

Reflection

John had received an invitation to attend a company sponsored event. From his misreading and misinterpreting the name of the event, John assumed that the dress code at the event would be formal.

Questions

- What could John have done to find out the dress code for the event?
- If you were John, what would you do when you arrived at the event in the tuxedo?