

## **The Gift of GAB – Goals, Attitude, Brand**

### **A Fable – or is it?**



Location: O’Hara’s Bed & Breakfast, West Coast Ireland.

Characters: Mary Margaret O’Hara, proprietor: Son Patrick Michael O’Hara, Husband Michael Patrick O’Hara (in absentia), Hank Devlin and his wife Moira O’Flaherty Devlin, both on first visit to Ireland.

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“Well, how’s the happy couple? I hope you enjoyed that lovely Irish breakfast – the three slices of black pudding—blood pudding to you—the slices of bacon, mushrooms, baked beans, the two fresh eggs sunny side up as you Americans like to say and of course the giant sausages from McCool’s the Butcher. He’s a brother-in-law of my sister-in-law you know, although they haven’t spoken for over twelve years, but that’s only temporary. Tell me, what do you plan to do today. You’re off to the golf course, are ye?”

“Mrs. O’Hara we sure are. We need directions. We don’t have GPS.”

“And what would ye be needin’ that for, Ma’am? Doesn’t everyone around here know where everyplace is, around here - like? But I’ll tell ya how to get to the golf course. If you go down this road for about two miles, you’ll see a road to the right. That road takes you over the beautiful green hillside and you’ll get a great view of the lakes. They say it is where the angels swim. Some people say they swim in the nude, but I don’t think Father Murphy would approve of that, although there’s been a lot of talk about the long walks he takes with Mother Octavia of the Seven Sorrows - she’s from Six Flags, she has five brothers, four sisters, three are nuns, two priests and one is the black sheep of the family – he’s a politician! Aye... very long walks.”

Mrs. O’Hara paused.

“Anyway, if you see the lakes, you’ve taken the wrong road. Don’t take that road. About a kilometer – ‘tis kilometers we use here now, you know. Kilometers are shorter than miles, but the funny thing is you don’t get there any faster. Anyway - before that road, there is a turn to the left. Take that road, and when you see the sign that says “Golf Course,” that’s the golf course. You can’t miss it, unless you drive past it. Anyway, have you visited these parts before?”

“No. No. We have not, although I sure do love it. My grandfather emigrated from here years ago. I remember sitting on his knee and he telling me about

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*Conor Cunneen – “James Joyce meets Tom Peters” – Substance with Humor*

the beautiful Irish people and countryside. He never told me about the great Irish golf courses you have.”

“Ah, the only things walking the land in those days were the sheep. Well, now, off you go and keep an eye out for sheep on the road when you are near the golf course, they might delay you. But as my late husband, Michael Patrick said when things go wrong – ‘*What do I want my attitude to be?*’ ”

“Sorry to hear that your husband passed away, Mrs. O’Hara. That must have been a blow.”

“My husband? – Ah no, he’s just late – late back from the creamery, but mind you, if he’s not home soon, he might just get a blow.”

“Oh, I’m glad to hear that.”

“You’re glad to hear he might get a blow?”

“No. No. I’m glad he’s just late back from the creamery.”

“You’re glad he’s late back from the creamery?”

“No, what I meant was...”

“Ah, I’m only joking you, Ma’am, but keep an eye out for sheep.”

“Don’t worry – we’ll keep an eye out for the sheep on the road.”

As the would-be golfers drove off, Mrs. O’Hara took out her sleek iPhone, hit a speed key and said:

“Hi Patrick Michael? Morning. Quick one for you. I’ve just had a couple of guests heading off to the golf course. Are you out on the land at the moment? Good. Good. Look they’ll be going by your place in about 10 minutes. Put a few sheep out on the road for them. Give them a touch of old Ireland.”

“Mom, you’re nuts.”

“Ah now Son, you are the one that told me about this Brand Experience thing. Those lovely people came looking for the old Ireland. Aran sweaters. Friendly people. Crazy directions.”

“And what’s with the sheep, Mom? That could make them late for their golf.”

“Sheep? That’s the added value son which you tell me should always be provided. And if they get a little anxious about being late, just tell them to remember that great question when things go slightly wrong.”

“Yea, I know, ‘*What do I want my attitude to be?*’ It’s a powerful question alright. Where are they from?”

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***Substance with Humor***

“Illinois, I think.”

“Ooh, Obama-land. Ha! After playing that golf course, they won’t be saying ‘Yes, we can. Yes we can.’ It’ll be more like ‘*What do I want my attitude to be?*’ after they lose a few golf balls. That’s a good question alright.”

“That it is, Son. So put those sheep out, create that Brand Experience thing, I’ll get repeat business and pay off your student loans. It’s the **Gift of GAB** son, and for God’s sake don’t be playing the *Sex Pistols* on the tractor when they go by. It’ll confuse them. And remember that **Gift of GAB**, son.”

“I know, I know. **Goals, Attitude, Behavior** and your **Brand** is created by your **Behavior**. It’s the key to a good workday. It’s the key to a good life really. OK, Mom, I’ll put the sheep out. But why are you sending them this direction? All you had to do was give them MapQuest details.”

“And wouldn’t that ruin the experience, Son? You know Ireland has one of the best educated young populations in the world. You are not a good example of that. You’ve got your father’s brains. He’s still not back from the creamery.

“Son, my **Goal** and my vision is to make sure my guests have a great time, they’ll have a great **Attitude** and the end **Behavior** is they will come back because of the **Brand Experience**. I sometimes wonder what Brand Experience you create. I’ve got to go now son. Hurry up with those sheep. You’ll see my guests coming. They’re driving a stick shift, so you’ll probably hear them coming as well.”

“I will Mom, I will. I might even tell them about the Gift of GAB – How **Goals, Attitude, Brand** creates a Top o’ the Morning Customer Experience.”

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