



Beth Israel Deaconess
Medical Center



A teaching hospital of
Harvard Medical School

Dressed In Overalls and Looking Like Work

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“Opportunity is missed by most people because it is dressed in overalls and looks like work.”

Thomas A. Edison *US inventor (1847 - 1931)*



How do we take advantage of opportunities and fill in the holes?

Example #1:

“Is there an authoritative list of medical abbreviations?” *(question from HIM director)*

- What is she asking for?
- What does she need?
- How can I fill that need?

The Work

- Research the literature!
- Examine and compare acronym resolvers
- Settle on best resolver and create best practice standards
- Package the findings
- Present to Forms Committee

The Outcome

- Establishment of standards and procedures for approval of medical abbreviations in BIDMC (Patient Safety initiative #1)
- Plain Language review of patient-readable forms (Patient Safety initiative #2)
- Presentation at 2008 AHIMA Conference
- Article featuring our work published in HIM publication (2009).

How do we take advantage of opportunities and fill in the holes?

Example #2:

“The space committee is looking at the library.
Can you give me an idea how the space is used?”

(question from CIO)

- What is he asking for?
- What does he need?
- How can I fill that need and look out for my department's best interests?



The Work:

- The “quick & dirty” survey:
 1. What is your role at BIDMC?
 2. What is your department?
 3. What was the purpose of *this* library visit?
 4. What did you do while you were here?
 5. How often do you visit the Medical Library facility?
 6. Comments, suggestions or feedback regarding the library
- Packaging the survey results (graphs, slides & executive summary)

The Outcome

- The space is saved!
- Discussion w/CIO regarding “red flag” effect of “library”
- Research into alternative nomenclature (more work – but very revealing!)
- Decisions on division, staff & facility names
- Changes in HR, Finance, Facilities