



(Team 40)

--Presents--

**MY** sombrero

Owner's Manual:

Creative solutions for life's  
toughest obstacles

## Instructions



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## Step 1 - But Before We Begin...

*"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."*

- Margaret Mead

WE ARE



**Alex Chacon** is a nutrition major coming from the hot and dry city of El Paso, Texas. As an aspiring medical professional, Alex has garnered better insights into the lives of children and the entire



medical process, which has brought joy and understanding to his own life.

A self-proclaimed world traveler and motorcycle enthusiast, Alex awaits life's next challenge; life's next adventure.



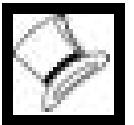
## Corporate Relations



**Brenda Ramirez** is a human development and science major from the small Midwest town of Eden, Texas.

Working on the

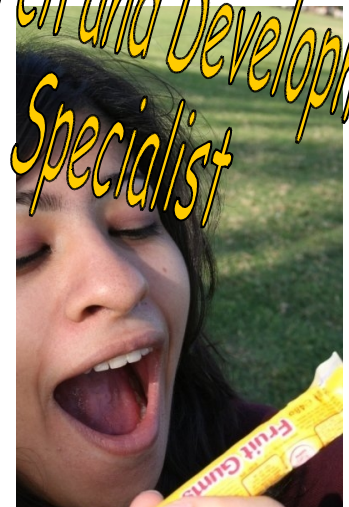
project has allowed Brenda to reconnect with old friends for input and establish new friendships within the group. Brenda enjoys swimming, taking pictures, and spending time with friends and family.

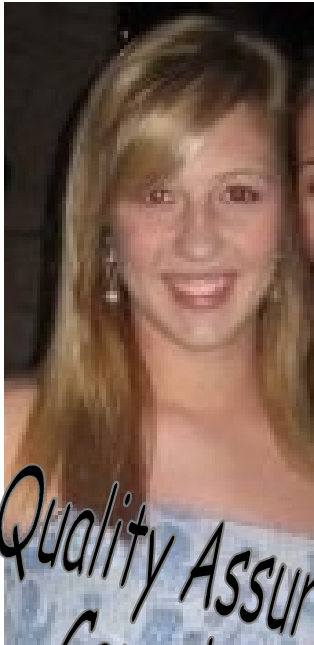


**Nada Al Ansari** is a philosophy major all the way from Dubai, United Arab Emirates. A care-free spirit who has a love for photography, movies, and music, Nada has tied in three life lessons that reflect the work of the project: patience, sacrifice, and positive thinking.



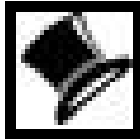
## Research and Development Specialist





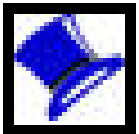
*Quality Assurance  
Consultant*

**Meredith Meyer** is a public relations major from the ever-expanding Houston, Texas. The project has allowed Meredith the opportunity to apply both the management and statistical aspects of business to real life scenarios.



*Webmaster/Technical Analyst*

**Tessa Simpson** is a computer science major from Mangilao, Guam. Tessa is highly trained in the fighting styles of Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu and Muay Thai,

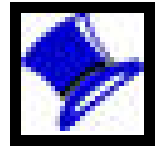


allowing the discipline and hard work of those endeavors to carry her forth into the project at hand.



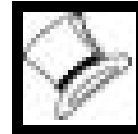
*Account Manager*

**Brandon D. Guidry** is a government and African American studies major from Houston, Texas. While Brandon has gained knowledge in business and product



establishment through the project, he also made new friends and looks forward to the impact the product will make.

**Lisa Johnson** is a public relations and journalism major from League City, Texas.



The hands-on opportunity has allowed Lisa to meet new people and gain new perspectives on communication.



*Central Brand  
Strategist*



Communications  
Director



Dustin Villarreal is a public relations major pursuing studies in pop culture and business. Coming from Palacios, TX, "the city by the sea," Dustin actively seeks the challenges of life, the good in others, and the cultural



understandings of one another . . . all while getting in a good videogame on the side.

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We are Team 40.

We are projectHOPE.

We can make a difference.

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## STEP 2 - Mission: Possible The Creation of a Team Vision

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*"The concept is interesting and well-formed, but in order to earn better than a 'C,' the idea must be feasible." -- A Yale University management professor in response to Fred Smith's paper proposing reliable overnight delivery service. (Smith went on to found Federal Express Corp.).*

We entered this project as individuals . . . we walked out as a team. We started with eight different ideas . . . we came out with a unified goal. In the fast-paced world of apathy and

One of the main problems any family has when dealing with their children in a hospital setting, aside from the obvious issue of health, is the child's comfort level. The emotional and psychological state of the patient should be of the utmost concern, but sadly, even in today's world, we tend to get wrapped up in the end result without first recognizing the patient's current level of emotional stability and comfort.

By implementing a more "kid-friendly" and positive way to hide/cover their wounds and injuries through

personalized garments/clothing items, we are able to produce a design suite that passively connects family and friends to the patient which is not only beneficial to the child's emotional values, but to their health as well.

A simple way to see the invention is by labeling it as an "emotional stability design suite." But to think of it as just that would be to limit the potential uses of the product. There is so much more to the invention than meets the eye, as the design suite has the potential to provide the proper items necessary for the creation of different clothing materials that are specialized for the needs of each patient. This product will not only help the child emotionally, but by association, physically as well.

The product is introducing a total rethinking of how a hospital is "supposed" to look and feel, and with all the items necessary to bring each child closer together and remind everyone that these patients are still kids, it brings hope and stability to an otherwise fearful and confusing time.

## STEP 3 - To Plan a Business: The Management Function



"Effective leadership is putting first things first. Effective management is discipline, carrying it out." - Steven Covey

### People!

#### **Communication Cycle**

Throughout the entire product brainstorming process, Group #40 went through the communication cycle countless times. The first few weeks after our group's formation, our meetings were completely devoted to group collaboration in order to come up with the most beneficial product with the most market potential.

Group members encoded their product ideas in order for them to be transferred to the receiving group members, who gave supportive or constructive feedback in order to better or fine-tune the product idea.

Noise and barriers became problems when the environment in which our group's brainstorming took place - UT's Perry-Castañeda Library - because busy with other students. Noise was, literally, noise that distracted our group members from completely grasping some product ideas. Barriers included every group member's busy personal schedule—trying to schedule a time in which every single person could attend every meeting was a substantial challenge.

Nevertheless, because of the communication cycle, Group #40 was able to effectively communicate numerous product ideas and get their company off the ground and running successfully.

The communication cycle was also utilized throughout the development and promotional planning stages of our product. Group members were constantly in communication with each other.

**Facebook group** - allowed for sharing of photos, Internet links, and communicating ideas and schedules via message boards

**Gmail account** - allowed for posting documents and creating a place in which every member had access to add anything they thought would be beneficial to the group as a whole

**Telephone number exchange** - enabled every group member to have everyone else's contact information at hand all times.

## **The Networked Economy**

One of projectHope's members actually scored a deal with a foreign business that pledged over \$360.00 toward our project. The communication involved between our team and the international business, Al Ansari Exchange, proved to be one of our most stunning accomplishments and shows the power of networking, effective communication, and a good idea that goes a long way.

# Types of communication!

Oral - spoken communication at our weekly meetings and every Tuesday and Thursday before and after class, weekly updates on each member's progress

Written - e-mails posted to our Gmail account, ideas shared on Facebook message boards, each member's progress expressed on our website's blog

- Non-verbal - sitting together, as a group, at every class period each week

Our **completely connected communication network** allows each group member



to effectively communicate with one another with ease.

- There is no middleman to go through, nor a designated leader to report to.

**Horizontal** direction of communication - with no hierarchy of group members, the communication between each of us flowed smoothly and without any major problems.

## Intrinsic Rewards

Although the goal of any company is to create a profit and earn considerable market share, the main goal of our product is to create an emotional connection with our consumers. Because of this main objective, our group constantly considered intrinsic rewards over extrinsic rewards throughout the entire product planning process.

While marketing goals are always being considered, we also understand that sometimes there are more important things for a company

to believe in, rather than market share or quarterly earnings. Our product has such an emotional attachment with its consumers that we consider the more human side to business at all times.

## **OVERALL**

Our group was able to successfully create a beneficial and marketable product because of the constant communication link between all members at all times. We were all receptive and eager to give feedback in terms of product idea brainstorming. To ensure that our group would continue to work together successfully once our product patent was submitted, we established many channels of communication (via phone, Internet, and personal meetings) to ensure that effective communication and working well together remained a top priority amongst all group members in order to run a successful business.

## **Organizational structure!**

### **Organizational barriers to communication**

#### Information overload

Our group initially came up with numerous product ideas, and it was difficult to sift through each one to finally come up with the customizable hats that would eventually make it to market. Because this was the most crucial part of development, it took a lot of time to finally decide on which product to make. After a first patent for a completely different product was submitted, our group decided to go in a completely different direction and chose to produce and market our current line of hats.

#### Time pressures

Due to assignments in other classes and the day-to-day schedules of busy college students, finding a meeting time in which all members could regularly attend was a challenge. However, due to the many channels of communication established



by the group, missing members were able to catch up on any progress they may have missed by checking Facebook or our Gmail account.

#### Organizational climate

Finding a calm, pressure-free environment in which brainstorming could happen most productively led us to the University of Texas Perry-Castañeda Library. Though it is a popular place for many students to hang out and sometimes posed a noise problem, it was the location for all of our group meetings, therefore creating a level of comfort and familiarity once the main objectives for the group fell into place.

### **Improving organizational communication!**

#### Encourage feedback

This especially came into play during the time in which group members suggested possible product ideas. Once an idea was submitted during meetings, every member of the group had the opportunity to voice their opinion on the possible

benefits and possible consequences of the product. Because everyone's input was encouraged, we were able to ultimately create a product that resonated with every group member and was supported by everyone to the fullest extent.

#### Climate of trust

Because our group began meeting very early in the semester, a climate of trust was instilled very early in the product planning stages. Everyone was accountable for their own actions, and was extremely dependable in terms of keeping up with the progression of the group itself.

#### Effective listening

Effective listening was practiced at each and every group meeting. Our group understood the importance of considering other members' ideas, as well as expressing their own ideas. Cooperation

and collaboration were the two most effective means of communicating possible product ideas, marketing and promotional strategies, and the technical aspects of execution.

**Self-directed work team** - as defined in class, our group worked as a self-directed work team at all times. Working complementally with the instructions given by the Mayor, our group was able to independently develop a marketable product for the Business Fair by considering all members' input opinions.

## OVERALL

Cooperation and collaboration were the key elements of our group's organization. There were no official leaders of the group, and everyone's input was carefully considered and discussed by the group as a whole. Because of our ability to work cohesively, our company was a success. By practicing the ways in which a company can overcome the organization

barriers that could compromise the success of the company, we were able to avoid any potential problems before they ever arose.



## Customer Involvement!

Customer involvement was the driving force behind the development of our product. The initial idea for "Mysombrero" came about when talking with staff at Dell Children's Hospital. After discussing such concepts as everyday dilemmas, patient morale and out of date procedures we felt an underlying need for our product.

Staff members reiterated time and time again the negative association accompanying these hats. Numerous employees expressed complaints who felt that "the current hats are unfashionable and plain." Other staff members told of the emotional toll children experience when undergoing Chemotherapy. Even more surprising was the high number of burn victims the hospital takes on, often the result of car crashes, as well as the startling realization that Dell Children's Hospital is the only non-profit hospital in Texas.

From then on it was undeniable the important role these hats play in a hospital's day to day operations. The need for an affordable, comfortable, breathable, fashionable, and fun hat was made even clearer after our interviews with children. All appeared extremely receptive to our product and reviewed the idea as a "great one!"

Everyone interviewed revered our product as innovative and likely to succeed, expressing interest in buying the product were it to exist. Overall, the positive feedback received by our market customers: patients and family members, hospital staff, and distributors of medical equipment provided sufficient evidence for our product's need and success.

## **Financial Management!**

Our group has gone to/taken great measures to ensure financial stability and profitability. Research and development played a major role in maintaining our company's edge and reputation, and served as the basis for making all financial decisions.

Our goal was to remain as affordable as possible yet stay within the confines of our consumer's budget. To satisfy these needs our company chose to market our product to a distributor/manufacturer? Our calculations depicted this as the cheapest solution. We originally hoped to sell our product directly to the

To pay for our current expenditure's each member has contributed his or her money in accordance with the class rules while the majority has come from sponsors interested in investing in a start-up company. As the company continues to grow we will invest more money in advertisements; however, we will keep with smaller media outlets as our market is not entirely common or mainstream.



With the right decisions and resources in place our company stands ready to succeed. The diverse make up of our company strengthens the likelihood of our achievement. As further proof of our commitment, each member pledges to do his or her best to uphold the company promise and look to elders for guidance. In times of question, we will band together and make all decisions as a team.



Adequate planning will also attribute to the company's success, as we will have plans in place detailing the proper succession of team members both in everyday operations

and in times of crisis. Thus far, in our company's development we will remain as an eight member company and will expand as we continue to prosper. All in all, our company looks ahead with great promise.

## Step 4 - Let's Not Get So Technical Now...



"Where there is the necessary technical skill to move mountains, there is no need for the faith that moves mountains. -- Eric Hoffer

Since our product is something that has not been seen before in hospitals or with families of these children, our plan is to mass distribute to the hospitals as an alternative to the normal plain hats that they make available to the children. That will be the first step to distribute the product. However the possibilities for distribution are not only limited to the hospitals. The company's website will be the key tool for national distribution. There our product can be purchased in bulk (for hospitals, etc) or individually as a gift for a child in the family for example.

All accounting and data can be managed using software to minimize human error. Availability of the product will be kept up-to-date on the website, and orders will be reconciled with the information in our accounting and database software. All orders and invoices will have digital copy and physical copy saved for accounting purposes.



The "MYsombbrero" is a great product that encompasses the ideas of individual creativity while hiding the psychological benefits of it. According to Cynthia Fitchpatrick M.Ed., psychological program coordinator at Dell Children's medical center, a fun and creative activity not only helps children with their suffering, but creates a psychological event that helps in the mental healing of a tragic situation or accident. Along with Mrs. Fitchpatrick, Ms. Claudia Velasco, BS Child Life Specialist, and Pediatric Hematology Oncology, agrees that a common game or activity that children take part and that gives the child a sense of belonging is the first step in emotional healing and a great benefit psychologically.

The incorporation of a product such as the "MYsombbrero" helps children network with one another, viewing themselves as a group and not as individuals with individual problems. This unified group works together, helping each other overcome life's burdens. In order to achieve a uniform incorporation of such a product, one that experts agree will benefit children; the spread of this item must be widely distributed and marketed. "Hats for

Children," a local non-profit group located in Austin, is dedicated to making knit hats for cancer patients, welcoming the product and supporting it.

The fact that the Dell's

Children's Hospital gift shop has never seen or heard of such a product is another crucial point. The manager mentioned that if an item were to exist along the lines of the idea for "MYsombbrero," she would definitely purchase such a product for the hospital in the near future. This has also lead to conversations with various managing rehabilitation nurses,



stating that this would be easily achievable through the hospitals main supplier of medical and rehabilitation supplies.

This is why Sammons Preston has valued the idea and has even shown potential interest in such a product to distribute nationally. The "MYsombbrero" is not only just a small idea generated from a highly empathic group of students for a project, but is also a way to help children of the world cope through incredibly difficult times. Helping children psychologically and emotionally through frightening and emotional times is a great feeling that has brought a group of students together to help those in need.

## Step 5 - Hey! You Got Your Statistics in My Product!



"Consumers are statistics. Customers are people."  
- Stanley Marcus

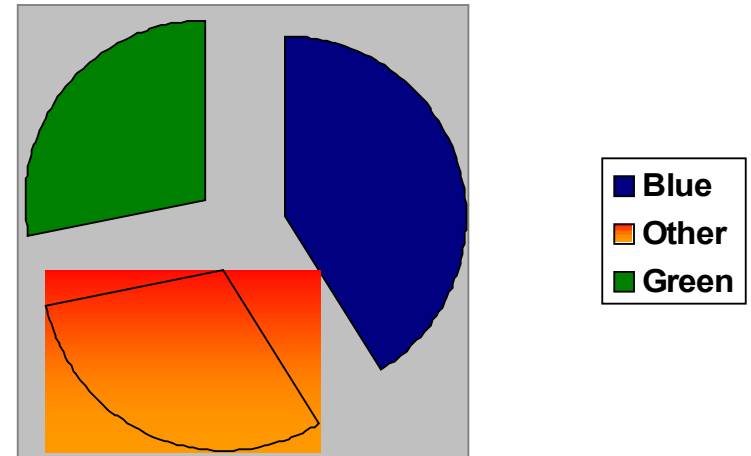
To work on any business venture, research and statistics are necessary. In developing our product we researched many aspects that we thought would affect the success of our idea. By talking to children, nurses and reading past research we further developed and refined our idea. Nurses that we interviewed thought that our idea would be very useful and that children's moods would be lifted.

Many patients at the Dell's Children Hospital are trauma victims who have been in bad car accidents. Being in these situations has a heavy toll on their psychological wellbeing. Being in a hospital (despite it's wonderful design)

and being confined to lying in their bed or being attached to an IV is difficult for children and many are gloomy and sad according to nurses. In addition to that, some have to wear the hats issued by the hospital that are bland and further reminds them of their situation. Finding all this information out helped us cement our idea and gave us motivation to pursue it further.

We used a lot of statistical information. Reading up on some online surveys, polls and previous research; we've discovered that blue is the favorite color of children ages one to eighteen. With this information, we decided to have blue markers and blue decals with our kit since we predicted they would be popular with children. Green was the second most popular color, so based on that we're including a lot of green in our kit.

## Favorite Colors Amongst Kids



41% chose blue as their favorite color while 28% chose green. Studies have also shown that brown is the least favorite color among children, 43% of children between the ages of one to eighteen picked brown as their least favorite color. We have avoided using brown colors and are sticking

with primary and bright colors because they are more popular with children.

We hypothesized that about 70% of children liked our idea and by testing our hypothesis using various means we came to the conclusion our hypothesis was largely correct. 80% of children interviewed like the idea of being able to design their own hats.

We also collected many different forms of useful information from doctors, parents, and the children that our invention was aimed to aid. Doctors provided us with the vital data essential to the growth of hair follicles in a child cancer patient, and assisted us by pushing us into the right direction so that our product would follow these guidelines. Parents and the children we aimed to aid, provided us with their opinion on our product and if, and how, it was different from similar things on the market.

Using their opinions along with data provided to us from the medical personal, we used a method that was very familiar to us from our Management Information Systems

class; Hypothesis Testing. We gathered the opinions, both negative and positive, and added a decision made on our behalf to create a hypothesis.

What we wanted to know was; "If these children were provided these hats, would they enjoy them, and would the product implement hair growth"? The outcome would determine if we failed to reject or rejected the null, which later had a great impact on our decision to go on with production of our product.



Team 40 (projectHOPE) went to places such as Dell Children's hospital and talked to patients. We even visited with employees of major companies (such as Hancock Fabrics, and Hobby Lobby). We wanted to make sure "MYSombrero" would be a Business Fair success.

We used statistics online by finding children's favorite colors and other useful pieces of information. We had a member go to the UT Child Development Center and ask how the children would like to decorate their own hats. The member used simple random samples of students from a 4-5 yr old class. Then she used a cluster sample from another 3-4 yr old class. The member also had them choose between black and white hats to decorate. With information about children's preferences, we made an executive decision to go with white hats.

We also included colors that were chosen to be favorites and the colors included in our kit. We talked with nurses and looked at past research to see what hats for children in hospitals work best. We discovered that a child's hair doesn't grow back evenly because most hats are rigidly designed, not breathable, and very uncomfortable. Using all

of our statistical data, research, interviews, and focus groups, we were able to design a hat with the target audience in mind while still allowing the flexibility for creativity and individuality.



# Step 6 - The Nitty Gritty of an Itty Bitty Committee



"Individual commitment to a group effort -- that is what makes a team work, a company work, a society work, a civilization work. " --[Vince Lombardi](#)

The following records were kept by all the members of projectHOPE (Team 40). Records include attendance and budgeting for the product, booth, marketing, advertising, and other expenses.

## Attendance Records

*\*Subject to change, Final Accounting will be submitted Tuesday before the Fair\**

Date	Alex	Brandon	Brenda	Dustin	Lisa	Meredith	Nada	Tessa
5-Feb	x	x	x	x	x		x	x
10-Feb	x		x	x			x	
15-Feb	x		x	x			x	
22-Feb	x	x	x	x	x		x	x
24-Feb	x	x	x	x		x	x	
29-Feb	x		x	x	x	x	x	
14-Mar	x	x	x	x	x		x	x
21-Mar	x			x		x	x	
28-Mar	x	x	x	x			x	x
4-Apr	x	x		x	x			x
11-Apr	x		x	x	x	x	x	x
13-Apr	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	

## Budget

INCOME (From ALL sources)		
Income Source	Actual (A) or Estimated (E)	Income (\$)
Dr. Delio Ortegon	(A)	\$100.00
Al Ansari Exchange	(E)	\$360.00
Meredith's Potential Sponsor	(E)	\$100.00
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>		<b>\$560.00</b>

EXPENSES		
Expenses	Estimated Amount	Amount Requested
<b>BOOTH PREPARATION</b>		
PVC Pipe	\$70.00	
Drapes	\$30.00	
Surge Protectors	\$20.00	
Extension Chords	\$20.00	
<b>PUBLICITY</b>		
Banners	\$20.00	
T-Shirts	\$70.00	
Pictures	\$30.00	
<b>PRODUCT PREPARATION</b>		
Hat Mold	\$50.00	
Plastic Containers	\$35.65	
Labels and Materials	\$20.88	
Yarn	\$8.78	
Stitching, Needles	\$5.60	
Decoration Materials	\$45.55	
Display Board	\$20.00	
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>		<b>\$446.46</b>

# Step 7 - The Things That Keep Us Going



"Good character is more to be praised than outstanding talent. Most talents are, to some extent, a gift. Good character, by contrast, is not given to us. We have to build it piece by piece-by thought, choice, courage and determination." -- John Luther

The following feature story is the culmination of an hour long interview with the Mayor of the City of Cleveland AT Texas, Dr. Lynda G. Cleveland. A story of hope, loss, and determination, it was often read for inspiration during the team's toughest times and as a foundation for the product.

*- See "Cleveland Feature" under the "Endeavors" tab on website for story. -*

8 students + 1 unified endeavor = HOPE  
On behalf of projectHOPE, Team 40, or however  
you see us:

Thank You Dr. Cleveland.

