

Poly Royal 2014: Applying Communication Concepts in order for a Successful
Annual Rodeo Event

A Senior Project presented to
The Faculty of the Communication Studies Department
California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo

In partial fulfillment
Of the requirements for the Degree
Bachelor of Liberal Arts

by

Shyan Souza

June, 2014

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	1
Program Goals.....	3
Small Group Communication	
<i>1.1 Introduction and Group Roles.....</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>1.2 Collaboration in Problem Solving.....</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>1.3 Leadership.....</i>	<i>10</i>
Persuasion in Advertising	
<i>2.1 Resource-Matching Theory.....</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>2.2 Social Networking.....</i>	<i>15</i>
Working with Organizations	
<i>3.1 Topoi of the Company.....</i>	<i>17</i>
Results.....	19
Strengths and Weaknesses.....	21
Works Cited.....	24
Appendix A.....	26
Appendix B.....	27
Appendix C.....	30
Appendix D.....	31
Appendix E.....	32
Appendix F.....	33
Appendix G.....	34

Introduction:

Rich in American tradition, the sport entitled “Rodeo” has been around for many centuries. The blood runs thick and it runs deep within the veins of my ancestors, myself, and the many members of the rodeo community. Derived off of a traditional working cattle ranch, the sport of rodeo evolved from everyday activities seen on the range. In April of 1851, the State of California even passed an ordinance requiring every owner of a stock farm in San Luis Obispo County to produce one rodeo. This is proof that the origin of this sport once began within the boundaries of which we reside in now. Rodeo has been a part of Cal Poly for over 60 years—creating some of the most famous athletes in the world. With our “Learn By Doing” ideals, Cal Poly has produced collegiate champions that go on to be superstars. The legend of the Cal Poly Rodeo Team has been carried on from generation to generation, and will be preserved for years to come.

Cal Poly, known for its agricultural roots, attracts some of the most high-class, intelligent, and talented rodeo performers from across the nation. While some are unacquainted with what we do, we are recognized in the western industry for our prestigious rodeo program, and our annual Poly Royal Rodeo held on campus every year. With one of the largest crowds noted in the National Intercollegiate Rodeo Association—over 3,000 and counting— the Poly Royal Rodeo production is talked about all year. High school students from around the U.S. *dream* of being a part of the Cal Poly Rodeo Team. This event not only provides advertisement for future Cal Poly students, but potential rodeo team members as well.

The Poly Royal Rodeo is known for its professionalism, and ample academic honor behind its competitors. As a member of the National Intercollegiate Rodeo Association (NIRA), Cal Poly is one of six Universities in the West Coast Region that is required to put on their own rodeo production. Cal Poly Rodeo takes this event to the next level through specific communication-related campaigns and procedures. According to authors Michael Meyers, and C. Matthew Laurent Jr., Associate Professors of the Department of Sport Science and Physical Activity at Idaho State University, “the rodeo athlete has achieved iconic status in sport, literature, art and entertainment. For over half a century, rodeo has become a staple of organized sport programmes in high schools, universities and international competitions” (418). What Meyers and Laurent Jr. state could not be more accurate. Rodeo athletes all over the world are becoming famous for their strength, integrity, and endless amusement. Because of this fact, rodeo fans will travel up to hundreds of miles to watch these future professional rodeo cowboys and cowgirls take their first step into the top rankings.

With rodeo performances on Friday, April 11th, and Saturday, April 12th, we are able as contestants to compete for multiple titles, as well as allow for audience members and fans to be a part of this great rodeo tradition. The annual Poly Royal Rodeo gives away high-end awards such as beautiful designer belt buckles, and saddles to the All-Around Cowboy and Cowgirl. Rodeo competitors strive to earn the established “Poly Royal” buckle once in their college rodeo career. The West Coast Region competitors look forward to this rodeo every year—it stands in a category of its own. During each performance there are eight rodeo events:

Bareback Bronc Riding, Tie-Down Roping, Breakaway Roping, Steer Wrestling, Saddle Bronc Riding, Team Roping, Barrel Racing, and Bull Riding. In each of these events, the rodeo contestants compete with their trusting animals in order for a victory. It is truly one of the most unique connections that any outsider is able to witness. As stated in “The Rodeo Athlete” written by Meyers and Laurent Jr., “When considering that experience and, thus, improvement in rodeo is achieved solely through constant and punishing practices involving actual and repetitive, human versus livestock competition, the practices closely imitate a sport-specific form of interval training” (419). Although rodeo is not recognized as a school funded sport, these rodeo athletes have made a name for themselves in the Cal Poly community.

Just as any other sport, local audiences can cheer for their Cal Poly Rodeo Team as our rodeo contestants seek victory. With rodeo being known as being a family-oriented sport, audiences of all ages are encouraged to attend. The Poly Royal Rodeo performance contains endless action to keep adults involved, as well as clown acts to suit the children. This event has become a large part of the annual “Open House” weekend. For years I have promised to keep this tradition alive, and what better way than to do just that here at Cal Poly using what I have learned from my time here as a Communication Studies major.

Program Goals:

Just a year shy of its 75th anniversary, the Cal Poly Rodeo Team is searching for a way to reach out to the public and invite them to be more involved in what we pride ourselves in. In the past we have had sufficient attendance, but for years to come we want to be remembered for our flawlessness. Here, we take our Cal Poly

motto and what we have learned as Mustangs into account while planning for this special event. With a new coach in place this year, we are striving for this event to be orderly, high-class, and memorable for the attendees. Though it has been vastly successful in the past, my goal is to improve on a number of communication approaches in order to create a professional image. My plans for Cal Poly Rodeo include starting with strong communication tactics to improve our planning process, and finishing with positive results and a spectacular event. The pre-planning steps that we will take beginning the December prior to the event, are outlined in Appendix A. In order to achieve success with this event, we must first design and abide by the Poly Royal Rodeo timeline. This document states exact dates to be followed by the board members. Our hopes with this are to stay on top of tasks, in order to not be rushed the month before this event takes place.

Poly Royal, a three-day episode, is marked on people's calendars every year and is recognized all over the western industry. This year, in order to inform others of our Poly Royal Rodeo and connect further within our Cal Poly community, our goal was to incorporate a "Staff Day" into our itinerary. This "Staff Day" would include: lunch for all, meet and greet with the Cal Poly Rodeo Team, a detailed description of each rodeo event, real life roping lessons, and a full three hour performance of rodeo action. Included were raffle incentives for Cal Poly Rodeo Apparel, in which we designed for this year especially. Our hopes in planning this special event and adding it on to the Poly Royal Rodeo were to gain new fans, and plentiful support for the future of our program. On Thursday evening, we invited Cal Poly Staff and their families to join us for the kick-off performance to our 74th annual

Poly Royal Rodeo. Since many of the staff at Cal Poly admitted to being unaware of Cal Poly's rodeo program, we decided it would be in our best interest to make them feel welcome, and inform them about the great sport of rodeo. This being a first time experience putting on a special performance for our Cal Poly staff, we enacted on brainstormed plans. We found, however, that there was much that went well, and much we could improve on. These details will be expressed later on in this project.

In order to put on an event of this size, there are many elements of fine detail and communication strategies. As with most every task in life, communication is essential. Putting on an event such as Poly Royal involves many communication theories and tactics such as: small group communication theories, collaboration and compromise, persuasion tactics and the "resource-matching" theory, leadership and "power" theories, along with a strong presence of organizational communication theories. In this project, I will lay out all of the steps necessary to put on this event, and how using these specific communication strategies play out in real life.

Small Group Communication

1.1 Introduction and Group Roles

A team of five students and the rodeo coach work together months before this event takes place, in order for distribution of certain phases and formation of ideas. This team, or "student board" consists of a President, Vice President, Secretary, and Sponsorship Coordinator. Each board member works together as a team under the supervision of the coach in order for a successful production. Though many would believe that having a larger group to plan an event of this sort would be necessary, I have learned through my research that the number that we chose was

just as effective. According to an article published in *Communication*, titled "The Nature of the Small Group," a small group is defined as "two or more people in physical proximity who dynamically interact orally about a common concern" (3). Through this definition, we can be assured that our Poly Royal planning team is classified as a "small group".

Though the publishers of this article state "two or *more*" people, they do not confirm a maximum number of group members. They do, however, acknowledge the fact that it could become increasingly difficult to interact effectively when the group grows to be a large number. The article states, "Communication channels multiply as the size becomes larger, and communication grows in complexity. The power structure alters also, and the cliques form" ("The Nature" 6). Keeping group members, or in this case board members, assembled in smaller numbers reduces the chances of cliques that may form, and the chaos that might occur when reaching an risky heightened number of team members. The article agrees with this concept as well. As the article "The Nature of the Small Group" also positions, "The ideal sizes, therefore, in terms of communication effectiveness, power structure, high productivity, and high member satisfaction, appear to be five, seven, and perhaps nine" (8). With odd numbers such as these, groups are less likely to face standstills on decisions that require a vote, and are more likely to engage in solid face-to-face communication.

As each small group encounter formulates, roles eventually emerge through each group member. In this case, however, at the beginning of every year the rodeo team gets together and elects each board member separately, basing their

decisions off who they believe would be the best fit. Once the board members were elected, they were then assigned specific duties to their title. Lane Karney, a Cal Poly Junior who has had experience in the rodeo industry for many years, took president of Cal Poly Rodeo. The obligations of the President consisted of delegating duties to individual officers under the consent of the coach, assisting in organizing team meetings, planning and researching the needs and wants of the organization and its members, and being an overall positive representation of the rodeo program. Lane did his job to look over the planning process of the Poly Royal Rodeo, and assist each board member with their jobs as well. Being a part of this program for three years allowed for decisions to be made based on past experience, and other factors.

Vice President, held by Cal Poly sophomore T.J. Jewell, was entitled to assisting the President in any projects that he may be working on. The V.P. was to ensure that he was prepared to take over whenever the President may be busy, or not able to attend a particular meeting or event. The next position, held by myself, was the Secretary position. As Secretary, my duties were to assist in creating a specific task for each board member, take notes at meetings, work with the coach regarding fundraising efforts, and take part in the advertising process. I would also make use of social media networking, audience analysis, persuasion advertising, and other various sorts of communication related tactics in order to produce an effective event to showcase the pride of our Cal Poly Mustang Rodeo Team. I thought that this position suited me very well—I thoroughly enjoyed working in depth

with all of the other board members, as well as working within the organization to include the public in this pronounced event.

The fourth and final position on the board was entitled Sponsorship Coordinator, and was ran by Cal Poly Sophomore Giuliana Torlai. Giuliana was in charge of managing and delegating the rodeo sponsorship packets, contacting potential sponsors, answering sponsor questions, and putting together sponsor advertisements for the Poly Royal Program. This position is highly significant to the Poly Royal Rodeo process because without the support from our sponsors, the rodeo would not be possible. The Poly Royal Program consists of all sponsor advertisements, an order of events, and a contestant's list that is handed out to spectators for a small fee. A large incentive of being a Poly Royal Rodeo sponsor is having a banner displayed in the arena, and an advertisement in the program seen by thousands. The Sponsorship Coordinator must be able to pay close attention to detail, and be a patient, people-oriented person. Since sponsorship money is one of the only things that keeps this Cal Poly program alive, having an effective person in this position is necessary. Each team member is provided with a sheet describing each level of sponsorship, a breakdown of the payment process, and a letter describing what Cal Poly Rodeo is all about.

1.2 Collaboration in Problem Solving

As Anastacia Kurylo describes, "collaboration, also known as problem solving, is 'a strategy that involves seeking a mutually satisfactory alternative'" (25). Collaboration, an important factor in the problem solving process, requires that participants brainstorm, problem solve constructively, and 'think outside the box'

during the deliberations necessary to pursue their goals successfully (26).

Collaboration in small groups is crucial—when groups are stumped on an issue, collaboration invites diverse opinions, interpersonal communication, and opportunities for feedback. By communicating about alternative views within the group, the problem solving process can be completed. Just as authors and professors at Purdue University, Kasey Walker and Cynthia Stohl state, “The bulk of collaborative communication occurs at the team level, indeed, the level where relationships among individuals and organizations is revealed and acted upon” (450). Through the implementation of collaboration, our “team” was able to form a strong relationship that welcomed communication about what each member liked and disliked, thus inviting new topics into the discussion.

For example, when the group’s decision was split over the amount of sponsorship funds required by each member, the Cal Poly Rodeo board members collaborated to find a solution. This disagreement was over the amount of sponsorship monies that each member must bring in. Cal Poly Rodeo team members are required to seek at least one sponsor for that year’s annual event. Due to the lack of funding from the school, however, the rodeo team must take matters into their own hands. Some members believed that \$600 could possibly be asking too much of rodeo team members; other group members believed that asking the team to each collect \$600.00 was very reasonable. Half of the group argued for \$300.00, while the remaining half argued to keep the status quo. Knowing that conflicting ideas are nearly inevitable in small groups, I applied the communication strategy of Integrative Problem Solving. Integrative Problem Solving

is “a creative approach to conflicts of interest; it searches for solutions that benefit everyone” (Rothwell 295). Using the type of integrative solution to conflicts known as “bridging” the Cal Poly Rodeo board members were able to expand our ideas and make a mutual agreement. Bridging “offers a new option devised to satisfy all parties on important issues” (296) and certainly assisted in the eventual decision to require an amount of \$500.00 for each rodeo team member, and \$450.00 from each board member. By following this process, the Cal Poly Rodeo board members were able to come up with a solution.

Due to the successful use of collaboration, and by the five of us meeting weekly, we were able to bond as a team and form each decision by discussing each phase elaborately. By not only using the phrase “I do not agree,” but also the phrase “let’s think this through,” we were able to work our way through each discussion by using positive reinforcement, and a significant amount of communication collaboration. Though sometimes voting in board members does not turn out to be the best form of position evaluation, our 2013-2014 Cal Poly Rodeo board was an extremely well-tailored group. This was because of the amount of *collaboration* used in our problem solving process. Based on the decisions made throughout the planning course of this event, our group exercised a vast amount of collaboration, and showed positive results by utilizing the integrative solution process of “bridging”.

1.3 Leadership

The complete functioning of the small group involves roles that different members take on through the communication processes. Leadership, defined as,

“the ability to make strategic decisions and use communication effectively to mobilize group members toward achieving a common goal” (Engleberg and Wynn 203), is essential to the small group and its general success. Engleberg and Wynn state, “All groups need leadership. Without leadership, a group may be nothing more than a collection of individuals, lacking the coordination and motivation to achieve a common goal” (203). These authors declare, again and again, the importance of group leaders. A *leader*, which refers to a given title, differs from leadership. *Leadership*—within a small group—refers to the actions that it takes to help group members achieve group goals.

Reaching further into small group communication research regarding leadership, there is also a feature power dynamics. Power—in general— is seen as a method of control and influence. As author J. Dan Rothwell states, “When transacting power in groups, members utilize power resources. A power resource is ‘anything that enables individual to move toward their own goals or interfere with another’s actions’” (311). Expert power, a specific power dynamic, can contribute to the small group based on previous experiences and knowledge. Rothwell states, “Experts not only have valuable and useful information for a group, but they also understand the information and know how to use it to help the group. An expert can give knowledgeable advice” (312). Though different from the title of a leader, expert power can have just as much or even more of an impact on the group. Based on experience, expert power can bring many positive aspects to the small group. In this situation, and because I have been a part of this program and the planning of this event for four years now, the expert power position was claimed by myself.

Although my title was simply “Secretary” there were many more roles that I acquired such as: emergent leader and expert power. Using what I knew about communication combined with what I knew about this event, I was able to lead the group members in the right direction.

The Cal Poly Rodeo board meetings ran fairly well; we searched for a time that would be functional for all members and stuck to that. Friday at 11:00 a.m. was what was decided, and we met at a casual restaurant known as Charlie’s Place, in downtown San Luis Obispo. In an orderly fashion, Rodeo Coach Ben Londo would start off the meeting as the official small group leader. However, taking on the role of leader and acting on my expert power, I made sure that each group member’s topic of concern was covered during every meeting. I wanted to be sure that all members were on the same page and able to complete each task orderly, efficiently, and with the utmost enthusiasm. It was crucial that each member had their own designated speaking time, and satisfaction was confirmed before meetings were terminated.

As a leader, I made sure to use uplifting communication, while focusing on keeping the group on track as to complete the planning of this annual event. Through the use of these communication tactics, the Cal Poly Rodeo board was able to communicate effectively, as each member was accepting of their role and the formation of others. There were no examples of excess power to one individual, or an inability to accept a task that was put upon a single member. As a result of becoming an emergent leader, I was able to use what I have previously learned as a communicator and apply it to this real life small group situation.

Persuasion in Advertising:*2.1 Resource-Matching Theory*

A method known as the “resource-matching” theory, which entails “approaching a persuasive situation by recognizing both the target’s cognitive resources and the demand placed on those resources by the message” (Koch 7), was applied to the creation of the Poly Royal Sponsorship Advertisement. Koch explains the effects of different persuasion techniques used on consumers, and how they react to them. From this, we were able to get a grasp on which persuasion tactics seem to be most applicable. Choosing the “resource-matching” theory and including it in our search for potential sponsorship donors, allowed for a deeper connection with those already active in our sponsorship program, as well as new sponsors. According to researchers George Deitz, Susan Myers, and Marla Stafford, “Organizations seek to utilize sponsorship as a way of differentiating their products and services by tethering them to issues, events, and organizations that customers care deeply about” (226). For those who reside in the West Coast, the attachment to the western industry can be very deep-rooted.

If Cal Poly Rodeo was previously aware of this theory and could tailor sponsorship packets to the desires of the potential supporters, the annual Poly Royal Rodeo event would have been able to expand immeasurably. However, the implementation was done this year, and in Appendix C and Appendix D, I have included a sample of what was created for the 2014 Poly Royal Event. Based upon the resource-matching theory we were able to create a packet that tended to specific aspects of what we believe sponsors could connect to directly. Using the

resource-matching theory, Cal Poly Rodeo can create a functioning fit between the sponsor and the activity. Through the process of resource-matching, message processing is “optimized when available processing resources match required cognitive demands” (Deitz, Myers, and Stafford 227). As researchers Deitz, Myers, and Stafford further state, “It is proposed that the message relevance of sponsorship information will be higher for individuals with high social identification with the sponsored activity, creating greater motivation for them to elaborate upon the nature of the sponsor-event relationship” (228). Just as these researchers suggest, the objects involved in the message and the correct uses of persuasion tactics and rhetorical design indefinitely pulls all of the weight in the success of the Cal Poly Rodeo sponsorship program.

The resource-matching theory advocates the use of added elaboration on areas such as: assumed motives of the sponsor and suggestion of the association being the right fit. Connecting our needs of sponsorship funds to something that would appeal to the consumer would be ideal for this operation to be successful. In Appendix D, Cal Poly Rodeo’s “level of sponsorships” are listed and contain titles such as: Rodeo Sponsor, Event Sponsor, and Arena Sponsor. Listed under each of these specific categories are all of the inclusive items that come along with. For example, when a sponsor donates enough money to be an official “Rodeo Sponsor” they will receive a sponsor flag, rodeo tickets, V.I.P. parking, and recognition in the Poly Royal Program. Another item included in this list is “a pennant to show my Cal Poly Rodeo pride”. Under the guidance of the resource-matching theory, we offer these types of incentives to evoke a sense of togetherness and pride. We want our

sponsors to know the importance of this event to us, and in turn hope that they feel the same by becoming a sponsor.

Since Cal Poly Rodeo relies on sponsorship money for the majority of this event, persuading outside businesses and personnel to become a Poly Royal sponsor is one of the main focuses. Using communication and persuasion theories such as the Resource-Matching Theory, Cal Poly Rodeo can be confident that it will raise a sufficient amount of funds for this year, and future years. By connecting directly with the supporters' social identity, we can heighten the chance that they will be able to connect in a deeper way. Inviting them to be a part of the Cal Poly Rodeo family allows for a growing attachment to our team and the annual Poly Royal Rodeo. This year, we were aiming to create a replacement method of gaining new sponsors. Using my knowledge of specific communication theories, we were able to create an effective document that can be used in years to follow.

2.2 Social Networking

The Media Priming Theory has a direct association with message effects on personal beliefs and mental constructs. Media Priming, or “the effects of the content of media on people’s later behavior or judgments related to the content” (“Media Priming” 97), provides a powerful tool for influencing how people think and react to media. First seen in psychology research, media priming was used to “explore the structure and representation of information within network models of memory” (“Media Priming” 103). As researchers have found, media priming allows companies to tailor their presence on social media to create a reaction from the public. A social media site such as Facebook is a pristine example. Since the success of social

networks are “becoming one of the main channels to access content across the internet” (DaSilva 678), creating a Cal Poly Rodeo Facebook page appeared crucial in reaching out to the public. Companies around the world are quickly realizing that it is necessary to include social networks for the branding and communication about their product. In addition to giving companies massive access to people, social networks offer companies to interact with its users in a simple and cheap way.

Cal Poly Rodeo attempted to reach out to all audiences by using Facebook. By creating a Facebook page, we are taking a step in the right direction—as long as we consider deeply how our potential spectators will receive our communication messages. Using the basis of the media priming theory, we posted phrases that would leave a mark on our fans. Since many of our “likers” are a mix of rodeo community members and random rodeo fans, we tailored posts to evoke some sort of emotion. For example, in Appendix G, I have provided a screenshot of one of our posts regarding a “Kids Camp Rodeo” that we put on at the beginning of the rodeo season. This special rodeo is a chance for children that are diagnosed with some sort of illness to spend a day with the cowboys and cowgirls of the Cal Poly Rodeo Team. In this post, we wrote “Thought we would share this awesome little write up about the Kids Camp Rodeo that we put on here at the rodeo grounds, here’s the link!” For this particular post, we wanted to leave an impression on the fans of Cal Poly Rodeo, while also hoping to gain new fans. On this Facebook post, we received 14 likes, and one share.

Though the likes on the Cal Poly Rodeo Facebook page are low as of now, our hopes in utilizing Facebook to its maximum capability will be to raise awareness

of the Cal Poly Rodeo program. By keeping fans updated and taking advantage of direct access on mobile devices, the Poly Royal fan and consumer spectrum can be broadened to people of many different places. Using communication resources and the media priming theory, the implementation of the Cal Poly Rodeo Facebook was deemed successful. After a few short months of creating the Cal Poly Rodeo Facebook page, the number of “likes” hit 1,290.

Working with Organizations:

3.1 Topoi of the Company

In order to improve our advertising and public relations within the community, I worked with a local company known as J.Carroll to create a line of apparel for Cal Poly Rodeo. By becoming familiar with J.Carroll, and visa versa, we were able to establish an understanding of one another. Matching the topoi, or “representation of a set of closely related minor premises that form a general consensus among members” (“Rhetorical” 280) of J.Carroll to our goals was the first part of forward progress. According to researchers James Barker, Sarah Gilmore, and Clive Gilson, “Topoi, as framing modes of argument, give a sense of direction and intention to an organization’s rhetorical discourse. That is, organizational topoi represent the configurations of organizational values we use as modes for generating shared understandings and meanings as we need them” (280). Learning the “topoi” of J.Carroll and their services helped in both the initial and final stages of working to create our apparel web-shop.

At the beginning of this process, we did some research into what J.Carroll took pride in. What we found is that they were very involved with sports teams—

especially those from Cal Poly. They pride themselves in creating “an atmosphere that makes the thorough and insightful handling of a screen printing or embroidery project enjoyable for both our customers and our employees” (Jcarroll.com).

Through this, and the many conversations that we shared, I concluded that J.Carroll’s mission was to truly benefit others. They believed in putting customers first, and tried to make every encounter a pleasant one. As with Cal Poly Rodeo, J.Carroll wanted to leave a positive imprint on its customers. By finding this connection, J.Carroll and Cal Poly Rodeo was an easy match. As stated by authors Chris Huxham and Siv Vangen, “The one issue that has been raised by virtually every group is concerned with the aims, objectives or goals of a collaboration. Typically, people argue for the importance of having a clear and agreed set of aims” (5). By finding common ground between both party’s goals and points of interest, communicating effectively with an organization becomes easier and goals can be accomplished more quickly.

Through J. Carroll, I requested the opportunity to create a Cal Poly Rodeo “web-shop” in which people could go online, order their apparel, pre-pay, and the order would be shipped straight from the manufacturer. This way, the Cal Poly Rodeo Team would not have to be in charge of the maintenance, yet are still earning a profit for the organization. My hopes for the J.Carroll and Cal Poly Rodeo connection are to not only raise more money for the rodeo program, but also expand our fan base. With Cal Poly Rodeo apparel available, parents of rodeo contestants, rodeo contestants, fans, staff, and others are able to sport our name around wherever they may go.

Once we had decided on what apparel was to be sold online, we offered J.Carroll's print and design team a few suggestions on new designs that they had created. This process was very simple, the J.Carroll team was very easy to work with—our communication was very effective and neutral. They were very willing to get our web-shop up and running, and Cal Poly Rodeo was very excited to get this process rolling. After a simple negotiation of percentages, our site was one step closer to being functional. In Appendix E and Appendix F, I have inserted what Cal Poly Rodeo Apparel's homepage looks like. We have received much interest already, and hope to see more. Through what I have learned in Organizational Communication, communication and matching organizational "topoi" are critical to the success between a club (or non-profit) and an organization. All that J.Carroll believes in correlates to what we believe in at Cal Poly, and we were very fortunate to have found such a company who had faith in our program. This would be the final step of this year's Poly Royal Rodeo production, and one that I hope will have a large impact on the future of Cal Poly Rodeo.

Results:

Based on the communication concepts that were used in the production of this event, I believe the Poly Royal 2014 event was very successful. For having a new coach, the Cal Poly Rodeo Team really stepped up to the task. By effective communication between the coach and team members, along with team member to team member, we were able to work together to put on this great production. Poly Royal 2014 was talked about for many weeks after—people complimented on the cohesive of our team, and the amount of energy and enthusiasm that we all had for

success. Though the main commission was comprised of only five people, it took the assistance of every other member on the Cal Poly Rodeo Team.

Each board member successfully filled their role, but together, we were able to fill in the blanks when needed and assist each other each step of the way. The Cal Poly Rodeo Team has faced many hardships in the past, but that has just brought us closer. Though tensions are high during the time preceding this event, each member is understanding and willing to jump in. From planning weeks in advance and until the bitter end, the Cal Poly Rodeo Team showed their strength, integrity, and hardworking ethics in numerous ways—communication amongst one another and their needs playing a large part.

The implementation of the resource-matching theory into the sponsorship packet proved to be a success in the end. This year, we raised \$2,000.00 more than last year, showing that this theory benefited Cal Poly Rodeo as a whole. Working with J.Carroll was also a very positive experience. Through the process of figuring out an organization's "topoi" I found it crucial to hold the same set of beliefs and ethics as the company that you are working with—which fortunately we were able to do with J.Carroll.

The most important factor through this process, however, is learning from the mistakes that were made. Although this event ran very smooth to the outsiders, the people working on the inside saw differently. Nevertheless, in search of perfection, little faults can seem much bigger to the eyes of the ones who worked to make it flawless. Based upon the responses received, Poly Royal 2014 was an extremely successful event. I also feel that I accomplished what I wished to accomplish as

well. My goal was to improve upon the communication tactics used in order to create a professional image for Cal Poly, and I believe that is what I did. I hope to leave this year's board with the confidence and skills to move forward, along with a set of past instructions and suggestions for future implementations regarding the use of communication.

Strengths and Weaknesses:

Since this event has been going on for many years, much of the process was already familiar to the coach and the Cal Poly Rodeo board members. However, there is always room for improvement, and that is what I am about to discuss. After extensive research on small groups, the first thing that I would suggest is to add one more board member—making a total of five. This way, we are able to hold meetings without the coach, and still be able to maintain a stable face-to-face interaction. In situations where the coach was unable to attend, the group meetings tended to be slightly unorganized. In the future, I believe it would be beneficial to add a “Rodeo Committee” in charge of meetings that the coach would not be available. This way, we could still be productive, and have some form of official leadership. Based on some interactions in Cal Poly Rodeo's board, an addition of one or two other sources that the leader, or leaders, can rely on. This would help with any other tasks that may need done, during the final stages of the planning process.

Along with an addition to the Cal Poly Rodeo board, we agreed that each position should be drawn out in specifics. In doing this, we can ensure the position was filled by the correct candidate. Beginning in Appendix B, I have created an “Officer Position” profile that describes the duties of each position, along with both

the benefits and requirements. I feel that this document will not only ward off people who believe that they cannot fulfill this position, but also invite those who are well structured, and feel that they would be a spectacular fit for this position. Other than specifications and additions to the Cal Poly Rodeo board, however, there is not much that I would change about this aspect. Being a part of the board not only keeps members involved, but also opens up a broader view based on each member's differences, similarities, and potentially outstanding ideas.

Another characteristic of this year's production that could have been more organized was the new launch of the Cal Poly Rodeo Apparel. Since this was a new, fresh, idea for this year, we should have gone about advertising and retailing in a more ornamental fashion. For example, many of the Cal Poly Rodeo team members weren't even aware that we had launched our own line. Since this process had taken months to run through the school, we should have had the Cal Poly Rodeo Team on board with advertising. The next step that we took was "pre-orders"—which seemed like a great idea. However, once orders were taken and packaged, the consumers really had no way of collecting them during the chaos of the rodeo weekend. This procedure, however, once reflected upon post-rodeo meeting, was then implemented, as it should have been, after we then connected with J.Carroll in the formation of our web-shop.

Lastly, I thought that the implementation of the social networking task into the function of the Sponsorship Coordinator position was a good idea, but underdeveloped. Though advertising and networking using social media is something that Giuliana enjoys doing, it was hard to manage that time in the midst

of all the other tasks. In the future, I think devoting the time to social media advertising for Cal Poly, and the Poly Royal Rodeo would be vital to the program. However, creating a new position, or perhaps adding this aspect as a different board member's duty would be beneficial. Since this is where most kids ranging from junior high to college are spending their time, it is essential that that is where we focus a lot of ours. Managing the Cal Poly Rodeo Facebook page would be part of this as well—considering that this has already been created, the task of updating should not be a problem. I believe using the media priming theory already focused on for Cal Poly Rodeo's Facebook would also be beneficial to focus on during the creation and maintenance for both Instagram and Twitter accounts. This allows for a wider range of social media users to become connected with the Cal Poly Rodeo Team. Along with this, Twitter will be used to provide constant updates during rodeos, and spread information about the team.

Works Cited

- "About Us." Jcarroll.Com. J.Carroll Ecommerce Software by Shopify. Web. 4 June 2014. <http://www.jcarroll.com/pages/about-us>
- Barker, James, Sarah Gilmore, and Clive Gilson. "Rhetorical Profiling: Modes of Meaning Generation in Organizational Topoi." *Canadian Journal of Administrative Sciences*, 30.4 (2013): 280.
- Dasilva, J. Á. Pérez, et al. "Companies On Facebook And Twitter. Current Situation And Communication Strategies." *Revista Latina De Comunicación Social* 16.68 (2013): 676-695. *Communication & Mass Media Complete*. Web. 9 June 2014.
- Deitz, George D., Susan W. Myers, and Marla R. Stafford. "Understanding Consumer Response To Sponsorship Information: A Resource-Matching Approach." *Psychology & Marketing* 29.4 (2012): 226-239. *Communication & Mass Media Complete*. Web. 4 June 2014.
- Engleberg, Isa N., and Wynn, Dianna R. *Working in Groups: Communication Principles and Strategies (4th Edition)*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon, 2006. 203. Print.
- Huxham, Chris, and Siv Vangen. "Working Together Key Themes in the Management of Relationships Between Public and Non-profit Organizations." *The International Journal of Public Sector Management*, 9.7 (1996): 5.
- Koch, Eric Charles. "The Use of Persuasion Expertise to Interpret Marketers' Persuasion Attempts.", (2001): 7.
- Kurylo, Anastacia. "Teaching The Difference Between Compromise And

Collaboration Through Trial And Error." *Communication Teacher* 24.1 (2010): 25-29. *Communication & Mass Media Complete*. Web. 3 June 2014.

Meyers, Michael C., and Jr., C. Matthew Laurent. "The Rodeo Athlete." *Sports Medicine* 40.5 (2010): 417-431. *Academic Search Premier*. Web. 30 May 2014.

Myers, Scott A. "Students' Perceptions Of Classroom Group Work As A Function Of Group Member Selection." *Communication Teacher* 26.1 (2012): 50-64. *Communication & Mass Media Complete*. Web. 1 May 2014.

Roskos-Ewoldsen, David R, Roskos-Ewoldsen, Beverly, and Carpentier Dillman, Franceson R. "Media Priming: A Synthesis." *Media Effects: Advances in Theory and Research*. Mahwah: Taylor and Francis Library, 2008. Book

Rothwell, J. Dan. *In Mixed Company (8th Edition)*. Boston: Cengage Learning, 2013. 295-296. Print.

"The Nature Of The Small Group." *Communication* (1973): 1-105. *Communication & Mass Media Complete*. Web. 19 May 2014.

Appendix A
Poly Royal Planning Timeline

Poly Royal Rodeo Timeline

December 1st:

- Send out sponsorship letters to previous sponsors
- Unpack apparel for giveaways, banquets, or purchase

February 1st:

- ALL Sponsorships Due
 - Any student who turns in sponsorship after Feb. 1st will not receive team jacket

March 15th:

- Order sponsor banners/signs/flags
- Organize program- send print once draw is available
 - (Usually week prior to the rodeo)

April 1st:

- Send out “Thank You’s” to all sponsors
 - Remind sponsors of upcoming Poly Royal Rodeo
- Send out tickets/parking passes/ VIP
- Radio/ TV/ Newspaper Advertising

April 15th:

- Comprise list of Poly Royal buckle sponsors to VIP tent for pictures
- Personally introduce and thank all sponsors in VIP tent
- Radio/ TV/ Newspaper recap of Poly Royal

May 1st:

- Thank you and recap letter to all sponsors
- Compile list of what went good/bad

July 1st:

- College National Finals Rodeo letter to all sponsors and rodeo boosters

Appendix B Rodeo Officers



Officer and Job Positions for Summer-2014 and 2014-15 Academic Year

PRESIDENT

- Delegates duties to individual officers and outlines the job description for the officer positions
- Preside/organize/ maintain order during meetings
- Plans and researches the needs and wants of the organization and its members
- Represent the Rodeo Team within campus associations...ASI, Student Life, Student Council
- Hold Monthly Team Meetings and Bi-Weekly Officer Meetings
- Keep Rodeo Team updated and informed

Perks

1. One large stall scholarship in kind for the academic year (Fall-Spring)
2. Special problems units if needed
3. \$500 scholarship if position is filled past coach's and officer team's expectations

Requirements

Self-motivated, leader, organized, willing to put in lots of effort. Able to manage and motivate a team.

FACILITY/LIVESTOCK MANAGER –Apply for this position

- Enforce Program Membership Rules and By Laws
- Assist coach in enforcing housekeeping rules throughout facility
- Maintain and delegate rotating work crews throughout the year
- Manage and coordinate improvement projects around the grounds throughout the year
- Manage/delegate rodeo grounds preparation for Poly Royal Rodeo and other Events
- Be in charge of work days

Benefits

1. One large stall scholarship in kind for the academic year (Fall-Spring)
2. Special problems units if needed
3. Up to 20 Hours a Week paid position @ \$10/Hr for work above and beyond position.

Requirements

Hardworking, self driven. Preferably experienced with equipment, welding, hardware, plumbing etc. Able to notice and tackle projects without being asked. Experience with doctoring, feeding, handling livestock.

Appendix B Rodeo Officers Cont.

****Position will be chosen by coach's discretion. If interested please send a detailed email to me complete with qualifications.***

SECRETARY

- Keep accurate notes at each meeting
- Assist coach in stall/practice/membership fee collection
- Delegate and manage PR work and relations with Queen
- Manage and delegate all program mailings, appreciations, functions etc.
- Work closely with the coach regarding budgeting and fundraisers development
- Work closely with all committees throughout the year, especially rodeo committee

Benefits

1. One large stall scholarship in kind for the academic year (Fall-Spring)
2. Special problems units if needed
3. \$500 scholarship if position is filled past coach's and officer team's expectations

Requirements

Organized, able to work in a team, budgeting and cash handling experience, able to take accurate and tidy notes, self-motivated and driven

RODEO CHAIR/SPONSORSHIP COORDINATOR

- Manage and delegate rodeo sponsorship program
- Assist coach in all contract procurement, delegation, management of Poly Royal Event
- Contact and follow up with all sponsors, vendors, contractors, etc
- Work closely with coach to develop and maintain event budget
- Work closely with Queen to manage award presentations
- Lead, manage, and delegate Rodeo Committee

Benefits

1. One large stall scholarship in kind for the academic year (Fall-Spring)
2. Special problems units if needed
1. \$500 scholarship if position is filled past coach's and officer team's expectations

Requirements

Organized, able to work in a team, budgeting and cash handling experience, able to take accurate and tidy notes, self-motivated and driven, comfortable talking to people in a professional setting.

CAL POLY RODEO QUEEN-Chosen through Queen Contest

- Assist coach, rodeo chair and committee in all event PR work
- Contact and delegate all press and public relations for program throughout the year
- Do a presentation for each quarter of the Beginning Rodeo Class
- Manage sponsor and supporter hospitality during rodeo

Appendix B Rodeo Officers Cont.

- Plan, organize, and put on Poly Royal Queen Contest
- Promote our sport and program through multiple community events (farmers market, etc.)
- Lead, manage, and delegate Rodeo Committee

Benefits

1. \$3,500 in scholarships
2. Special problems units if needed

Requirements

Organized, able to work in a team, able to promote our sport and program, public speaking skills, self-driven and motivated.

RODEO COMMITTEE – Composed of 2 individuals (Winter Quarter Only)

- Work closely with officer team and coach to manage all duties involved in putting on Poly Royal.

Benefits

1. Stall Scholarship for Winter Quarter
2. Special problems units if needed

Requirements

Organized, able to work in a team, able to promote our sport and program, public speaking skills, self-driven and motivated.

WORK POSITIONS-Up to two per quarter-apply through coach

- Do odds and ends work around the arena and rodeo grounds at coach's and facility manager's discretion.

1. \$10 per hour for up to 20 hours per week

Requirements

Organized, self motivated, reliable, work experience and skills. Must commit to work agreement with coach.

Appendix C
Sponsorship Form

Thank you for support of Cal Poly Rodeo. Please return this form and your donation to the address at the bottom of the page.

Please make your check payable to "Cal Poly Rodeo." We will send a tax receipt. All donations go directly to the Cal Poly Rodeo program.

All checks and ads must be received by Feb. 1, 2014

If your sponsorship includes an ad in the program, we can either use the ad we used last year or you may email your copy to:

gstorlai@calpoly.edu

Business Name _____

Contact Person _____ **Phone** _____

Address _____ **City** _____

State _____ **ZIP** _____

Email _____

Cal Poly Rodeo Contestant Name _____

Cal Poly State University
College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Science
Cal Poly Rodeo
1 Grand Avenue
San Luis Obispo, CA 93405

Appendix D Sponsorship Levels



Poly Royal Rodeo Sponsorship Program

- ☐ Yes, I would like to be a **Rodeo Sponsor** for \$1,500 and receive...
- A flag to be run in the grand entry at each performance
 - Announcement throughout the rodeo
 - Four VIP rodeo passes, a VIP parking pass
 - A pennant to show my Cal Poly Rodeo pride
 - Facebook recognition as a sponsor
 - Mention in the rodeo program
 - A Cal Poly Rodeo hat
- ☐ Yes, I would like to be an **Event Sponsor** for \$1,250 and receive...
- A 4' x 6' sign in a high-visibility location in the arena
 - The opportunity to award the championship buckle to an event winner
 - Two VIP rodeo passes
 - A pennant to show my Cal Poly Rodeo pride
 - Facebook recognition as a sponsor
 - Mention in the rodeo program
 - A Cal Poly Rodeo hat
- ☐ Yes, I would like to be an **Arena Sponsor** for \$1,000 and receive...
- A 4' x 6' sign posted in a high-visibility location in the arena
 - A pennant to show my Cal Poly Rodeo pride
 - Facebook recognition as a sponsor
 - Mention in our rodeo program
- ☐ Yes, I would like to be a **Full-Page Sponsor** for \$750 and receive...
- A full-page ad in our rodeo program
 - Facebook recognition as a sponsor
- ☐ Yes, I would like to be a **Half-Page Sponsor** for \$500 and receive...
- A half-page ad in our rodeo program
 - Facebook recognition as a sponsor
- ☐ Yes, I would like to be a **Quarter-Page Sponsor** for \$250 and receive
- A quarter-page ad in our rodeo program
 - Facebook recognition as a sponsor
- ☐ I do not wish to be a main sponsor but would like to donate to the Cal Poly Rodeo program and receive subtle recognition in the program as a cash donation sponsor.

Appendix E

Cal Poly Rodeo Apparel Web-Shop



[Home](#)
[One Color Special!](#)
[Contact Us](#)
[About Us](#)
[Our Services](#)
[FAQs](#)
[Latest News](#)
[Web Stores](#)

Home » Cal Poly Rodeo

Share: [g+](#) [Print](#) [Tweet](#) [Like](#) 4

Cal Poly Rodeo

All Products ▾



CP Rodeo Tee • Heather Grey

The classic Cal Poly Rodeo logo printed in dark green on a cotton comfort t...

from \$19.99



CP Rodeo Tee • White

The full color Cal Poly Rodeo logo printed on a cotton comfort t-shirt! Sho...

from \$19.99



Junior Fit V-neck • Heather Grey

The classic Cal Poly Rodeo logo printed in dark green on a cotton v-neck! T...

from \$24.99



Junior Fit V-neck • White

The full color Cal Poly Rodeo logo printed in on a white cotton v-neck! The...

from \$24.99



Missy Fit V-neck • White

The full color Cal Poly Rodeo logo printed in on a comfy white cotton v-nec...

from \$24.99



CP Rodeo Tank-Top • Heather Grey

The classic Cal Poly Rodeo logo printed in dark green on a cotton comfort t...

from \$24.99



CP Rodeo Tank-Top • White

The full color Cal Poly Rodeo logo printed on a white cotton tank top! Show...

from \$24.99



CP Rodeo Ladies Racerback Tank • White

The full color Cal Poly Rodeo logo printed on a ladies racerback tank top! ...

from \$24.99



CP Rodeo Long-Sleeve • White

The full color Cal Poly Rodeo logo printed on a long-sleeve t-shirt! Made w...

from \$24.99



CP Rodeo Long-Sleeve • Heather Grey

The classic Cal Poly Rodeo logo printed in dark green on a long-sleeve t-sh...

from \$24.99



CP Rodeo Hoodie • White

The full color Cal Poly Rodeo logo printed on a cotton rich heavyweight hoo...

from \$39.99



CP Rodeo Hoodie • Heather Grey

The full color Cal Poly Rodeo logo printed on a cotton rich heavyweight hoo...

from \$39.99



Ladies SLO Rodeo • Green

A classy and stylish 'Rodeo - San Luis Obispo' floral print on a lightweigh...

from \$19.99



Ladies SLO Rodeo • Orange

A classy and stylish 'Rodeo - San Luis Obispo' floral print on a lightweigh...

from \$19.99



Bucking Blue • Tan

Get in rodeo spirit with a Cal Poly Rodeo blue bucking horse print on an ex...

from \$19.99

Appendix F

Cal Poly Rodeo Apparel Cont.



Bucking Blue • White

Get in rodeo spirit with a Cal Poly Rodeo blue bucking horse print on an ex...

from \$19.99



Bucking Brown • Tan

The Cal Poly Rodeo brown bucking horse t-shirt really shows true rodeo spir...

from \$19.99



Bucking Brown • White

The Cal Poly Rodeo brown bucking horse t-shirt really shows true rodeo spir...

from \$19.99



Rodeo Hat • Black & White

The full-color Cal Poly Rodeo logo trucker hat is built for comfort and sty...

\$24.99



Rodeo Hat • Tan/Khaki

The full-color Cal Poly Rodeo logo trucker hat is built for comfort and sty...

\$24.99



Interlock Rodeo Hat • Black & White

The CP Rodeo Interlock logo trucker hat is built for comfort and style! Cla...

\$24.99



Interlock Rodeo Hat • Tan/Khaki

The CP Rodeo Interlock logo trucker hat is built for comfort and style! Cla...

\$24.99

Appendix G

Cal Poly Rodeo Facebook

Shyan
 Home

Cal Poly San Luis Obispo Rodeo Team

1,289 likes · 2 talking about this

Organization

This page was created to keep the community and all those who support the Cal Poly rodeo team informed. The Cal Poly rodeo team is a group of student athletes who not only excel in the arena but also academically.

About · Suggest an Edit

Cal Poly San Luis Obispo ...

Timeline

Recent

Like · Reply · May 28 at 7:57pm

Cal Poly San Luis Obispo Rodeo Team

April 16

Cal Poly San Luis Obispo Rodeo Team shared a link.

Thought we should share this awesome little write up about the Kids Camp Rodeo that we put on here at the rodeo grounds, here's the link!
<http://www.slocity.org/downloads/council%20notes/04-11-14%20Council%20Notes.pdf>
<http://www.slocity.org/downloads/council%20notes/04-11-14%20Council%20Notes.pdf>

Like · Comment · Share

14
 1 Share

Cal Poly San Luis Obispo Rodeo Team

March 31

Make sure you're calendars are marked for our annual

Cal Poly San Luis Obispo Rodeo Team

May 28

Congratulations to the following points team members headed off to Casper for the CNFR! On the men's team we have Chase Bowen (bareback), Lane Santos-Karney (steer wrestling, team roping, and calf roping), Colton Farquer (calf roping), Tayl... See More (13 photos)

Create Page

Sponsored

Times change
att.com

So should your phone. Add a device to your AT&T wireless account today starting under \$1.

The Sub

2 levels of awesome, fun & unusual items – we're not just a shop – we're an ADVENTURE!

Like Page

Hannah Alexa Serlich likes this page

Create Page

Recent

2013

Sponsored

FREE Designer Glasses
coastal.com

First time glasses customers! Get your first pair FREE, includes frame + standard lenses.