

OCBF Fundraising Handbook

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 of
Bachelor of Arts

By

Clare Devlin

Dr. Jnan Blau

Senior Project Advisor

Signature

Date

Dr. Bernard Duffy

Department Chair

Signature

Date

I. Intro:

For my senior project I chose to undertake an applied project so that my work would have a direct impact. I was presented the opportunity to explicitly use my communication knowledge to enhance the function of an Orange County Bar Foundation at the internship I completed this fall. The Orange County bar foundation is a non-profit organization committed to keeping “at-risk youth out of jail, in school, healthy, and drug free through education, counseling, and mentoring” (What Is). The Foundation completes its mission by offering its program service to the youth of Orange County.

At my internship with the Orange County Bar Foundation I became aware of some of the communication problems they face on a daily basis and on a larger scale. One problem the Foundation is having, is effectively communicating with its stakeholders at its annual golf tournament, and on a larger scale. As a non-profit the Orange County bar Foundation relies on stakeholders to fund its programs so effectively communicating with them is essential for the Foundation.

II. Preview:

In this essay I will explain how I created a handbook for the Orange County Bar Foundation in order to enhance the organization’s communication with its stakeholders. In order to do this, I will first elaborate on the Orange County Bar Foundation and its organizational structure. Then I will describe in higher detail, the communication problem the Foundation is experiencing. And finally, I will present a literature review of the persuasion theories I used to inform the set of guidelines I created to help the Foundation solve its communication problem.

III. Background:

The Orange County Bar has a total of fifty board members, responsible for raising funds for the Foundation's various program. However, in recent years, the Foundation's staff has had to take on the board's fundraising responsibilities because the board has not raised enough money to keep the Foundation's various programs in operation. Therefore, the Foundation's Associate Director, Nancy Garcia has taken on the role of fund developer for the Foundation in addition to her other work. As fund developer, Nancy puts on events like the Foundation's annual golf tournament, aimed at raising money for the Foundation's programs.

One way the Foundation's staff raises money at its annual golf tournament is by putting on a sweepstake. Unfortunately, this year, the Foundation's sweepstake did not raise as much money for the Foundation as it has in previous years. Usually a majority of golfers participating in the golf tournament enter the sweepstake by purchasing a ten-dollar key that may or may not open the treasure chest full of prizes. However, fewer golfers entered the treasure chest sweepstake this year. Only thirty-two keys to the treasure chest were sold, even though the standard amount of golfers, 120, participated in this year's golf tournament.

The treasure chest sweepstake's failure to raise money can not be attributed to low attendance, but may be attributed to the fact this was the first year the Foundation sold keys to the treasure chest sweepstake on its own. In the past the Foundation has outsourced the task of selling the sweepstake's keys to an outside company because it was easier and more efficient to do so. However, the company the Foundation normally hires was no longer in business this year, so the Foundation decided to try and save some money by selling the keys on its own.

It would be good for the Foundation not to rely on an outside company to sell keys to its treasure chest sweepstake since hiring an outside company adds a cost to the sweepstake that the

Foundation doesn't need to take on. Without the additional cost hiring an outside company, the only cost of putting on the treasure chest sweepstake would be purchasing the physical keys the Foundation sells to the golfers. Everything else in the sweepstake is donated to the Foundation, including the prizes in the treasure chest. Plus, the Foundation has more than enough labor to run the treasure chest sweepstake by itself.

III. The Orange County Bar Foundation's Communication Problem:

Ninety cents of every dollar of the Foundation's revenue goes directly to the Foundation's programs, so it is important that the treasure chest sweepstake is successful (What Is). The reason the golfers participating in the Foundation's tournament this year probably didn't buy as many keys to enter into the treasure chest sweepstake because the Foundation's staff did not advertise the sweepstake properly. Due to inexperience and a lack of a standardized procedure, the Foundation failed to effectively communicate to the golfers and persuade them to purchase a key.

This communication problem stems from a larger communication issue the Foundation has been facing. An external stakeholder survey conducted by an outside consulting company called the Olin Group, found that the Foundation stakeholders tend to lack awareness about the variety of programs and issues the Foundation seeks to address, despite the fact that many of them have engaged with the Foundation for a long time and the mission and values of the Foundation resonate positively with them. These results indicate that the Foundation needs to improve its communication with its stakeholders, so that the stakeholders are educated about the Foundation's programs and can act as ambassadors for the Foundation.

The Foundation can start taking on this larger communication problem, by improving their communication with the golfers participating in their tournament. Most of the golfers have a stake in the Foundation and are easily accessible at the tournament. To enhance the Foundation's communication at the golf tournament I created a set of task messages designed to help employees communicate with the stakeholders in the golf tournament effectively.

IV. Literature Review:

At the golf tournament the foundation put on this year, fifty of the treasure chest's keys were displayed at a table golfers passed to get to their next hole of golf. A surplus of keys was stashed under this table the keys could be replaced once they were sold. However, because of a study done by Worchel et al., I instruct the Foundation to displays its keys in a different manner.

In Worchel et al.'s study published in the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, researchers asked subjects to rate "the value and attractiveness of cookies that were either in abundant supply or scarce supply" (Worchel). "The results indicated that cookies in scarce supply were rated as more desirable than cookies in abundant supply; cookies were rated as more valuable when their supply changed from abundant to scarce than when they were constantly scarce; and cookies became scarce because of high demand were rated higher than cookies that were scarce because of an accident" (Worchel). Basically the study supports the theory that items that appear to abundant and then later on scarce due to high demand are more valued and deemed more attractive. Therefore, based on this theory, the Foundation could make its keys more attractive to the golfers participating in the tournament by creating the illusion that its keys are scarce commodities in high demand.

In order for the golfers to think the keys are scarce, they first need to see the keys in abundance. This year's location of the keys did not allow the golfers to make this comparison because they only passed the crossroad where the sweepstake was set up once. Therefore, in my handbook, I instruct the Foundation to sell the keys at check in, before selling them at the crossroad. Every golfer in the tournament has to check in order to play so displaying the keys at check in guarantees every golfer will see them. Then, later on, when the golfers pass the treasure chest sweepstake at the crossroad it will be their second time seeing the keys.

Other than adding a supplementary time and location for the keys to be displayed, I also instruct the Foundation to display all of the keys at once. Originally the Foundation stashed some of the keys off to the side because it wanted to make sure the golfers that passed the crossroad towards the end of the tournament had the same chance of buying a winning key as golfers who passed the crossroad at the beginning of the tournament. Therefore, all the winning keys weren't supposed to be displayed at once. But if the Foundation sells the keys to the treasure chest sweepstake during check-in, like my handbook instructs, then the golfers would have an equal chance to buy a winning key then. Selling the keys at check-in makes the sweepstake fairer. It also highlights the growing scarcity of the keys. For the keys to the treasure chest sweepstake to appear to be high in demand, the Foundation should advertise the amount of keys it sells.

It is also important to advertise key sales because it could induce conditional cooperation. The theory of conditional cooperation is supported by Frey and Meier in their field experiment "Social Comparisons and Pro-Social Behavior: Testing Conditional Cooperation in a Field Experiment", published in the *American Economic Review*. According to their research "an individual's probability of contributing to a public good increases when the percentage of individuals who contribute increases within a given group" (Frey). Therefore, based on this

study's findings, it would be good for golfers participating in the Foundation's tournament to hear that other golfers are buying keys because it might make them more likely to buy a key. This is why I insist in my handbook that golfers are told that other golfers have bought keys to the treasure chest sweepstake.

In addition to raising money through its treasure chest sweepstake, the Foundation also raises money by selling squares with guaranteed prizes attached to them. These squares, however, are more expensive than keys to the treasure chest sweepstake. Therefore, if the OCBF were to place the keys next to the squares, they could capture the population of golfers unwilling to spend fifty or one hundred dollars on a square but willing to spend ten dollars on a key.

This idea follows the logic of the door-in-the face theory, supported by an article Cialdini et al. published in the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* in 1975 called "Reciprocal Concessions Procedure for Inducing Compliance: The Door-in-the-face Technique." Their study indicated that proposing "an extreme request which is rejected and then moving to a smaller request increases compliance with the smaller request" (Cialdini). As I see it, the squares the OCBF sells could substitute as the "extreme request" and the keys could be the "smaller request."

However, it is important to note that the door-in-the face technique only works "when the extreme and the smaller favors were asked by the same requester" (Cialdini). In order to increase key sales using the door-in-the-face theory, the same people who sell the Foundation's squares need to sell the Foundation's keys to the treasure chest sweepstake. So, in my handbook, I not only instruct that the keys be placed next to the squares at check in, but insist that the same people selling the Foundation's squares sell the Foundation's keys.

It is also important that the same people giving free beer out to the golfers are the same people selling the golfers the keys to the treasure chest sweepstake. The OCBF normally displays its keys at a table next to the Foundation's free-beer table where golfers can get free beer; however, this year, I sold zero keys when I displayed them there. It wasn't until I moved the keys to the actual free-beer table that golfers started to purchase keys from me. From my own experience I learned that the keys needed to be sold at the free-beer table.

My research also supported this conclusion. In Regan's study, "Effects of a Favor and Liking on Compliance," published in the *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, subjects who received a Coke from Joe bought twice as many raffle tickets as subjects who didn't receive a Coke from him because they felt like they needed to reciprocate the favor (Regan). Data in Regan's study "strongly indicates that people are more likely to comply with a request made by someone who has done them a favor than by someone who has not" (Regan). The Foundation should make the free beer appear to be coming from the people selling keys to the treasure chest sweepstake, so that golfers feel like they need to contribute to the sweepstake.

According to Regan's study, people like to give back to people who give to them (Regan). However, there are also many altruism theories that "assume that individuals enjoy seeing the well being of others increase independently of the source of the improvement." Meier discusses these altruistic theories in his *Survey of Economic Theories and Field Evidence on Pro-social Behavior* (Meier). Based on these theories I believe the Foundation can improve key sales by merely making it clear to the golfers that buying a key will increase the well being of someone else. Therefore, in my handbook I lay down clear guidelines indicating the Foundation to promote the good its programs do for Orange County's community. If the Foundation follows

these guidelines, stakeholders will also become more educated about the Foundation's different programs.

V. Conclusion

Referencing persuasion theories I was able to create a handbook of task messages for the Orange County Bar Foundation. These task messages will improve the Foundation's communication with its stakeholders and in turn allow the Foundation to have a more successful treasure chest sweepstake at its annual golf tournament.

Mission Statement

This handbook's mission is to guide and assist the Orange County Bar Foundation employees and/or interns in becoming familiar with persuasion techniques that will allow them to successfully run the treasure chest sweepstake and raise money for the Foundation at its annual golf tournament.



Overview

Every year the OCBF puts on a golf tournament for its stakeholders in order to raise money. One way the Foundation raises money at its annual golf tournament is through its treasure chest sweepstake. This handbook was specifically created to make sure the treasure chest sweepstake is profitable for the OCBF. It is full of guidelines stipulating how OCBF employees and/or interns should sell the keys to the sweepstake in an efficient manner. However, the guidelines in the handbook are subject to modification. The Executive Director of the OCBF can and may administer specific procedural changes to how the keys to the treasure chest sweepstake are sold so that the Foundation can adapt to each year's needs. OCBF employees and/or interns are always encouraged to consult the Executive Director for additional information regarding the treasure chest sweepstake. Overall, employees and/or interns tasked with selling the keys to the sweepstake at any golf tournament put on by the OCBF are expected to be familiar with this handbook's policies and procedures. The handbook will not be individually administered to all employees and/or interns but will be given to any employee and/or intern in charge of the treasure chest sweepstake. Furthermore, the Foundation expects each employee and or intern to display good judgment and diplomacy when selling keys to the golfers and guests at the Foundation's annual golf tournament.

Treasure Chest Sweepstake Location

The keys to the treasure chest sweepstake should be displayed at the front of the country club when the players check into the golf tournament, next to the squares the Foundation sells as well. It is also important that the people selling the Foundation's squares also sell the treasure chest sweepstake's keys at check in. Many times the OCBF hires an outside company to sell the squares. If this is the case, employees and/or interns tasked with running the treasure chest sweepstake need to communicate with the outside company selling the squares and make sure the company sells the keys during check-in. However, once check-in is over and the tournament begins, the task of selling the keys falls upon OCBF employees and/or interns, and the treasure chest sweepstake should be relocated to the table where the OCBF supplies free beer to golfers participating in the tournament. Keys to the sweepstake should be displayed *at the free-beer table*, not beside it, so that the free beer appears to come from the employees and/or interns running the treasure chest sweepstake. In order to create this illusion, employees and/or interns should place the free beer behind the sweepstake's actual table and work with whoever is manning the free-beer. It is important that the same people handing the golfers free beer are the same people asking golfers to buy a key to the treasure chest sweepstake.



Setting up the Sweepstake

Employee and/or interns selling keys to the treasure chest sweepstake need to make sure that the keys the Foundation hopes to sell are displayed during check-in. Also, in order to highlight the initial abundance of the keys, it is vital that none of the keys are put off to the side but are displayed all at once. *All of the keys* available for sale need to be on display at all times. The number of keys the Foundation sells should be publicized to the golfers as well. Employees and/or interns can advertise this information merely through word of mouth or have the option to create a sign that has the ability to be updated. Telling golfers how many keys have been sold is vital to increasing key sales because it lets them know others are choosing to enter the treasure chest sweepstake as well.



Using the Treasure Chest Sweepstake as a Platform

Employees and/or interns selling keys to the treasure chest sweepstake should remind golfers how the money the OCBF raises is used. Employees and/or interns can do this by exhibiting pictures and or facts about the Foundation's various programs such as the Higher Education Mentoring Program or engaging golfers in informative conversations concerning the Foundation. Therefore, it is vital that employees and/or interns in charge of the treasure chest sweepstake are well informed about the Foundation and all of its programs. If an employee and/or intern want to become more knowledgeable of the OCBF they should visit the Foundation's web page. Overall, employees and/or interns need to understand that the Foundation's annual golf tournament is a unique platform for golfers participating in the tournament to learn about the OCBF as well as contribute money to the Foundation by entering the treasure chest sweepstake.



Works Cited

- Cialdini, Robert B., and Et Al. "Reciprocal Concessions Procedure for Inducing Compliance: The Door-in the-face Technique." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 31.2 (1975): 15-206. Web. 2014.
- Frey, Bruno S., and Stephan Meier. "Social Comparisons and Pro-Social Behavior: Testing Conditional Cooperation in a Field Experiment." *American Economic Review* 94.5 (2004): 1717-722. Web. 2014.
- Meier, Stephan. *A Survey of Economic Theories and Field Evidence on Pro-Social Behavior*. Working paper no. 06-6. Federal Reserve Bank of Boston., Jan. 2014. Web. 2014.
- Regan, Dennis T. " Effects of a Favor and Liking on Compliance." *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology* 7.6 (1971): 627-39. Web. 2014.
- "What Is the Orange County Bar Foundation, Inc.®?" *OC Bar Foundation*. The Orange County Bar Foundation, 2014. Web. 2014.
- Worchel, Stephen, Jerry Lee, and Akanbi Adewole. "Effects of Supply and Demand on Ratings of Object value." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 32.5 (1975): 906-14. Web. 2014.

