

Throughout this project our group has really enjoyed interacting with the business community here in Lawrence as well as the individual donors we have attracted to our raffle. The feedback that we have received has mainly been positive. Both business and individual donors have listened patiently to what we had to say, and reacted positively to our message, they seemed genuinely interested with our project. We have found that the more information we provided potential donors or participants and the more questions we answered, the better feedback we received. The information flyers that we produced helped us gain their attention and added a sense of legitimacy to the whole project. Yet, information was not the only catalyst because the more enthusiasm and excitement that we conveyed, the more willing community members were to listen to our cause.

Many of the questions that we were asked concerned the reason we were doing this project in a comparative politics class. The reasoning we gave them was that in doing this project we learned about the affected countries' governments and political culture. Also, we told them about interest articulation, and how this project gave us experience with informing and mobilizing the community about a cause. All of the other inquiries were usually about the logistics of the event itself, such as where were the profits of the raffle were going to, when the event would take place, and how much the tickets would sell for. These questions seemed easy to answer, and most of them were covered in the informative flyers that we had provided them.

Some of the problems encountered during the donor search were finding the person who had the authority over donations. Sometimes the right manager was not on duty, or the single franchise store did not have the authority to donate items to the

community. These caused problems because it involved going back to the location several times or having to reach district offices that never answer their phones. In the franchise store situation, we learned it was better to avoid them, and this was where our ideas about targeting smaller local businesses really helped. As for the manager issue, we would ask employees when the manager was next on duty and hope they were correct.

Another problem with the fundraising process was some of the corporation's policies on donations. One store specifically needed six months advance time for request of donations. Another company asked us for a letter from the organization we were representing. If we were a regular organization, these problems would not be an issue, but since this is a special situation, it would be difficult and impossible to follow these requests. Unfortunately there is no way to remedy some of these issues therefore we could not get their donations.

Community awareness is an important aspect of any fundraising event. Through this project we have learned many things about community awareness because of the fact that the success of the Tsunami Relief Day is going to depend on how aware the community is of the event. One specific thing that we have learned is how to publicize an event as large as this and why getting that publicity is so crucial to the event's success. As a group we have produced flyers that are meant to inform the community about the different aspects of the Tsunami Relief effort. This is important because it's not only necessary that the community be aware of the actual event itself, it's also vital that they understand the cause that they are donating to. The community needs to feel educated and informed before they are willing to give up their money for a cause. In a community like

Lawrence we are very lucky to work with donors that are highly educated and overall seem to have a good understanding of the importance of a global relief effort such as this.

The community is truly the most important piece to the puzzle in a task like the one we have undertaken in the Tsunami Relief effort. As a group we have come to realize that the success of this event is in our hands and those of the community as well. By creating a greater sense of awareness in the community, through our publicity and information, we have helped to eliminate some of the uncontrollable element of this project. This element is the community because we can only hope to influence them and we cannot completely control their reaction to our efforts. Through our interactions with community businesses and individuals we have not only learned the importance of awareness but also the methods that one must apply in order to gain that awareness. In a way our job as promoters of this event has been similar to that of a salesman. We must sell the idea to the community that helping us is both important and necessary. With an event as publicly known and internationally recognized as the Asian Tsunami, this task did not prove to be as difficult as we had expected at first. The community in Lawrence was knowledgeable and for the most part shared our enthusiasm in the effort to aid the countries that were devastated by the Asian tsunami disaster.

Our group has learned a lot about raising money in the community. The most important lessons our group has learned is raising money is not always easy and fundraising is definitely not straight forward. There is a lot of red tape involved when raising money; there is a lot of paper work needed to make an event legitimate. People do not always trust fundraisers and it can be difficult trying to convince someone that they are not being shorted and the money is indeed going to help the tsunami victims. In

addition to the red tape, our group has learned that the community is willing to help but it is up to us to provide valuable information to the community to convince them that help is needed and that we are indeed legitimate. We have also learned that it helps to raise money when it is a group effort, and not the work of only one individual.

Another thing that we have learned through working on this project is the importance of communication in order for our goals to be successful. Our group had to communicate many different things successfully when working on this project. It was necessary to communicate to the community and our donors what exactly we aimed to accomplish with our efforts for the raffle. We also had to communicate and combine our personal ideas with one another as group. These two aspects of the project are crucial because they are some of the challenges that are faced in any fundraising effort. The ability to effectively communicate ideas with a team of people and then relay those ideas to the community are important skills that we have improved upon throughout the duration of this project.