



case 6-993-398

June 3, 2019

Rashmi Menon

The Empowerment Plan (C): Generating Persuasive Communications to Raise Funds in a Nonprofit Startup Organization

This case is part of a series of four integrated cases about The Empowerment Plan (TEP), a Detroit-based nonprofit working to break the cycle of homelessness through training, employment, and job placement. Founded in 2012 by Veronika Scott, TEP recruited employees through homeless shelters and provided them with training, education, and full-time employment manufacturing sleeping bag coats. The specially designed coats were distributed free of charge to the homeless population.

As a nonprofit organization that generated nearly all of its revenues from contributions, creating persuasive communications to solicit donations was critical to the continued success of TEP. Imagine you were hired by TEP to develop a presentation intended to persuade key donor groups to provide cash gifts to the organization. You were asked to determine the best form of communication (e.g., presentation, email, flyer, etc.) to reach your audience group and to craft your messaging by taking into account the relationship TEP has built with these donors in the past, as well as how TEP would like to shape these relationships going forward. (A document with background information about TEP is included with this case.)

TEP Donor Groups

1. **Corporate donors.** Corporate donors provided both in-kind materials and cash donations to TEP. You were asked to create a persuasive communication piece to solicit donations from one of the following corporate donors:
 - a. **The Detroit Lions.** The Detroit Lions have been coat sponsors for TEP; in other words, the organization purchased several coats from TEP at \$125/each and then distributed them to people in need in the Detroit metropolitan area. You have been asked to convince the Lions to increase the size of its sponsorship program and make a multiyear commitment to TEP.
 - b. **Patagonia.** Patagonia has provided in-kind materials to TEP in the past. You have been asked to persuade Patagonia to make a cash donation to TEP, in addition to its in-kind donations.

Published by WDI Publishing, a division of the William Davidson Institute (WDI) at the University of Michigan.

© 2019 Rashmi Menon. This case was written by Rashmi Menon, Lecturer at the University of Michigan's Ross School of Business. This case was prepared as the basis for class discussion rather than to illustrate either effective or ineffective handling of a situation. The case should not be considered criticism or endorsement and should not be used as a source of primary data.

Unauthorized reproduction and distribution is an infringement of copyright. Contact us for permissions: info@wdi-publishing.com or 734-615-7319.