

Stamates #HigherEd Teen Talk Conference Takeaways

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ADMISSIONS PROCESS

- Personalize the Admissions Process in every way! Most important takeaway!
- Every part of the admissions process touches a student. It affects the mood. Make sure everyone involved is aware of how to act. Everyone should be fun, friendly and engaged with the kids.
- Experience on Campus is what seals the deal. Not marketing materials – it just gets them in the door. Most students said it was a gut feeling they had. So make every experience count.
- Having the President come out and say how fun the college is and the experiences you'll have and how prepared we'll make you for the real world makes a huge impact. A cool president goes a long way. Also the Deans of departments introducing themselves to students shows they really care.
- Be informal in your speak and emails. It's a relationship you're building not a business deal.
- Its best to let students know you are coming to their school beforehand. Not just show up. Then they know you are coming and can be prepared or request time to come see you.
- Experience during college fairs makes a big difference! Demeanor, approach, kindness of counselor influences decision. Personality and interaction is key.
- Hook students up with a current student that is in their major interest. It helps personalize the experience and establishes a bond with the College.
- Having overnight visits and tagging along with a current student is also a major influence.
- Tour guides make a big difference. Are they reading from a script or really excited about this college?

MAILINGS

- Kids get too many mailings from colleges. Often repeated mailings. It makes them feel like they are just a name on a list when the same info is resent to them.
- Personalize all mailings. General mails don't make them feel special. Its junk mail to them.
- Personalization and "Welcome to the College" gimmicks should not start only when accepted. They should be from the beginning. Otherwise students think now that you have my money you are taking the time to get to know me.
- Send the student the email of a current student that is in their program of interest. This helps build a connection with the College and reel them in. Then you're not just "some institution."
- Use colorful mailers. Blank white ones are boring and not worth opening.

EMAILS

- Hand written emails from admissions counselors make the most impact. Copying and pasting a generic block of text is a dead giveaway and turns kids off.

VIEWBOOKS

- Include all the seasons in your view book. Only spring/summer seems fake. Also, add photos that are not staged. Kids want to see what is really like on campus. Not polished marketing photos.
- Kids want to see candid moments and a recap of campus life: dorms (how people decorate), events, the dining hall, etc. Not just set up shots of students smiling.
- Most kids only read the titles and look at pictures. They barely read the paragraph texts unless its about their specific program. Less type and more pow!
- Kids want to see a Fast Facts section so they can see the statistics about the College. Will I fit in, are class sizes appropriate, student-faculty ratio, etc.

SOCIAL MEDIA

- Kids do not want to be contact by Facebook until accepted. Don't solicit. Its best to create an admissions Facebook Fanpage for them to go to for quick answers. Also incorporate this into every contact with student so they know they can go there for help.
- Don't text students unless they are enrolled.

ADVERTISING

- Advertisements don't really impress kids.

SLOGANS

- Make the catch phrase resonate with students. Don't just throw a slogan around. It should be backed up in everything we do. Example, Drake University D+ Campaign. Pairing Drake with Experiences. Shows their more than just academics. It's a whole experience:
<http://chronicle.com/blogs/tweed/did-drakes-ad-campaign-give-itself-a-near-failing-grade/26672>
- Incorporate the mascot more in marketing materials. Kids bond with it. It gives a sense of pride in school.

WEBSITES

- Make it easy to navigate so they can find info they want.
- Separate the pages for Prospective, Undergrad, Grad. Kids only want info relevant to their status. Not have to hunt around for it.
- Financial aid calculator is an important. Can they even afford your school?
- Many kids go do facebook to find other kids in the school to talk to them. Also they look to Fanpages to get answers.