Recruiting Guidelines & Tips

Graduate Studies Workshop
Wednesday, October 12, 2005
Updated Thursday, October 13, 2005
Do You Know . . .

- your market needs?
- the key messages your prospective students want to hear?
- your niche?
- how your applicants learned about your program?
Do You Know . . .

- where else your applicants have applied?
- how many people applied and withdrew last admissions cycle?
- the best and worst things about your program?
- where further promotional work may be needed?
Do You Know . . .

- what is on your website?
- your international market?
- about the countries from which your graduate students come?
Do You Have . . .

- connections?
- print communications?
- a dedicated website for your program?
- automatic emails?
- other customized, personalized communication?
- a recruitment plan and strategy?
Are you . . .

- using the email to respond to inquiries?
- actively soliciting information from prospects through your website?
- using regular chat sessions? (I think I know the answer to this question.)
- persistent?
Are You . . .

- tracking the professional/employment status of your alumni?
- keeping in touch with your alumni?
- reachable?
- spending equal efforts on analytics and creativity?
- taking action based on measurements?
Do You

- analyze the pools of graduate inquiries and applications?
- track student interest by source and discipline?
- compare data for related departments?
- continue to recruit your newly admitted students?
History of Graduate Recruitment

Green Eggs and Ham
Past

- Late 70’s and early 80’s: Tradition print brochures & snail mail
- Personalized but rarely customized
- Mail & pray

Present

- Print & electronic equally important
- Personal touch
- Expectation to be recruited
- Some schools still do little to develop inquiry pool
Most importantly...

- Competition for the best students is keen.
- Negotiations for high-quality graduate students may begin well before the expected year of enrollment!
RECRUITING RULES
RULE #1

IDENTIFY
Identify

- Your target audience (who you want in your program)
- Your resources
- Your connections
- Your best recruiters
Identify

- What the market wants to hear (pay attention to what makes the best applicants resonate)
  - Develop and test creative concepts among prospects and current students
  - Conduct internal audit
    - Faculty, staff, university relations, current undergraduates, current graduate students, directors of admission, alumni
    - Prospective applicants
Identify

- Uncover key benefits and unique differentiators
  - Internal: Perceptions; motivation
  - External: Perceptions; awareness levels; reputation of school; perception of competitors

- Develop your own statistics (i.e., enrollment reports, # of applications, etc.)
  - Why are they here?
  - What convinced them to join your program?
  - Why aren’t they here?
Chart Explanations:
(Statistics for Fall 2004 & Fall 2005 combined)

- **Potential Applicants by College:** % of individuals who submitted some application materials (i.e., transcripts, test scores, recommendations) but did not complete a formal application by submitting a Form A and paying a fee out of all complete and incomplete applications on record.

- **Grad Applicant Withdrawal:** Submitted a formal application but withdrew their applications. “No Shows” are individuals who were admitted but did not begin their program out of all formal applications.

A copy of individual college statistics was given out at the workshop. Please contact Graduate Studies if you wish a copy sent to you.
Percentage of Grad Applicant Withdrawals

- App Withdraw: 14%
- No Show: 2%
RULE #2

SELL

Think Like A User
Sell

Overview

- Be present
- Captivate your audience
- Market your unique characteristics
- Elevate overall reputation of the university

- Make effective use of publications, web space, and communications
- Be persistent & persuasive
- Increase response
Sell

- **Target messages:** Break your messages into moderate doses. Give them what they want to hear when they want to hear it. Don’t give them everything at once.

- **Build a cohesive case** for your program by using appropriate marketing messages.
Sell

- **Seek feedback:** Don’t send out mail without expecting a response.

- **Be reachable:** The quality and timeliness of the personal contact prospective students receive will attract them to your institution.
Sell

- **Be sensitive to cultural nuances**
  - Consider differences between the perception of international and domestic students
  - Consider differences between the perception of minority students and others

- **Make information on demand at the top of the list**
  - The further down the list, the less likely it is used.
Sell

- **Short, informative, simple**
  - Use active words
  - Avoid wordy prose

- **Try walking in their shoes**
  - Use “apply” instead of “admission,” etc.

- **Write attractive headlines**
  - Capture attention
  - Select audience: Grab the right kind of attention!
  - Draw in reader
Sell

- **Make information accessible:** Develop a list of frequently asked and answered questions for distribution on your website and publications, or for use by staff in answering inquiries.

- **Make your publications and websites navigable**

- **Market diversity**

- **Visibility:** Fairs draw many prospects and provide a forum that gives your program exposure.
Sell

- Advertise in professional journals
  - Target the people who are most likely to be interested in further study.

- Integrated, comprehensive communication plan
  - Email and online chats are the only proactive means an institution has to contact students online. It is vital to contact international students.

- Know the limitations of the website
  - If all information is available, prospects will no longer have a reason to contact the program for information.
  - No way to identify prospects
Use the referral method!
Use your faculty connections!
**Sell**

- Establish contact with key faculty in strong programs in target universities.
  - Faculty can correspond with colleagues in other institutions and with prospective students well before the admission cycle begins.

- Keep network informed of the growth and development of your program.
RULE # 3

THE SAM I AM

STRATEGY
PERSISTENCE

- **Work the inquiry pool**
- **Keep your applicants and newly admits informed**
- **Send print:** Video didn’t kill the radio star!
  - Follow up with visual brochure. Visual people are more likely to respond.
- **Sustain contact:** Continue to market your program, especially to those who have been admitted
EXAMPLE OF AN EMAIL CAMPAIGN
Brigham Young University Graduate Studies

Applicants-in-Progress Email Campaign
Presented September 30, 2005
Key Benefits

- Positive, uplifting environment
- Reputable research facility
- Excellent value
  - One of the most affordable private universities in the country.
Requirements

- Maintain graphic integrity of and consistency with www.byu.edu
- Incorporate images that support key benefits
- Allow for program-specific content
Email #1: Automated Response

Dear (Name):

Thank you for beginning your application to Brigham Young University Graduate Studies. You have made an excellent choice by selecting this unique institution. BYU's inspirational, uplifting environment allows you to study in an atmosphere that promotes and fosters creativity and intellectual advancement. With respected faculty, world-renowned research facilities, and solid devotion, our graduates receive one of the best educations possible from one of the most affordable private universities in the country.

As you continue to complete your application, we want to let you know that we are here to help you every step of the way. For scholarship information and other financial aid support, please click here. Or, if you have questions, problems, or just need some simple guidance in submitting your application, please feel free to contact us at (insert phone number) or via email at (insert email).

We hope to see you on campus soon.

Sincerely,

[Name]

[Title]

Graduate Studies, Brigham Young University, 8-356 ASB, Provo, UT 84602
Phone: (801) 422-4091 Fax: (801) 422-0270 Email: gradstudies@byu.edu
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Email #2:  + 14 Days

BYU
GRADUATE STUDIES

Program Information Here

Dear (Name):

Just checking in to see if you need any help in completing your online application. As of today, we have not yet received it and wanted to let you know that if you have questions or need assistance, we are here to help. For deadline information and a list of requirements to the Accounting Professional Program, please click here, or contact us directly at (801) 422-4959 or via email at ssas@byu.edu.

Your decision to apply to BYU is one of the best investments that you could possibly make in your future. Our uplifting environment, respected faculty, affordable tuition and our devotion to maintaining our excellent reputation make BYU the best choice for your graduate studies.

We hope to see you on campus soon.

Sincerely,

Name
Title

Graduate Studies, Brigham Young University, 0-356 ASB, Provo, UT 84602
Phone: (801) 422-4959 Fax: (801) 422-0270 Email: gradstudies@byu.edu
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Email #3: + 28 Days

Dear [Name]:

We have not yet received your completed application, and want to send this quick reminder that March 1, 2006, is the deadline for admission to the Accounting Professional Program.

We also want to let you know that we are here to answer any questions you may have or provide assistance as you complete and submit your application. To view specific test requirements and other information, please click here. Or, if you have other questions or concerns, please feel free to contact us directly at 801-422-4959 or via email at [email protected].

We hope to see you on campus soon.

Sincerely,

[Name]

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RULE # 4

MEASURE
Measure

- Evaluate your identify
- Evaluate your marketing strategies and follow up methods
- Balance expenditures and yield
- Take Action Based on Measurements
Thanks for coming!