The Guiding Principles of Successful Enrollment Leaders

ABHE Annual Meeting 2019

Tim Fuller, Senior Vice President / Owner
1. Key Points We Study
2. The Admissions Truths
3. What Your President Needs From You
Key Points We Study
Key Enrollment Health Points

1. Practices
2. Programs
3. People
4. Prices
Assumptions

• A strong foundation of data and the systems to generate it
• Recognition that strategic enrollment health is an ongoing enterprise
• The right balance between best practice, customized for institutional individuality
Achieving strategic enrollment health requires the right strategies consistently applied. These practices are understood clearly and exist in a written, living plan which supports institutional goals as reflected in the overall strategic plan.
Guiding Questions

- How effective are your top of the funnel strategies?
- How effective are your communication strategies in moving students through the funnel?
- How powerfully does your digital presence drive motivation and interest?
- How impactful is the campus guest experience in driving enrollment decisions?
- How effective is your transfer strategy?
Research

• On campus assessment
• Resources benchmarking study
• Admitted Student Research
• Funnel analysis
  • Source
  • Demographics
Possible Focus Areas

- Retooling campus guest experience
- Retooling communication flow
- Creating a transfer culture
- Optimizing digital presence
- Data mining and application
- Moves management
- Maximizing an efficient top of funnel strategy
Programs
Healthy enrollment practices are not enough. The college must offer the right mix of academic and co-curricular programs to attract and retain students. The college must recognize the need to continually evaluate programs for their “pull,” cost to deliver and relevance in the marketplace, adding and subtracting programs as necessary.
Guiding Questions

• How do programs function in the funnel?
• What are your magnets?
• What are your “landing” programs?
• How much does each program cost?
• Which programs have capacity to grow?
• Which programs should you add?
Research

• Marginal Revenue Analysis – what does each program cost?

• Funnel analysis – what does program funnel data tell us about opportunities, gaps and program strength?

• Program landscape report
  • Regional program preferences
  • Competitive analysis
  • Employment trends update
How are your program funnels performing?

What do these people want?

Are you capturing your fair share for existing programs?

What programs should you consider adding?
Possible Focus Areas

- Creating pipeline business plans
- Data mining and application (program funnels)
- New program launch protocol
People
People Defined

It takes enough of the right people executing strong practices over and over again to achieve strategic enrollment health. This starts with a strong onboarding process, includes clear pathways of growth and ongoing professional development and also includes key campus partners outside the admission office.
Guiding Questions

• Are you structured for success?
• Do you have the accountability measures in place that drive outcomes?
• Do you have a culture of training and education that lasts from onboarding through long-term employment?
• How well do campus recruitment partners understand and fulfill their roles?
Research

• On campus assessment
• Staff benchmarking study

Possible Focus Areas

• Sales and accountability training
• CRM emergency intervention
• Campus partners sales training
Price (and Value)
Price Defined

In this context price means more than sticker price. It includes financial aid strategy, the competitive context, and how the college makes the case for why it is worth choosing.
Guiding Questions

• How effective is your packaging strategy at meeting current and future institutional goals?
• How strategically do you align price with value?
• How well do you make the case for value through spoken, written and digital word?
• What evidence do you provide to support your case (outcomes stories and data)?
Research

• Packaging effectiveness scan
• Pricing (NPC) scan

Possible Focus Areas

• Strategic Packaging Matrix
• Outcomes and value proposition start-up
The Admissions Truths
Data Collection, Analysis, and Application

Strategic Enrollment Health

Recruitment
Student Support & Retention
Financial Aid & Pricing
Brand, Positioning & Marketing
Environment
Internal & External Partnerships
Academic Programs

Systems and Processes

Strategic Enrollment Plan
The Admission Truths – Leadership and Roles

• Leaders leading
• Accountability from the top
• Clarity around what success looks like
• Jim Collins – right people in the right seats on the bus
• Team roles
  • Recruiting
  • Data/systems/processes
  • Hospitality
  • Analysis
The Admission Truths – Campus Guest Experience

• Arrival branding/wayfinding
• Attractive admission space
• Campus guest coordinator
• Website facilitates the experience
• Intentional scheduling to highlight what guests need to see and hear
  • Faculty
  • The close
• Just enough events
• Campus tour storyboarded with script but still feels and sounds genuine
• Walk them to the car
The Admission Truths – Mobilizing the Campus

• Who to mobilize
  • Faculty
  • Athletics
  • Physical plant staff
  • Current students

• How to mobilize
  • Information
  • Affirmation
  • Clarity on the most strategic tasks
The Admission Truths – Strategic Pipelines

- Characteristics of a strategic pipeline
  - External (to the admission office) champion
  - Attracting students who might not otherwise consider the college
  - Business plan with budget
  - Achievable enrollment goal
  - Impact on retention/student success as well
Rethinking “The Funnel”

5 more students X 5 programs = 25 new students

Pipeline Building: Identify Champions

Athletics
Business
NEW PIPELINE IDENTIFICATION
Honors Program
Music

Unleveraged Recruitment by Admission Staff
Unleveraged Recruitment by Admission Staff

5 more students X 5 programs = 25 new students
The Admission Truths – Moves Management

• A focus on next steps throughout the admission funnel
• Applies to everyone in the recruitment process
• Implies knowledge of
  • Where the student is in the funnel
  • Next steps
• Accountability around the ability to move people to the next step
The Admission Truths – Data, Systems and Processes

- The right person/people
- Timely turnaround
- Leveraged financial aid and enrollment data
- Data protocols
- Effective training and use of current system
- Efficient processes
- Archiving of key data points
- An enrollment research agenda
  - Carried out
  - Data analyzed
  - Steps taken as necessary ("so what?")
Brand

Credo College reality

What people want

Credo College perceived

✰
Building an Enrollment Research Agenda

• **Yield rates along the funnel** (and by major, gender, geography and other key variables)

• Source code analysis – ROI

• Campus visit totals and yield rates by type and month

• **Admitted student research**

  • Validity of admission requirements

  • Market research (top of the funnel, parents, etc.)

  • Predictive modeling

• Application and deposit trends by month

• Yield by counselor territory

• The competition

• Strategic financial aid analysis

• Benchmarking and comparisons

• Student success research

• Impact of policy decisions on recruitment and retention
Admitted Student Research Nuggets

• Perceptions of faculty matter greatly in college decisions
  • Do they know their subject?
  • Can they teach it?
  • Would they be a good mentor?
  • Will they integrate faith and learning?

• When in doubt, influence Mom

• Important to lead with messages about heart AND mind

Source – Credo Admitted Student Research 2009 - 2017
Financial Aid

79% of non-matriculants who would have enrolled if they had received more money would have needed greater than $6,000 in additional aid.

Would you have enrolled at Credo College if you had received more money in grants, scholarships, and loans?

- **Credo College Non-Matriculants**
  - Yes: 42%
  - No: 58%

- **All ASR Non-Matriculants**
  - Yes: 39%
  - No: 61%

How much in additional financial aid PER YEAR would you have needed to receive in order to enroll?

- **$25,000+**: 11%
- **$20,000-$24,999**: 18%
- **$15,000-$19,999**: 8%
- **$10,000-$14,999**: 16%
- **$8,000-$9,999**: 5%
- **$6,000-$7,999**: 21%
- **$4,000-$5,999**: 18%
- **<$3,999**: 3%

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Influencers

How influential were the following in your college / university selection decision?

PERSONAL INFLUENCERS

- Mother: 5.2, 5.2
- Father: 4.1, 4.6
- Friend: 3.7, 4.1
- Brother / Sister: 3.2, 3.8
- High school guidance / college counselor: 2.8, 3.0
- Youth minister or other church leader: 2.6, 2.9
- Teacher: 2.5, 3.0

COLLEGE COMMUNITY INFLUENCERS

- Admission staff: 5.0, 4.9
- Faculty member(s): 5.0, 4.6
- Current student(s): 4.6, 4.6
- Alumnus / Alumna: 3.4, 3.5
- Coach / Athletics staff: 2.1, 3.0

Note: Non-matriculant ratings are for college community members from their chosen institution.

Responses are on a 7-point scale with 1 being not at all influential and 7 being very influential.
## Disaggregating the Funnel

**ABC College - Academic Program Funnel Analysis**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Inquiries</th>
<th>Applications</th>
<th>Completes</th>
<th>Admits</th>
<th>Matriculants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Biology</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>1,100</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall *</td>
<td>6,500</td>
<td>875</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>550</td>
<td>230</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yield Rates</th>
<th>Inq to App</th>
<th>App to Complete</th>
<th>Complete to Admit</th>
<th>Admit to Matric</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Biology</td>
<td>28.6%</td>
<td>85.0%</td>
<td>94.1%</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>13.6%</td>
<td>66.7%</td>
<td>80.0%</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
<td>86.7%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>53.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>13.5%</td>
<td>68.6%</td>
<td>91.7%</td>
<td>41.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* includes other majors offered beyond these three highlighted majors
## Funnel Analysis Example

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. FIRST YEAR STUDENTS</th>
<th>Fall 2017</th>
<th>Fall 2016</th>
<th>Fall 2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inquiries</td>
<td>3,535</td>
<td>1,998</td>
<td>8,544</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applicants</td>
<td>191</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completed Applicants</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admits</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deposits</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrolled</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. FIRST YEAR STUDENTS</th>
<th>Fall 2017</th>
<th>Fall 2016</th>
<th>Fall 2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inquiry to Applicant</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
<td>9.2%</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>App to Complete</td>
<td>67.5%</td>
<td>71.2%</td>
<td>63.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete to Admit</td>
<td>96.9%</td>
<td>99.2%</td>
<td>93.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admit to Deposit</td>
<td>60.0%</td>
<td>62.3%</td>
<td>59.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admit to Enrolled</td>
<td>52.0%</td>
<td>58.5%</td>
<td>52.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deposit to Enrolled</td>
<td>86.7%</td>
<td>93.8%</td>
<td>89.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Key Indicators

What numbers should you be watching regularly?

• Acceptances
• Deposits
• Campus visits
Key Indicators

Next level

• Applications

• Inquiries

• Territory management results

• Academic quality

• Other key metrics (geography, denomination, gender, diversity)
What Your President Needs From You
7 Fundamental Principles

1. It takes a campus to enroll (and retain) a student
2. Pay as much attention to retention as new student enrollment
3. Invest in enrollment leadership and team
4. Insist on a strong foundation of data
5. The oral tradition of the elders works in some contexts but not enrollment; you must have and execute a plan!
6. Campus visits are your most important recruitment strategy; your website is your most important recruitment tool
7. Your financial aid/scholarships/pricing must be organized to get you as many of the best students you can afford
What Do You Need From Your Enrollment Leader?

• Focus

• Partnership
  • Cabinet
  • Faculty
  • Athletics
  • Everyone Else

• Culture of Accountability

• Data-Informed

• Build & Lead a great team
Any questions?
Final thoughts?
Thank you!

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