Specific Measurable Attainable Realistic Time-Oriented Recruitment Planning for Community Colleges

Moryah Jackson
Program Director
Recruitment and Community Outreach
Midlands Technical College
Columbia, SC

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Objectives:

- To identify the components of an effective recruitment plan
- To provide tips and best practices for creating a campus wide recruitment plan
- To illustrate how to create a seamless enrollment process for students
Midlands Technical College

- SC State Technical College System
- SACS Accredited
- Columbia, SC
- Over 100 programs
- Serves Richland, Lexington and Fairfield Counties
- 11,100 credit
- 30,000 non-credit
- 2 Middle Colleges
- Average age 27
- 42% male, 58% female
- 56% white, 32% black, 12% other
- Largest source of transfer students to Columbia College and the USC (outside USC System)
Purpose of Recruitment

- Identify
  - Markets
- Attract
  - What makes your institution the best first choice?
  - Why should a student enroll at your institution?
- Enroll
  - What is the enrollment process?
    - Admissions, Financial Aid, Advisement, Registration
  - When, where and how to enroll?
The Role of the College Recruiter

- Role and title vary from institution to institution
  - Face of institution
  - Internal and external marketing
  - Facilitator

- Common responsibilities:
  - Coordinating events and campus tours
  - Visiting high schools
  - Attending college fairs
  - Targeting non-traditional populations
  - Developing relationships with high school counselors
  - Speaking with students and families
  - Providing follow-up communications
Organization: Enrollment Services

Director of Enrollment Services

Administrative Assistant

Student Information

Recruitment and Community Outreach

Advisement and Orientation Services

Admissions Operations and Technology Services
Organization:
Recruitment and Community Outreach
Enrollment Services Work Flow

- Enrollment Services Council
- Admissions Technical Unit
- Student Information
- Recruitment and Community Outreach
- Admissions
- New Student Advisement and Orientation Services
Research - Schools

- How many students from the high school have graduated from your institution and at what degree level?
- How many students are currently enrolled from the high school?
- How many students have applied so far for the next fall?
- Have any students been denied or will be denied before your visit?
- What was the yield rate last year?
- Are there any volatile political issues? Review evaluations and notes.
- Who sets appointments for visits? What are the “rules”?
- Call back to confirm and determine how many materials are needed.
Research – Non-Traditional Students

- What are my area demographics?
- What level of education do constituents have?
- What level of education do constituents need?
- What jobs are emerging?
- Who are the largest employers?
- Where do I find non-traditional students?
- Who are my contacts?
Research – Area Competition

- What institutions of higher education are in the area?
- Where are they located?
- What do they offer?
- How do they target students?
- What is their enrollment process? Cost?
- How are they structured?
- What is their academic calendar?
Community Relationship Management

- Get to know area schools:
  - Principals
  - Counselors
  - Teachers
- Has anyone expressed interest? May I have their names/contact information?
- How large are classes?
- Do you host events? If so, when?
- Do you need any special information?
Community Relationship Management

- Get to know:
  - HR Directors
  - Non-Profit Executives
  - Church leaders

- Has anyone expressed interest? May I have their names/contact information?
- Who is your target population?
- Do you host events? If so, when?
- Do you need any special information?
Creating an Effective Recruitment Plan

- Campus wide recruitment
- Link
  - Institutional Strategic Plan
  - Environmental Scans
  - Enrollment Goals
  - Retention Goals
  - Marketing Plan
- Focus
Planning

- “Plan the work…”
  - Analyze the funnel
  - Identify markets
  - Successful current practices
  - Planning assumptions
- Set the goals
  - S.M.A.R.T.
- “…work the plan.”
  - Formulate key strategies
  - Develop action plans for each key strategy
- Excessive Activity Syndrome
  - Activity-Oriented vs. Results-Oriented
- Evaluation
Analyze the Enrollment Funnel

- Know the number and conversion/yield rate:
  - Prospects
  - Inquiries
  - Applications
  - Acceptances
  - Assessment
  - Enrolled

- Determine by term, market segment, program, etc.
Target Markets

- **Primary**: High-yield, easily identifiable
  - Majority of time, energy, resources expended here

- **Secondary**: Lower-yield, substantially larger/more diverse
  - Success often related to image/reputation and or unique programs/offerings
  - “By what means and with what resources can we achieve cultivation of secondary market?”

- **Tertiary/Test**: Unknown quantity, could be productive
  - “To what extent should the college invest scarce resources in attempting to cultivate these markets without significant enrollment returns?”
Successful Current Practices

- What are successful current practices at your institution?

Common Planning Assumptions:

- Funding/staffing will remain the same or increase.
- The college’s computer system will be adequate to support the needs of the recruitment pan.
- Tuition increases will not exceed 5%.
Set Goals

- **S.M.A.R.T**
- **Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, Timely**

**Key Strategies**

- Designed to achieve established goals
- Use the 80/20 rule:
  - 80% of results derived from 20% effort
  - The challenge is to know which “key” 20% to focus on
Action Plans

- What are you going to do?
- When will it be done?
- Who will be responsible?
- How much will it cost?
- How will you know if it has been accomplished?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity/ Description</th>
<th>Timetable</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
<th>Budget</th>
<th>Control/ Evaluation Procedures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Excessive Activity Syndrome

**Activity Oriented**
- Redefining issues
- Failing to set priorities
- Focusing on trivial/non-critical issues
- Working to improve too many procedures simultaneously
- Involving large numbers of people in improvement process

**Results Oriented**
- Recommending specific actions to address issues
- Establishing top priorities
- Selecting issues that make the biggest difference
- Working to improve a small number of critical processes
- Involving participation of a limited number of interested persons
Evaluation

- Assessment techniques:
  - Mailed, On-Site, Web/E-Mail, Telephone Surveys
  - Focus Groups

- General things to remember:
  - Assessment is not a “one size fits all” proposition
  - Vary techniques to ensure gathering all the quality data possible
  - There is no need to reinvent the wheel each time

- Quality assessment practices mold better programs and services, which means being better at everything else

- Call on institutional research experts to create an assessment tool

- Encourage staff to develop an assessment habit
Summary

- Student success is the objective when creating a recruitment plan
  - Recruit to retain
- To create an effective recruitment plan:
  - Use the institutional strategic plan, environmental scan, enrollment data, marketing plan and retention goals
- S.M.A.R.T. goals allow institutions to:
  - Maintain better control over enrollment
  - Foster teamwork and collaboration
  - Promote student success
Thank You!

Moryah Jackson
Midlands Technical College
You Can Get Anywhere From Here!
www.midlandstech.edu
jacksonmt@midlandstech.edu

P.O. Box 2408
Columbia, SC 29202