

SHOWING YOU'RE INTERESTED

In today's competitive and selective environment, colleges and universities make admissions and financial aid decisions based on many criteria. Students typically follow a passive approach when navigating the college enrollment process. Students need to take a proactive approach to raise awareness and voice their accomplishments, abilities, and talents. Showing interest in a school for the right reasons can be the differentiator to creating a successful application request and financial aid appeal. Following some simple and easy steps, a student can proactively build a strong relationship with colleges and universities.

Easy Ways to Differentiate Yourself

Know the College - Do your research. Can you explain what a school offers and why it is essential to you as a prospective student? How does the school's mission statement align with your goals and expectations? Doing so during a meeting with an admission representative or answering a question in the Supplemental Essay in the Common Application can differentiate you from the pack.

Be More a Data Point - From the moment a student first engages a college, the goal is to be top of mind. Students need to be their best salespersons telling their stories to campus decision-makers. What are your authentic accomplishments, abilities, and aspirations-no time to be shy? Proactively schedule 1-1 meeting and conversations with school administrators (Admissions - Coaches)

Define Your Needs - Why are you interested in going to college? What about this school motivates you to be curious and potentially apply for admission? What are your academic and personal goals, and how can attending college prepare you to achieve them? Be specific.

Communicate – Engage – Network - Using a systematic communication plan, students need to develop a relationship with key members of the college administration; Admissions & Financial Aid Counselors, Faculty, and Coaches. Phone calls, emails, and other digital technology (texting) are all effective ways to connect.

What's Your 90 Second Elevator Speech – Who are you? Essential to have in your marketing toolbox ready when the phone rings or you find yourself speaking to a college President on a campus tour. No fluff, more specifics .

Be Visible – Success does not live by the application alone. Follow the school on Facebook and Instagram. Attend college visits at the high school and regional fairs, and make a campus visit memorable by scheduling a one-to-one during the visit. Open and respond to email and text messages. Reply with questions, inquiries, and requests for more specific information.

Be Strategic – Avoid the supply and demand trap - file an Application for Admissions early and with the school that needs a student's talents and treasures, not just where everyone is going.

Write Effectively – Your essay, supplementals, and personal statements can be defining moments.

Majors – Athletes - Performing Artist – The ability to elevate interest for selective majors (nursing, engineering, architecture), athletics, performing arts portfolio reviews, auditions, and other special requirements and conversations.

Local Alumni. & Current Students - Connect with local alumni in your area and upper-class students to learn about their experiences on campus and leverage their contacts to promote your interest.

Using some simple and effective action items, students can raise awareness and demonstrate interest. A process that can be the difference between being accepted and receiving tuition assistance.