

Doing Right Things Right

By Mark C. Perna

With a good game plan for marketing, schools can use the enrollment funnel to score big points.

Attracting quality students in sufficient volume requires you to do the right things right. Doing right things right is a combination of what you do and how well you do it. Successful enrollment marketing, like all good marketing, depends on consistency of effort and doing enough of the right things in the right way, repeatedly.

“The Enrollment Funnel” I wrote about in last month’s *Techniques* magazine is an example of doing the right things right. It is a systematic method of moving prospective students to becoming actual students as a result of generating positive feelings and emotional attachments that tie directly to your marketing plan. It is the funnel itself that clearly identifies those critical action steps (the right things) required in your marketing and recruitment efforts. The funnel allows you to filter all of your resources through one process and focus your organization on execution (the right way) in the worthwhile pursuit of becoming enrollment rich.

The Right Game Plan

I discovered early in my career that there are four ways to do things:

Doing wrong things wrong is completing the wrong activities in the wrong way. In this situation, not only do you do the wrong thing, you do it badly. That’s a double whammy! Imagine trying to use a skywriter to deliver your marketing message and planning for the delivery of that message at night. Beware of having your marketing efforts fall into this category, because there is nothing more embarrassing than doing the wrong thing and doing that thing wrong. Avoid this situation like the plague! It is more prevalent than you may think.

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way. This happens frequently when an organization does not have a clearly defined vision, does not know how to differentiate itself from the competition, or just isn’t sure what it should be doing to market to prospective students—yet is doing a great job with all of the action steps it utilizes. This approach typically



leads to a waste of resources and increased frustration, because everything looks wonderful, but enrollment doesn’t increase. It is important to recognize if you are not doing the right things and then make a change using the enrollment funnel.

Doing right things wrong is completing the right activities in the wrong way. This typically results in a lack of impact needed to accomplish the goals. This also leads to a waste of resources and frustration, but can be fixed with relative ease by carefully evaluating how you accomplish the action steps in your

funnel. Many times it is the little things that make a difference between success and mediocrity. You may be close—pull the team together, brainstorm, survey and find a way.

Doing right things right is completing the right activities in the right way. I watched basketball great LeBron James play recently, and it impressed me how

graceful he makes excellence appear. The truth is, he works at it every day,

It is not enough just to do something; you have to do the right thing, and you have to do that thing right.

Tipping the Balance

Here are some tips to score points with prospective students by using your funnel to do right things right.

W.I.F.M.: This is everyone's favorite radio station, and it stands for, "What's in it for me?" We all subconsciously ask this question when presented with a marketing message, sales pitch, or, frankly, any situation. You can rest assured that anything you create or any message you deliver will have prospects asking themselves, "What's in it for me?" It is critical that you know the answer to this question so you can position the action step and the execution of the action step in the right way for maximum effectiveness.

Be BOLD: All of us are bombarded with more than 1,600 marketing messages per day, including TV, radio, billboards, direct mail, print ads, sponsorships . . . the list goes on. Position recruiting events and marketing messages to achieve the greatest impact. Communicate effectively and in the right way with bold, attention-grabbing graphics, headlines, copy, offers, and compelling benefit statements that drip your message consistently within the channels of communication that are most desirable for your prospects.

Make it Personal: To create emotional attachment and loyalty to your school, make it personal. Prospects want to feel good about your school before they commit. Keep in mind that people will remember 33 percent of what they

read, 50 percent of what they are told and 100 percent of what they feel! The best way to make people feel good is to make them feel important, valuable, unique, appreciated and special. Use their names as much as possible on everything, including special event name badges, surveys, letters and direct mail pieces. Use their first names as much as possible during any visit or personal interaction. At the end of the day, it's all about them, not you!

Shoot, Score, Win!

Doing right things right is an important distinction that must be made within all of your marketing and recruitment efforts. It is not enough just to do something; you have to do the right thing, and you have to do that thing right.

Are you doing the right things now? If you answered, "I don't know," or, "I'm not sure," then I suggest you may not be doing the right things right—and that needs to be addressed within your organization.

Like LeBron James playing in the NBA, in order to score points with prospects and your community, you must realize that the game is afoot, and show up every day to play. The game goes on with or without you, so how well you prepare to do right things right will determine your final score this season in your journey to be enrollment rich. **■**

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and he does the right things consistently with the right execution to score often.

Schools can accomplish that same excellence by developing an enrollment funnel that defines the right action steps needed to drip a clear message consistently to the right audience in the right way. The objectives for each school may be unique, but scoring points in enrollment marketing is the same for each school as scoring points in the NBA. Some teams and players are better than others, but winning boils down to doing right things right consistently to achieve vital objectives.