Do More Than Inform
Best Practices for Your Session

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Presenters

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LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Explore various presentation styles to learn what characteristics make them successful, and which you can incorporate into your information sessions.

2. Consider how the target audience, time, and venue constraints shape your presentation approach.

3. Build in feedback loops to ensure communication is effective and the right message is being conveyed.
“There are only two ways to influence human behavior: you can manipulate it or you can inspire it. …

People don’t buy WHAT you do, they buy WHY you do it.”
- Simon Sinek
What is your natural presentation style?

- **Minimalist/Visual**- Captivating with clean looking slides, you tailor the conversation as you go
- **Free form**- Feels like a conversation and you address many topic areas
- **Instructor Style**- more fact heavy and more visuals so it feels more like a teacher’s presentation
- **Coach**- energetic and charismatic. Focuses on listener interaction and building a connection
- **Storytelling**- Audience will remember the essence of what you said, even if they forget the details
- **Connector**- build on the parallels between presenter and audience, develop a sense of community
BEST PRACTICES FOR INFORMATION SESSIONS

Planning
Preparation
Presentation
Phollow-up
PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Time of year: Fall/Spring/ Summer

Audience: Underclassmen/ Juniors/ Seniors/ Parents

Applicant Status: Prospect/ Applicant/ Admitted

Utilize previous year’s data to guide your planning, especially in new territories

High School Visit

• Have stories on hand to answer “What do students do on campus?”
• Know your High Schools
  • Grading policy/scale
  • Unique programs
  • Common Student interest

On-Campus Presentation

• Do you involve other departments in the University?
  • Financial aid
  • Student affairs
  • Housing and dining
  • Student support services etc.
• Decide if and how to utilize current students

Utilize previous year’s data to guide your planning, especially in new territories
PREPARATION

Get recent stories from current students. These are great to share, especially in the high school setting.

Think of any materials that would be important or relevant to your particular population:
- Admissions brochure
- Financial aid information
- IB/AP information
- Honors College
- Diversity Success
- International students
- Materials in varying languages

High School Visit

- Provide HS counselor with data on previous applicants, admits, and enrolled students from HS
- 3 updates about your University
- Bring the appropriate materials

On-Campus Presentation

- Know the audience: students only vs. families
- Secure an appropriate venue
- Check the tech
- Physical or hearing impaired accommodations
- Materials and swag items
HIGH SCHOOL VISIT

- Do not assume anything of the students. ASK!
- What do students/counselors want to learn about?
- Use “Peer Voice”
- Enable the student to visualize themselves at your institution
- Do not go on auto pilot or lose your zeal
- Have updates on hand
- Reiterate important messages
- Make the most of positive parallels or differences between your institution and the high school

ON-CAMPUS PRESENTATION

- Where are the visitors from, who is in the room?
- Provide full coverage of information, especially for larger groups
- Utilize student voice throughout presentation
- Divide information session and tour guide presentation content so that they compliment not replicate each other
- Have appropriate contingency plan in place for technical failures
- Mention any other sessions or departments families can visit while on campus

PRESENTATION

Remember when storytelling that a story has:
- Beginning
- Big change
- Ending or new normal

Begin with the school specific information, then address the application process and admissions criteria.

Avoid common public speaking pitfalls:
- Filler words - like, um, uh
- Be sure to practice. Practice. Practice!

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PHOLLOW-UP

to stay relevant to your students and counselors

- Always get students to fill out inquiry cards when possible, this will allow you to follow up with them.
- The handwritten note still goes a long way with students.
- Try new enticing locations for student meet-ups in their area: ice cream shops, top golf, co-working spaces etc.
- Region specific marketing materials.
- Learn from feedback collected.
OTHER TIPS
to ensure a SPECTACULAR session

- Learn to read your audience
- Elaborate vs. short and simple responses
- Getting back to someone is OK!
- Stay confident through tough questions
- "I know a little about a LOT of things"
- Reflect on each individual session
QUESTIONS?
...or APPLAUSE
ARE WELCOME
THANK YOU for attending this session!

We’d love to hear from you!

Please submit a session evaluation via the conference mobile app or from www.pcacacac.org.