

*EDU Performance Insights: Admissions*

# Admissions Best Practices of Top Performing Schools



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## Introduction

Thank you for your interest in our *EDU Performance Insights: Admissions E-Book*. In this resource we'll focus exclusively on the Admissions best practices of top performing schools. Our aim is to provide practical, actionable tips you can implement at your school to support admissions, improve contact rates and boost enrollment without a lot of time or money.

All of the knowledge, tips and techniques shared here are tactics we use and have seen work for schools like yours over our more than twenty years in Education Marketing.

If you have questions about any of the content or want to learn more about how to grow your school, don't hesitate to reach out. We're happy to chat and always appreciate the chance to collaborate with fellow members of our EDU community.

Sincerely,

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## 6 Pillars of Successful Admissions

### Where to Focus for Peak Performance in Admissions

The first step to high performance growth in Admissions (and truly any area of your business), is to benchmark where you are NOW. You need to know what Key Performance Indicators (KPI) to set up and manage in order to improve.

Let's take a look at the KPIs you need to concentrate on for peak performance in Admissions.

#### The Six Pillars of Successful Admissions:

1. **Lead Contact Rate** – What percentage of inquiries (leads) do you successfully contact?
2. **Appointment/Tour Set Rate** – What percentage of students that you get a hold of set an appointment?
3. **Appointment Show Rate** – What percentage of appointments set actually show?
4. **Application Rate** – What percentage of shows fill out paperwork to apply?
5. **Enrollment (Packaging) Rate** – What percentage of students who apply, get packaged and complete financial aid and get accepted?
6. **Start Rate** – What percentage of enrolled students start?

If you don't currently know the answers to these questions, that's the place to start. If it feels daunting to try to track this stuff down, make it a team effort. Proper tracking of these KPIs is one of the most important things you and your team can do to improve enrollment.

For assistance on how to track these six pillars of successful admissions, [book a time to chat](#) with a knowledgeable Admissions expert.

# 10 Tips to Improve Contact Rates

## Resources to Successfully Connect with More Prospective Students

One of the biggest ongoing frustrations in Admissions continues to be *actually contacting prospective students*.

Too often a prospective student will fill out a contact form and then just never respond. So frustrating. Below are some resources to help you support your team to connect with more potential students.

### 10 Tips to Improve Contact Rates

1. **Implement a Call Cadence Strategy:** Have a defined scripted process for when and how to follow up using multiple touches at predetermined intervals.
2. **Form to Phone Automated Connection Service:** Are you responding within 1-2 minutes to internet leads? Implement a Form-to-Phone/automated connection service to speed contact.
3. **Outsource Appointment Setting:** If you are not hitting goals or best practice, consider hiring a Call Center or Appointment Setting Service and let your reps do what they do best: close!
4. **Insource Appointment Setting:** Hire your own appointment setting team to set up your admissions reps. This can also serve as an intro to Admissions position, BUT don't sacrifice phone skills for a future rep.
5. **Front Desk Appointment Setter:** Reception can book appointments for admissions staff & fill calendar when admissions are busy.
6. **Answering Service:** Have this in place for off-hours calls to record name, phone and email for admissions.

7.

**Video Communications in Emails:** Have Reps customize their initial emails to prospects with a short (30 seconds or less) personal video introduction.

8.

**Voicemail Scripting & Split Testing:** Voicemail scripts are written and used by reps and A/B tested every few months to see which messaging gets the highest return.

9.

**Text Message Scripting & Split Testing:** Text scripts are written and used by reps and A/B tested every few months.

10.

**Automated scheduler on website:** Allow for prospects to schedule tours from the website. Do you have something on your website currently where prospects can indicate an interest in a tour and/or even schedule a time? Cut out the appointment setting and allow interested prospects to request appointments.

If you're interested in some support to implement any of these tips, [book a time to chat](#). A friendly and knowledgeable Enrollment Specialist will be happy to discuss best practices and how to incorporate small adjustments in your admissions process that can have a big return.



# Why Top Performing Admissions Teams Use Scripts

## How to Set Reps Up For Success

One of the most impactful things you can do in Admissions to improve enrollment rates is: **Standardize your communication with prospects.**

Top performing schools use scripts. Without consistent communication, common throughout your admissions team, you can't create scalable growth. Worse, if you don't know for certain what messaging Reps use with prospects, you can open yourself up to potential costly regulatory violations.

### Spoken Communication: Emails, Phone Calls & Tours

Provide your Reps with a roadmap that sets them up to confidently interact with prospects in a consistent, standardized manner.

### Written Communication: Emails, Texts, DMs

Collect and inspect what your sales reps are sending out through different channels. From both marketing and compliance standpoints, it is essential to monitor all outgoing communication to present a unified voice.

A great thing about using scripts and standardized messaging is you can test them. Make tweaks and monitor the results to push for continuous improvement.

When you provide a consistent message for your Admissions team you set them up to best help prospects consistently make informed decisions. When Reps feel confident to properly inform prospects, prospects feel confident to move forward toward their goals.

Consistent messaging in Admissions drives enrollments. Simple as that.

The concept is simple, but it's not always easy to get complete buy-in from Reps. Especially if you have team members that have been in the position a while who feel strongly about their own way of doing things. That type of conflict can be tough. Ultimately, as a leader in Admissions you need to believe in the messaging.

For help with ways to standardize your prospect communication, [book a time to chat](#).



## How “Back to Basics” Can Mean Big Gains in Admissions

### Does Your Team Make These Common Lead Losing Mistakes?

Throughout our over twenty years in EDU, we have remained strong believers in the power of the “Mystery Shop.”

For example, we audited the recordings of over 500 telephone calls made to schools by prospective students, from over 30 different schools. Here's what we found:

- 37% of inquiries were **not asked for their phone numbers**  
- These leads were lost forever
- 42% of the time the prospect was **not asked to tour the school**  
- The rep was passive in the exchange
- 22% of incoming calls went **straight to voicemail**
- On calls that went to voicemail, 68% of those callers hung up/**did not leave a message** - These leads also lost forever
- Less than 15% of receptionists actively **tried to schedule appointments** for reps that were not available



Do you know how your team would measure up?

The truth is, some of the greatest opportunities for growth for most schools is better implementation of the basics. It's rare that Reps deviate from best practices intentionally. But everyone is busy. Corners end up getting cut. Shorthands become the norm and along the way sometimes the crucial best practices you need in place are not consistently followed.

We do not recommend that you micromanage. You don't need to sit in on every call a Rep makes. But dedicating a small amount of time to quality control each week could prevent quality leads from slipping through the cracks.

### Action Item: Continuous Training

Use call tracking as a training tool.

Review 3-4 recorded calls from actual prospects with your sales team each week. Pick a range of calls from good to indifferent to bad and have your team articulate the strengths and weaknesses in each call. This makes the training process more collaborative and supportive. Make this training a continual and communal staple of your process.

For recommendations on call tracking processes or any other admissions best practice question, [book a time to chat](#).



# Surprising Research Finding Spells Opportunity for Admissions

## Admissions Pros in a Unique Position to Help Others

In 2022 we published a research study based on data from over 250,000 prospective career education students across North America and a surprising finding stood out:

**Just over 35% of all prospects identified that they want a better life but “have trouble imagining the details.”**

That stat represents an exciting opportunity for anyone in Admissions. As Admissions professionals, you're in a unique position to help prospective students to imagine the practical details that can lead them to a brighter future.

Below are three key things to keep in mind when you help prospective students to imagine their potential future.

### 1. Leadership - Break it Down Into Practical, Achievable Steps

Help prospective students to map out the full course from where they are today to where they want to be in the future. Use your knowledge and experience to fill in each step along the way.

### 2. Clarity - Be Specific

Specifics take “pie in the sky” dreams and ground them in reality. It's the difference between “I'd like to help people” and “I want to work as a patient care aide at the long-term care facility near my house.”

**TIP:** Use thoughtful questions like “what motivated you to reach out today?” and “what makes you interested in this field?” not only help you get to know the prospect you're speaking with, they help you to understand the prospect's drive. This forms the foundation for the portrait of the prospect's future you're helping to build.

### 3. Honesty - Don't Shy Away From Highlighting Potential Challenges

Address potential obstacles and help prospective students to visualize the ways they have within their means to overcome those difficulties. By bringing up the challenges in a safe, supportive setting you go a long way to illustrating the way in which successful graduation and the pursuit of a rewarding career is within the prospects' abilities to accomplish. This can provide incredible motivation.

The research showing how many prospects struggle to imagine the details of their future really highlights the importance of you and your Admissions team. In this role, you are uniquely qualified to provide clarity for prospective students about your school and their future.

When you utilize the goal-setting techniques above you can help students to practically envision the steps along the way to their desired future and remove a sizable barrier to potential enrollment.

For more insights on removing barriers to enrollment or any other admissions best practice question, [book a time to chat](#).





# Enrollment Resources

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