

*EDU Performance Insights:
Enrollment Management*

Enrollment Management Strategies of Top Performing Schools



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Introduction

Thank you for your interest in our *EDU Performance Insights: Enrollment Management Series E-Book*. In this resource we'll focus exclusively on the big picture management best practices of top performing schools. Our aim is to provide practical, actionable tips you can implement at your school to support your team 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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Good News For Your School's Profitability

The Practice Top Performing Schools Insist On

One of the most impactful strategies used by top performing schools is surprisingly simple:

Measure everything.

It's simple, but that doesn't necessarily mean it's easy. But, like all the performance tips shared in this resource, it also doesn't need to be complicated or intimidating.

What Does It Mean To "Measure Everything"?

- Do you test ads against media buying costs?
- Do you track marketing performance against your goal?
- Do you track financial aid departments' performance?
- Do you measure individual and team admissions performance at each step of the funnel?

Do you know the answer for your school for the following metrics:

- Cost per inquiry
- Show rate
- Cost per start
- Application rate
- Number of leads
- Conversion rate
- Contact rate
- Start rate
- Booked tour rate

If you have question marks for any of these, that's an excellent area for opportunity.

You can't manage what you can't measure

To improve, you need to measure everything in your school that moves so you have a baseline to move forward from. Identifying your baseline allows you to understand the impact of any adjustments you make.

When you can properly measure the effect of small changes, you can improve profitability without haphazardly throwing money at your marketing and admissions challenges.

TIP: Consider creating a "scorecard" for your school that lists all the different benchmarks you use to evaluate performance in each of your key departments. Use this scorecard to measure your performance at least monthly. We have one client that measures about 70 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) daily! He insists on it in each of the multiple successful schools he runs. You don't have to be that diligent to still see an incredible return on your time and effort when you properly measure your school's performance metrics.

If you'd like an example of a management scorecard, [schedule a conversation](#). We're happy to help you get started with a template.



Metrics That Drive 80% of School Growth

The Small Thing You Can Do Each Week to Strengthen Your School

In this section we'll review a smaller task that can yield big results.

In the opening section we covered why it's important to measure everything. While we strongly believe accurate benchmarking is a key element of long-term success, it's no small task. The good news is, a ton of your daily and weekly progress can be monitored by just a few key performance metrics.

Examples of Key Performance Drivers:

- Campus tours per week
- Leads generated
- Profit
- Enrollments

If the scorecard of ALL of your benchmarks is like your school's full physical, these few key metrics are like the blood pressure and heart rate of your school. When these important touch points are in a satisfactory range, you know that the marketing and admissions are working reasonably well. When these key drivers are too high or too low, it is indicative of a larger problem.

These are the elements that will drive 80% of your growth.

TASK: Identify 2-4 core metrics that you're able to easily review weekly.

The goal in identifying key drivers is to find quick ways to gauge the health of your marketing and admissions. This task will allow you to quickly identify issues when they come up, and save you the time of having to create and constantly review long reporting documents.

What do you do if your team consistently falls short of performance goals?

If you find that staff members are consistently not meeting performance goals, it is a result of one of four conditions:

- 1. TIME:** Your team does not dedicate enough time to support the primary goals of the school. *Solution:* Remove non-critical or “B” activities (delegate, defer or dump) from their responsibility to free up more time.
- 2. SUPPORT:** Your team is not adequately supported or resourced to meet the primary metrics. *Solution:* Review the resources needed to give them the best chance to succeed.
- 3. EXPECTATION:** Your expectations are too high/not realistic (blood from a stone syndrome). *Solution:* Review your overall goal and readjust as needed.
- 4. FIT:** The team member’s skills are not a correct fit with what is required to meet the primary objectives of your school. *Solution:* Hire or promote a new staff person, reallocate the person to a new job or terminate employment.

For help identifying the key metrics you can consistently measure each week to boost performance at your school, [schedule a chat](#). A friendly and knowledgeable Enrollment Specialist will be happy to discuss best practices and how to incorporate small adjustments that can have a big return.



What Employers Say About Your School

Top Performing Schools Know This Important Relationship Builder

Do you know what the employers of your graduates think of your school?

The programs you offer are only as strong as the reputation you have with the employers of your grads. For most students, particularly those who choose career education, post secondary is a means to an end. They get an education in order to pursue a rewarding career. If employers of your grads aren't your biggest fans, that will have a huge negative impact on your marketing and admissions.

If you haven't given it a lot of attention recently, consider these questions:

- Have you surveyed the employers of your grads?
- Do you stay in touch with them monthly?
- Do you use their testimonials in your marketing materials?

Employers can be your school's greatest ambassadors *if you take the time to develop the relationship*. When you get a minute, give some thought to how you can better connect with employers in your program area.

For suggestions on easy ways to keep in touch with employers, [schedule a quick time to chat](#).

A Game Changing Management Philosophy

What Small Project Could Have a Big Impact on Your Bottom Line?

This section will cover a management philosophy that can be foundational to your school's success.

The management philosophy is: *Reach Within Grasp*

If your team takes on a project can you finish it? Far too often schools (and other businesses) take on projects they just don't finish.

Here's an example:

Someone says "we should fix our website." Other team members agree that the website is ugly, old, boring, etc. so work begins to "fix the website" **but without a plan or a specific goal in mind**. There's no specific focus or answer to the question, "what exactly are we fixing it to do?"

Usually a Web Developer gets involved. Designs are considered and a new layout is fashioned. It's new and different so it feels exciting. Around here is where people often lose steam. Things come up, like a deadline for the catalog that can't be pushed, or some pressing ad materials, or a new program is being launched.

Next thing you know, that "exciting" new website has been sitting in limbo for 3 months. When the team finally gets back to it, the "newness" will have worn off and team members suggest changes/things they would do differently.

So a NEW design and layout are undertaken and the whole thing starts again.

The reach was out of grasp.

Only take on marketing projects that you can finish with a minimum investment of time and money. Focus on the little things that make a big difference.

Manageable Impactful Project Example:

An example of a small, manageable project that could have a big impact on your bottom line: Add a simple “request info” form to your homepage, program pages and every major page of your website.

Your website might not be the best looking one out there - it doesn't matter. The goal is to get more people to contact your school. When you get more leads, your admissions team has more opportunities to convert qualified prospects to successfully enrolled students.

Adding quality sign-up forms to a website takes a few hours. Redesigning a website takes months.

So before you begin your next project or initiative, consider what you can FINISH before you START and save yourself a bunch of time and money.

For help to brainstorm some easy-to-accomplish tasks that could have a big impact on your bottom line, [schedule a quick time to chat](#).



Goal Setting for School Growth

The Milestones That Lay The Groundwork For Better Overall Performance

One of the most important, effective and impactful tools for the success of your school is vision.

Only a small percentage of people set clear goals. Of those who set goals, only a percentage of those people clearly outline the steps it will take to achieve each goal. It makes sense. Change is hard.

But setting goals and establishing management milestones can lay the groundwork for exponential growth.

Tip for Business Goal Setting

This foundational planning exercise will help you develop your vision and uncover the goals that will get you there. This exercise does ask a lot given all the demands on your time. But energy spent on this type of foundational planning for the future can really pay off.

~ Imagine you have been launched one year into the future.~

If interviewed a year from now, how would you respond to these questions?

1. What is your school famous for? What makes your program unique?
2. How many learners graduate a year?
3. What is the “geographic footprint” for your organization? What area do you serve?
4. What are your sales? Profit margin? What is your cost per inquiry? Per enrollment?
5. What systems are in place to drive referrals to your school?
6. Who are the centers of influence that send you referrals? Why do they do it?

7. Describe the physical surroundings you work in.
8. Describe how you and your team weave your personal lives in with your work lives.
9. (Add any questions you have for yourself.)

When you have completed the exercise, review the questions again – but this time, answer each question as if the interview was TODAY.

As you answer the questions, make note of whether your answer is an “asset”, i.e. something you currently have in place, or a “bottleneck”, i.e. something that does not yet exist or has an obstacle to it.

Example:

If your goal is to have 100 students and to own your facilities, your current reality may be 10 students (asset), and renting your space (bottleneck).

When you review your interview answers again, you should see the beginnings of some clear goals starting to form.

If you're not sure where to start or would like some help on action steps to reach goals like increase leads, improve contact rate and boost enrollment, [schedule a time to chat](#).





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