

THE EARLY YEARS AS AN ADMISSIONS DIRECTOR



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SSATB Annual Meeting 2010
Boston, MA



The Agenda

- I.** Introductions
- II.** Learning to Utilize Your Resources
- III.** Communicating with Others
- IV.** Balancing Admissions & Non-Admissions Duties
- V.** Managing Your Office
- VI.** Learning to Do What You Don't Know How to Do
- VII.** Discussion, Questions, Best Practices, etc.....
- VIII.** Resource List

LEARNING TO UTILIZE YOUR RESOURCES



What's unique about your school?

- **Visiting**
- **Talking**
- **Meeting**
- **Experiencing**

What's unique about you?

- **Connecting**
 - Faculty
 - Colleagues
 - Head of School
 - Students

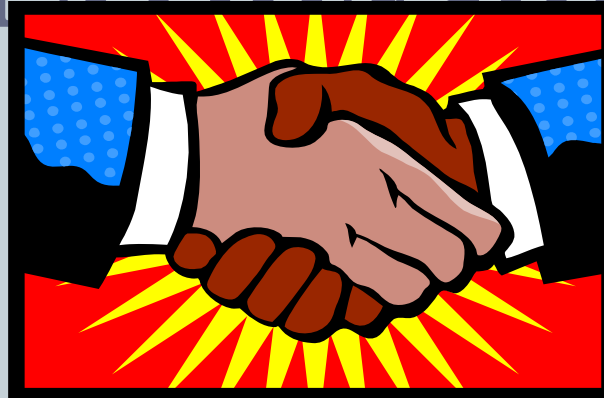
Gaining Respect & Getting Buy-In

- Homework
- Faculty Meetings
- Campus life

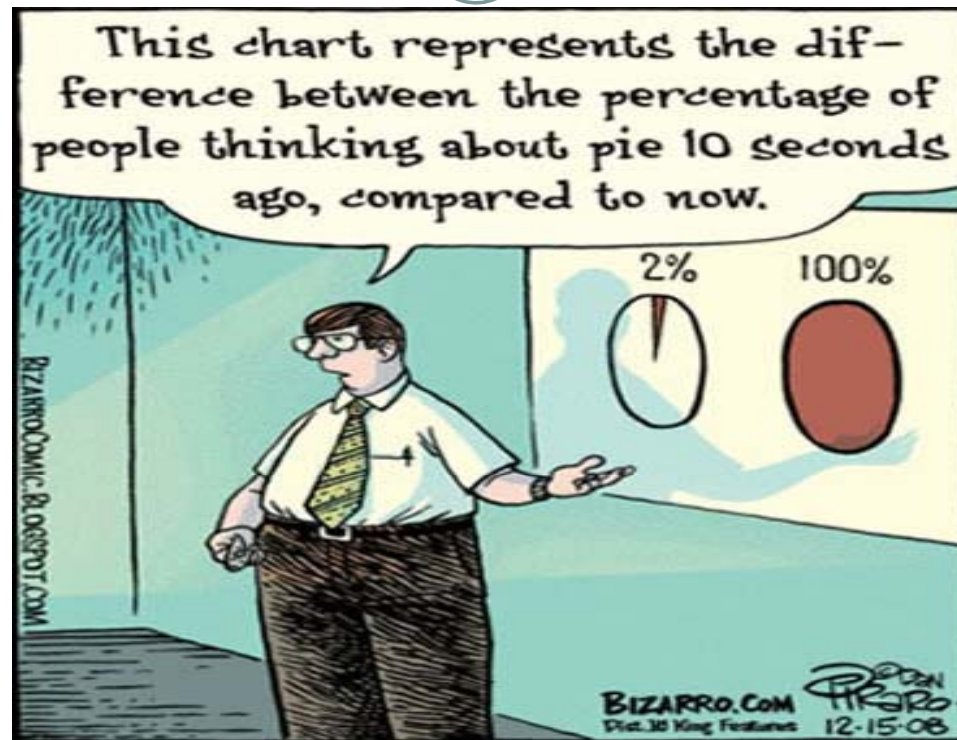
COMMUNICATING WITH OTHERS:



**WORKING THE
RELATIONSHIPS**



Everyone wants a piece...





What to say to your Head: the *When* and *How*

Sleep on it

Pick and choose your “battles” and/or “desires”

ALWAYS be prepared and research the topic

Provide visual examples (when possible; i.e. charts & graphs)

Keep them in the loop!

Face it...sometimes you just need to accept *that* candidate



The Head...



Bring you're A-team into the fold:

Invite them to all of your events (open houses, curriculum nights, visiting days, etc.)

If they are presenting for you...ALWAYS prep them

Internal marketing...sharing the same language

Assist them with your information (i.e. development)...or the "I thought this might help" scenario...



"As you can see from the flow chart, the problem stems from a lack of direction."

The Administrative Team...



Stroking your faculty:

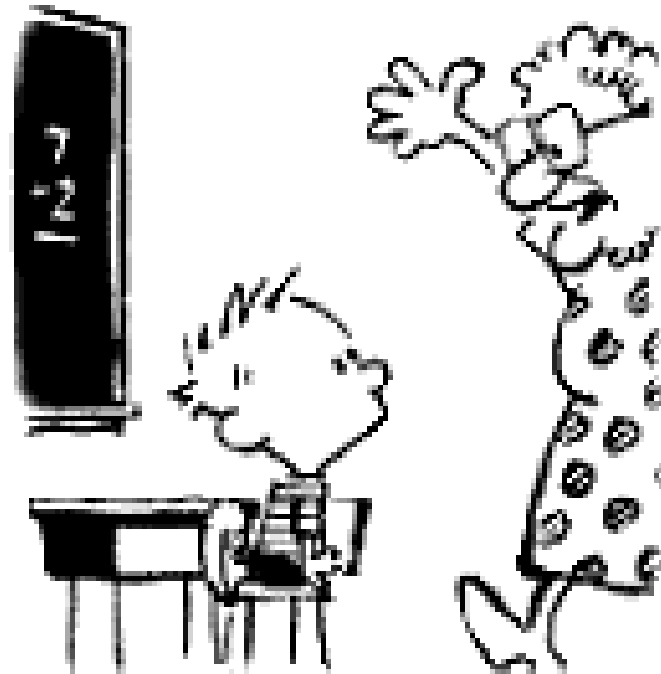
You can never give your faculty enough TLC!

Communicating, expectations & timelines are the key

If using for events/receptions...prep, prep, prep!

Utilize for outreach...especially for your “must have” apps

ALWAYS listen and do not be quick to defend YOUR decisions!



Faculty



Working WITH your coaches:

Outreach assistance-
local communities,
leagues, & connecting
with student athlete
apps

Identifying student
athletes

Be sure to express
admission expectations

DO NOT promise too
much...

Spreading the wealth



The Coach...

BALANCING ADMISSIONS AND NON-ADMISSIONS DUTIES



**...AND YOUR PERSONAL LIFE,
TOO!!!**

Benefits of Being Involved Outside of Your Office



- **Familiar with your school**
- **Allows you to speak authentically – families love personal anecdotes**
- **Provides you credibility with faculty – they believe that you know what it is like to “deal” with the students you are admitting**
- **Allows you to get to know/stay connected with parents – your primary marketers**

How to Leave it all Behind at the End of the Day



- Understand the full scope of your duties and responsibilities at the start (committee memberships, advising, teaching, coaching, dorm duty, lunch/dinner duty, etc.)
- Develop a plan for organizing and managing priorities and commitments
 - Are you planning to bring work home regularly?
 - Make a “schedule” for the next day before you leave at night
 - Ask yourself, “What had to get done today? What can I do tomorrow? What can I delegate?”
- Feel comfortable relying on your system, this will help you sleep at night
- Make time for yourself and your family – this is NOT optional
 - What do we do?

The Numbers: Share the Accountability



- **You are the manager of enrollment not the owner of it!**
- **Under your control**
 - Timeliness and quality of communication
 - Effectiveness of on campus visits
 - Appropriateness of admitted students
- **Not under your control**
 - Local and global economy
 - Retention – it's at least half of the equation
- **Use your voice to bring issues to your colleagues – success or failure is owned by everyone**

MANAGING YOUR OFFICE



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ANDERSON

"I'd say take it up with management, but that's me, so just ignore it."



“The art of
getting
things done
through
people...”

- *Mary Parker
Follett*

Office Dynamics/Politics

- **Your experience & your example**
- **Control and consensus**
- **Who is on your team?**
 - Matching your style to different individuals
 - Direct → Coach → Support → Delegate

(<http://jtaylorgoodlife.blogspot.com/>)
- **Team goal setting and time for fun**
 - Retreats & Off-sites
 - Holiday/Birthday parties
- **Hiring & Firing**
 - Trusting your instincts
 - Institutional needs
 - Speak up!

Assessing Performance

- A necessary evil
 - A critical part of their growth & yours:
FEEDBACK
 - Emotional and awkward



- Keep it:
 - BRIEF**
 - SPECIFIC**
 - RELEVANT**
 - ACTIONABLE**
- Tips
 - Self-evaluations, 360° evaluation, Peer-to-Peer
 - Use your Dean of Faculty or HR dept. (staff?)
 - Always, always meet in person
 - Give 'em something to think about!



Self- Evaluation: An Example

1. What do you feel best about this year?

As a team:

Individually:

2. What do you feel least satisfied with about this year?

As a team:

Individually:

3. What skills do you have that you feel could be used more effectively?

4. Describe the areas you feel require improvement in terms of your professional development.

5. List two of your career goals for the coming year and indicate how you plan to accomplish them.

6. Please evaluate yourself on the following factors:

Teamwork

Innovation/Creativity

Interpersonal Skills

Time Management Skills

Follow Through



Manager Evaluation: An Example

- Treats me fairly and with respect _____
- Takes initiative with solving problems _____
- Is skilled in conflict resolution _____
- Builds loyalty in others on the team _____
- Tells me when I do my work well _____
- Expects and demands high quality work _____
- Asks me for my input to help make decisions _____
- Gives good, practical advice _____
- Allows me to develop professionally _____
- Develops/explores new strategies and
opportunities _____
- Communicates decisions with confidence _____
- Establishes clear expectations _____

What do I do most effectively as a manger?

In what area do I need the most significant improvement as a manager?

What do you need that I'm not providing?

LEARNING TO DO...



**WHAT YOU DON'T
KNOW HOW TO DO!**



Becoming an Expert...

- 
- **Marketing Guru**
 - Communications Office
 - Consultants/Market Research
 - Surveys
 - Invest in a designer
 - **Financial Aid Specialist**
 - Business Office/Accountant
 - Who's on the committee?
 - F.A. audit: do you know how the money is being distributed?
 - Have conversations about sustainability with your Head, Board, Business Manager
 - **Counselor/Psychiatrist/Spiritual Guide**
 - Don't avoid the difficult calls (the longer you wait...)
 - Manage your "connected" pool carefully from the beginning!
 - Involve your Learning Specialist & School Counselors

We're all in this together... (sort of)



- **Creating a Network**

- Peer schools (by size, type, geography) & “Aspirational” schools
- Share stories, observations, trends
- Find mentors
- Travel partners
- Conferences: NAIS, TABS, SSS, SSATB (duh!), Regional, Affiliations

- **Your future**



RESOURCE LIST...

A Start!

- **Your local & regional associations**
 - ✦ Conferences, Surveys, Directors
- **National Organizations**
 - ✦ SSATB, NAIS, TABS, ERB
 - SSATB Regional Director
 - Bassett Blog
 - SSS Workshops
- **AISAP**
- **IECA**
- **Professional development workshops**
 - ✦ ISM
 - ✦ TABS Admissions Academy
- **Other Affiliations**
 - ✦ Small Boarding
 - ✦ Boys/Girls Schools
- **Parent & Alumni Events**
- **Your school's "History"**
- **"Good to Great" by Jim Collins**
- **Market Research: The Independent School Admissions Survey**