



## Annual Enrollment Planning Process - page 1



The anticipated outcomes of our enrollment planning process include:

- Clear and realistic new and returning student enrollment goals
- An inclusive and participatory planning process leading to high levels of understanding among staff members
- Greater buy-in by staff whose enthusiastic and effective execution of the plan are requirements for success
- A comprehensive written enrollment plan complete with key strategies and action plans, including implementation time tables, assignments of responsibility, resource requirements, and control/evaluation measures
- Increased confidence and morale among staff members
- Greater teamwork and improved communication
- Better management data and planning information
- More effective systems that are aligned to achieve goals
- Higher levels of confidence in the enrollment program and in the institution's ability to control and manage enrollment.



## Annual Enrollment Planning Process - page 2

### External and Internal Environmental Assessment

Your enrollment plan should be based on a deep understanding of the realities you face – both internal and external to the institution. We form a Data Collection Team to conduct an environmental scan and a SWOT analysis that identifies institutional strengths and weaknesses and environmental opportunities and threats. This information is incorporated in a Situation Analysis that presents with brutal honesty the key planning assumptions and the external and internal forces that will support or inhibit the achievement of annual enrollment goals.

### The Annual Enrollment Plan

#### Realistic Enrollment Goals

Enrollment goals should be realistic, quantified, measurable, broken down by market or territory, and relatively few in number. Too many goals will divert scarce time and resources away from what is truly important. And, nothing demoralizes a staff faster than goals they consider to be unrealistic.

#### Key Strategies

We apply the 80/20 Rule to enrollment planning – 80% of your success will be derived from 20% of your effort. The key enrollment strategies represent that 20%. The effectiveness of your plan comes from its focus on the right strategies – those that are key to success because they contribute most to the achievement of goals. In the end, there are only about 12 to 15 key strategies in a recruitment plan and another 12 to 15 key strategies in a retention plan. Your enrollment plan should not be a laundry list of all the activities you intend to implement during the year.

#### Action Plans

Action plans describe in detail how each key strategy will be implemented and by whom. They include a description of the activity being undertaken, including specific measurable objectives, the timetable for implementation, who is responsible, what resources are needed, and how you will measure progress and outcomes. Action plans constitute the bulk of an annual enrollment plan and serve as the road map to success.



## Annual Enrollment Planning Process - page 3

### The Annual Enrollment Plan (continued)

#### Systems Review

A comprehensive enrollment plan – especially one that includes retention strategies – incorporates systems (e.g. marketing, admission, financial aid, orientation, advising, registration, student life, etc.) that must be highly integrated and fully aligned even though managing their implementation can involve most of the organization chart. Achieving annual enrollment goals in an increasingly competitive environment relies more than ever on the institution functioning like a finely-tuned machine. A great plan will fail if the institution's systems and the people who implement them don't work together.

#### Organizational Structure

The structure of the organization – the organization chart – either supports the effective implementation of the enrollment plan or inhibits it. Imagine an organization where everyone – leaders, managers, and workers alike – share a commitment to the same goals and work in concert to achieve them free from the competing priorities and hidden agendas that frequently inhibit or prevent effective plan implementation. If a cabinet meeting is required to resolve every dispute arising from implementing the enrollment plan, it might be time to consider a re-organization.