



**INSTITUTE OF SCHOOL & PARISH DEVELOPMENT**

*Bringing People, Process, and Ministry Together to Build the  
Kingdom of God.*

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## **Enrollment Talk Newsletter**

**By**

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### **A Day in the Life of Your School's Enrollment Management Effort**

Whether your school's enrollment management program is directed by one person, a team of volunteers or both, there is a definite flow to the daily efforts that have to be carried out. Here's a typical enrollment management day in the month of April.

#### **Entering the Day**

Before getting your day started, you bless your day with the sign of the Cross. Remembering that there is a family coming to visit the school today, you dress up a little more than usual. The question pops into your mind, "How did I get myself into this job of recruiting new students for the school?"

In prayer the Holy Spirit says, "You are doing more than just recruiting students, you are welcoming prospective families into a school whose mission it is to make me more visibly present in the world." The Spirit adds, "What could be more important?" Strengthened by this, you head into the day with a new found sense of purpose. Yes, you are helping prospective families through your school's enrollment funnel. However, there is a deeper end to the funnel than just enrolling a student. The Kingdom of God rests at the end of your school's funnel.

#### **Arriving at School**

As you walk into the school building, it seems as if everyone wants a piece of you. A teacher says, "Did you hear that the Jones family is upset about their son's third quarter report card? Rumor has it that they are not planning to re-enroll for next year. You better talk to the principal and then give them a call."

The school secretary asks, "Did you get the hand-written thank you notes out to all the prospective families that came to the open house?" You tell the secretary that you have an even

better idea; you are going to have student's sign the card. Before you sit down to write the card, the secretary shows you an email from a prospective parent who indicates that they can't afford the tuition.

Before you can get to that email, you remember that you have to get ready for the prospective family which is visiting at 10:00 a.m. You check with the teacher that will host the family's child in the classroom. You give the teacher a little background information about the child so that she can better connect. Good thing you have school parent telecounselors. This family was called a couple of weeks ago. Not only was your telecounselor able to get them to last weekend's open house, but the notes taken from the conversation gave you a picture of this prospective family.

### **Getting Settled**

By 9:00 a.m. you pull up the WORD document of your template *Welcome* sign. You type in the family's name which is visiting, you print it out on colored paper, and you place it on the entrance doors to the school. Your welcome packet is ready. It is packed full of information about the school. It is professionally organized and printed. You say to yourself, "This family is going to be impressed with the look, feel, and content of this packet." You are so thankful that Sandy, a school parent designed this packet. You remember how happy she was to be asked to put her graphic design capabilities to use in promoting the school.

When the family arrives, the school secretary welcomes them and asks them if they want something to drink. She also makes sure that the school has good contact information on this family. She says, "Is the email address correct? Do you have any other children in the pipeline? Here's your packet."

After the child is in the host classroom, you sit down with the father. You ask him about his wants, needs, and desires in relation to an education for his daughter. You are ready to give answers that stress benefits and unique features of the school. After an hour meeting with the father, you take him on a tour of the school. Your tour ends when he picks up his daughter from the classroom. At 11:30 a.m. you see them to their car.

After lunch, you spend time responding to email and checking your school's social networking sites. You email the prospective family that you just met with at the school. You encourage the father to email you any questions that have come to mind since he left the school parking lot and headed for home.

You also remember to respond to the email from the prospective family that attended the open house and now has tuition questions. You copy the business manager on your email response to

the family. You tell the family that the business manager will be giving them a phone call to discuss how they can financially afford your school.

Speaking of email, it has been two weeks since you emailed your prospective families. You open up your Constant Contact email delivery provider. You and your team have worked hard to create a good email list of prospects so you go to an article recommended by John Cooper at [http://www.mediapost.com/publications/?fa=Articles.showArticle&art\\_aid=125599](http://www.mediapost.com/publications/?fa=Articles.showArticle&art_aid=125599) in order to make sure you make the most of the 8 seconds you have to impact the recipients of your email campaign.

Next you turn to Google Reader. You have set up a Google Alert with your school's name in it. On Google Reader you read all sort of mentions of your school's name on the internet. One of the mentions is in an article about one of your school's successful alumni. You decide to post a link to that article on your school's official Facebook page. Turning to Twitter, in less than 140 characters, you tweet a message about your school's science teacher who is receiving an award for her teaching. On both Facebook and Twitter, you pay attention to the number of fans and followers you have picked up this week.

At 2 p.m. you create the agenda for this evening's Enrollment Management Team meeting. After leading with prayer, you are going to get right into the "heart" of the matter by going over the detailed enrollment report that you update every two weeks. Your number of prospects is down, but the number of applicants is up. You are going to have your team spend time talking about strategies that you could employ right now to increase yield on deposits from those applicants. Toward the end of the agenda, you list the topic of satisfaction. Your school conducted for the second time this year a Parent Satisfaction Update. Your net promotion score is lower than what it was this time last year. Your team is going to begin to analyze and respond to the reasons why school parents didn't give you a perfect score of 10.

After school has let out, you return to the school office to talk with the secretary. She tells you about a prospective family which called today. She has already passed the prospective family's information along to the person in charge of entering prospective family data. That same data entry person has already addressed a prospective packet to be mailed to the family. You notice that the family is from out of town. You inquire to see if the local Chamber of Commerce's brochure was included. The prospect's phone number has been shared with one of the teachers who will wait a week and then, call them to see if they have any questions. For a moment you think back to the days when you did it all and you feel relieved that things have changed for the better.

### **One Last Phone Call**

You call to touch base with the person in charge of the direct mail campaigns that your school regularly conducts. He tells you that he will be bringing a final proof of the mailing to the Enrollment Management team tonight. He is also going to need a postage check for the mail house that will be handling the mailing. Your team had thought about going with a series of ads in the local newspaper, but you have never really gotten a good response to that form of advertising.

### **Spiritual Thought at the End of the Day**

As you examined your conscience that night, you thought about the message the Holy Spirit gave you at the beginning of the day. The Spirit said, “You are doing more than just recruiting a family, you are welcoming a prospective family into a school whose mission it is to make me more visibly present in the world.” You reflect at how the mission was furthered by...

- Taking the time to pray at the beginning of the day.
- Sharing talents and emptying ones self as Jesus did on the Cross.
- Welcoming people into God’s Kingdom of love, service, and solidarity.
- Responding to moments of positive grace (satisfied families) and negative grace (unsatisfied families) with love and respect.
- Knowing that one of those thank you cards might just end up in the hands of an anxious parent who is worried about doing the right thing in terms of schooling for their child.
- Teaching the students who signed the thank you cards the importance of welcoming and giving thanks for new classmates.
- Helping a teacher reach out to a nervous little classroom visitor.
- Appreciating the many people God has given to help get the work done...secretaries, principals, teachers, parents, students, graphic designers, telecounselors, business managers and the list goes on and on.
- Opening minds to God-given tools like colored paper, copy machines, printers, email, websites, Facebook, Twitter and whatever else Bill Gates comes up with next week.
- Blessing the school with an enrollment management team that understands its work as a true ministry.

**Happy Season of Easter!**