



December 2009

Catholic School Enrollment Talk

ISPD is your Catholic School Enrollment Solution for maintaining and/or increasing the quantity, quality, or diversity of your elementary or secondary Catholic school enrollment.

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Think about What You are Doing

By John Cooper, ISPD Enrollment Specialist

As we enter the Christmas season, we tend to do more thinking about what we are doing. We carefully invite guests to parties. We decorate our homes to convey the Christmas spirit. We pay more attention to the food we serve. We choose special cards to send. When guests are at our parties, we watch to see that they are having a good time. We even worry about whether people like the gifts we give them.

Some say that this increased thoughtfulness is what makes the Christmas season special. Catholic schools in their enrollment efforts can learn from this dynamic. Presence of mind and focus are vital to building enrollment programs that deliver students.

Real Examples of Where Our Schools Fall Short in Mindfulness & Attention to Detail

- A prospect calls the school office with a question. The staff member answers the question and forgets to ask and then record the name, address, phone number, and email address of the prospect. Without this vital contact information, your school can't be proactive in its follow up communication.
- A prospect emails the school with a question. The staff member responds to the email, but fails to record this interaction in the prospect's file (hard copy or database). This email could contain pivotal information regarding the prospect's interest.
- A prospect attends the school's open house. The staff member says, "Are you currently receiving information from us?" The prospect indicates that they are receiving mailings. The staff member fails to show the prospect the contact information that they have on file for

them. If the prospect's email address has been bouncing back, then an opportunity to correct the prospect's email has been lost.

- A prospect calls the school with questions about paying tuition. The staff member passes the caller like a "hot potato" to the business manager who is not in her office. The prospect does not leave a message on the business manager's voicemail. The staff member never makes any note of the call to follow up with the business manager to see that she connected with the prospect.
- A prospect talks to a faculty member during a school visit about important issues like transportation and the school's after school program. The faculty member never shares this exchange with the staff member in charge of recruitment. The prospect's concern about transportation and the after school program is never adequately addressed.
- Faculty members agree to do some phone calling of prospects. Some faculty callers take good notes of each conversation while others do not. The notes taken by the thoughtful callers are never recorded in the prospect's file. All that good information goes to waste. In addition, future callers will not have the benefit of reading those notes in preparation for later interactions with these prospects.

I could go on and on with these types of scenarios which happen regularly in our schools. They happen in the business world as well. I have never met an organization that could not improve upon its awareness of and focus on the prospect who is right in front of them. Don't be fooled into thinking that your school has this aspect of enrollment under control.

To Be On Top of Your Enrollment Game, Do the Following:

1. Be present to the moment, especially when interacting with prospects. Choose an attitude that values being there for your prospective students and families.
2. Focus on capturing and documenting prospect information from the mundane like address to the insightful questions they ask about tuition.
3. Understand that asking for information about a prospect is not about being pushy rather it is about good, authentic communication.
4. Construct a puzzle (prospect's journey to enrolling). Remember each and every inserted piece (communication) is important.
5. Watch and learn from the movie *Door to Door*. It is about the true story of Bill Porter. Bill is a master of what we are talking about.
6. Keep everyone on their toes. No one is immune from missing an opportunity to connect on a more thoughtful level. Create a culture that encourages greater focus on each interaction.

Spiritual Thought

In our Catholic schools, we strive to be one, big family, but we must remember that not every prospect has accepted our invitation to be family. Don't pull out the paper plates and plastic ware too early in the relationship. In the coming months, our Catholic schools would do well to set out the good China and silverware as we prepare a table that leads prospects to enrolling.

We recruit one prospect at a time. Every interaction and contact with a prospect matters. Most Catholic schools don't have the quantity of prospects to be able to afford thoughtless interactions. Most importantly, being Christ-like begins and ends with attention to the dignity of each and every person.

ISPD 2010 Mardi Gras Development School



In case you haven't heard, we are bringing back the most popular three day workshop ISPD has ever introduced - the ISPD Mardi Gras Development School - which will be held at De La Salle High School on February 3, 4 and 5, 2010.

The ISPD Development School will have many advantages:

- At a Catholic high school located directly on St. Charles Avenue on the streetcar line
- Numerous hotels up and down the streetcar line where attendees can stay and simply ride the streetcar to De La Salle High School
- Over 15 courses on Catholic Development, Advancement, People Engagement and Total Stewardship
- Many presenters - ISPD associates and guest presenters from throughout the country
- Mardi Gras parades beginning the day the Development School is over
- Park bench sessions with presenters
- ISPD socials
- Networking luncheon
- Plus much more

Make your plans & mark your calendar for a great time in New Orleans!

- [Click here for more details & list of courses on Mardi Gras Development School](#)

ISPD Webinars

ISPD now offers \$39 sixty minute Webinars on Catholic Development.

Listed here are our upcoming Webinars:

- **"Organizing and Implementing the Total Stewardship Process"**
January 14, 2010
- **"How to Invite the Gifts"**
February 22, 2010
- **"Getting Your Parish and/or School Ready for a Capital Campaign"**
March 9, 2010
- **"Integrating Total Quality and Customer Service into Your Catholic Development Efforts"**
April 22, 2010
- **"Hosting a Gift Reception"**
May 5, 2010
- **"How to Effectively Host Input Sessions and Town Hall Meetings"**
June 8, 2010

- [Please visit our website for Webinar details & online registration](#)

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Please feel free to forward this newsletter to anyone you think could benefit from this information. If there are any topics you would like to see covered in a future newsletter, please contact us.

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