Inbound Telephone

The "Typical Way"

- Calls come to front desk
- Answered by work study or stressed out front desk employee who has to balance phones, walk ins and data entry
- Inquiries ask for information and we say we'll send it - very few ask for a tour, and very seldom do we suggest a tour.
- Prospect receives mail package

A Better Way

- Calls routed to counselor
- ****Get the call away from the front desk, where there is too much going on!!!!
- Counselor encourages student to visit
- Or Counselor encourages student to apply
Why?

- Students and parents are most interested when they call
- Many do not know how college visits work
- Students are 20% more likely to enroll and start when they visit

Let's look at an example...

- Midwestern University "before"
  - Averaged 7 visits a week
  - Inbound calls were handled at front desk
- After......
  - Visits jumped to 31 per week
  - Calls were routed to admissions counselors

So what is the best way to handle the inbound call?

- 2 rules:
  1. Gather information first
  2. Give information second

- Remember – the person asking the questions is in control

Do not tell them everything over the phone. Get them to visit.
Inbound Call Outline

• **GREETING:** Good morning. Thank you for calling ________ College, how may I direct your call?
• <caller asks for information>
• **QUESTION:** Ok, is this information for yourself?
• **QUESTION:** And your name <or student's name> please? And your phone #?

Inbound Call Outline

• **QUESTION:** How did you hear about the College?
• **TRANSITION:** I'm going to transfer you to an admissions counselor who will be able to help you.
• __________
• **Counselor:** (warmly) This is __________, how may I help you?

Inbound Call Outline

• *Let me find out a little bit more, so I make sure you get the right information.* I know you gave your name already, but I want to make sure I have it too. What about your email address?
• And what year will you graduate high school?
• OK, if I'm going to send you information, I will need your address...and your phone.
Inbound Call Outline

**PROBE:** Ok then, can you tell me about your educational background:

- <Verify high school / college>
- What sort of a student are you?
- Have you visited other colleges? <if yes, which ones?>

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Inbound Call Outline

- What programs are you looking into?
- Do you know anyone who has attended XYZ College?

(with inflection) What made you call me today?

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Inbound Call Outline

**TRANSITION:** (name) You seem serious about this. (pause) I know that XYZ College would be a great place for you. We have great ____ program.

- Can I make a suggestion? (pause)
- **SUGGESTION:** Let's arrange a date and time for you to visit the College. When you visit we'll be able to show you around the school, talk to students, meet faculty, and really check us out.
Inbound Call Outline

- **STATEMENT:** We'll also be able to make sure you get all the information you need to apply for financial assistance and scholarships in time to meet the deadlines.
- **BENEFIT:** Then, after going through all of that information, you'll be able to go home, think about what you've seen, and make a decision in time for the ______ semester.

Inbound Call Outline

- **ASK:** How does that sound?
- **SUGGEST:** I might be able to squeeze you in tomorrow, how does 3:15 look? (continue until you establish date, time)
- **DIRECTIONS:** Do you know where we are located? Why don't you grab a pen and I'll make sure you know how to get here. (go over directions, or make sure they have url to a map link)

Inbound Call Outline

- **WARM GOODBYE:** Ok, We'll see you on ______ at ______. By the way, you are welcome to bring a parent or friend with you...

- Good bye
After the call....

- Make notes about what you talked about
- Mark the calendar with their visit
- Call to reschedule if they no-show

Dealing with difficult situations

Review pages 123 - 127
What causes customers to get upset?

What should we do when customers get upset? (pg 129)

Triggers vs Calmers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Triggers</th>
<th>Calmers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Policy</td>
<td>Here's what I can do</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can't</td>
<td>Can</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sorry</td>
<td>Thank you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No, I don't</td>
<td>I can find out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>But</td>
<td>And</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You should have</td>
<td>I understand why you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The only thing we can do</td>
<td>The best option I think</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
More Suggestions...

- Page 133 – Inform the student quickly (don’t make them wait!)

- Page 135 – Do something extra
  What could we do that would help a frustrated student? <Think “parking, directions, frazzled, lost, confused”>

Let's Practice....

- Read your scenario
- Talk it over in your group
- Make a list of words to use
- Decide what action you would take
- Write a “script” that incorporates your key words and actions

Scenario One

An applied student ends up on your phone, demanding to know if they have been accepted, and frustrated that their admissions counselor’s voice mail box is full – and they can’t talk to them today
Scenario Two

A student who has been awarded a generous – half tuition scholarship calls to ask why their award wasn't more, and explains they are getting $1,000 more from their second choice school.

Scenario Three

Even though you don't handle transfer students, a transfer student is routed to your phone – you are the only counselor on duty. The student wants to know why their COM101 from BIG State Community College did not transfer.

Scenario Four

A parent calls to ask for more information on why their honor-roll daughter was not accepted. She insists that another girl at their high school who isn't even an honors student was accepted.
Scenario Five

A parent of a deposited student calls to demand her daughter be moved off from the housing waiting list, and cannot understand WHY her daughter would be on the waiting list in the first place.

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