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of

admissions@Vidyasanskar

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The Three Dimensions are:

1. Training Manual, Step by Step Guide
2. Systematization of Department
3. Game Plan for Admission Theater

source of information

This guide is based on Joe Girard's book,
"How to sell anything to anybody".

Girard is regarded as
World's Greatest Salesman.

He holds **World Record**
in retail selling of
making more than **13,000** car sales
in his just 14 years.

Girard knows how to sell real products and services.

He is an expert of real business world
and knows how to best deal with prospects
to make them customers.

NOTE:

In this booklet, I've used his suggestions and recommendations for the sales aspects of admission counseling, school tour, and on how to best network with parents, for parents support to get more leads, referrals from them. Thank you.

admissions, a business case:

Tough competitive world, a premium education business segment. There are lot of international schools with similar infrastructure, similar words in prospectus, similar promises and similar fees. Surviving in a business world needs selling, converting prospects into customers.

It DOES NOT mean we have to compete or steal to survive. Nobody is a born admission counselor; we have to make ourselves one, by practicing and learning. Visiting parents are fully aware of various international schools, their promises and way they talk and deal.

Vidya Sanskar has a great competitive advantage, its impact full name, the traditional brand respect and cultural value attached to the words "Vidya" and "Sanskar".

Make a sale that is converting a prospect (visiting parents, children) into our customer is like a war, in which you have to win a bloodless victory. Important is that in this war in which there should be NO loser. Both buyer and seller should win.

Yes, Counseling is a bloodless war. Often prospects come in as enemies. With very negative preconceived notions. They think school is obviously trying to push something over them.

We counselors think they are here to waste our time. Just another annoyance activity in our daily work life, which we have to go through to get our salary cheque.

training manual for counselors (step-by-step guide)

rule 1: parents are humans like us

Why are parents here? Visiting parents are probably in the school to get their child enrolled. They are in school because they are interested in school but they are scared. Yes parents are scared of you, your school.

Why parents are scared of you, your school?

1. They know what you are trying to do. They know you will try your best, probably even lie to make them shelling out lacks of rupees, their hard earned money, their savings.
2. They do not want to take risk, change school and land into wrong hands, which may spoil their future and money.
3. Sometimes they think they will never get the best services for which they are paying.

What are parents looking for? Two things: First, Financial Satisfaction – meaning school is worthy of the high fees, their facilities and services for their child. Second an Emotional Satisfaction of making good education of their child and confidence that their child will be well looked after.

Treat parents well.

Sometimes we look at parents in a wrong way. Parents are not animals who will lie and are there to take our valuable time for time pass.

Visiting parents are intelligent creamy layer people of our society who have worked hard to earn their money, they know and understand the business and are genuinely interested in getting their child enrolled in Vidya Sanskar. This is the first assumption that a admission counselor must have.

Parents must feel that they have spent their time well. They will be willing to spending their money if they feel it's a winning deal.

Vidya Sanskar wants two things from our customers: Their Money and Their Friendship.

Yes our school needs both. If you don't treat them well, during their conversation. They may even want to pay leave entire talk in middle, get out of counselor room and never come back to school again.

Remember Atithi Devo Bhavah? Its true! Please treat Guests as Gods.

Do not have pre-conceived notions. Do not think person is stupid or cracking and silly joke. Do not think he looks like some one or resembles some one u don't like. Get that desire that feeling out of your head. You cant sell a scared person. You cant sell to a person you don't like, he will pick up how you feel about him.

Don't forget who you are, a sales person and don't forget who he is – a customer, and don't forget you are there to make a satisfying win-win deal for you and for parents.

rule 2: counselor must be sincere, honest, truthful and one like parents.

How to conduct School Tour and Counseling Session

1. FIRST & MOST IMPORTANT: You should not be fake!
2. Always Remember: You are an actor playing your part.
3. People should ask you by your name. Make sure to repeat your name few times before the parents so that he memorizes it. Next time, if and when they come, they know whom to ask for.
4. We do not want people to think words Vidya Sanskar doesn't really mean anything and that school is only for money.
5. Start by greeting in a welcoming smile. If kids are accompanying, acknowledge and compliment them. Compliment kids on his dress, cuteness or even eyeglass frames he is wearing. Give them some candies, freebies, balloons. Start conversation and take him on school tour.
6. Alternative way will be, Introduce yourself to the kid or parents, Hi, my name is Sumitra, and your name is???
7. Start politely by showing them pictures of VIP visitors, school life, prospectus, etc.. and be passive for first 2/3 minutes. Once he starts to talk, start moving with him. Whatever he asks, answer that is in half question, which will get him going for some more... this will help u learn more about him.
8. Start with get him talking about his children, their current school and studies.
9. Give them a feel of Vidya Sanskar brand value. Take them to a class, art-room, dance room, Show them kids work displayed.
10. Show class in action. Show them copies of students. Example see copies of Nayna and Leher's ICT copies and get the kind of Vidya Sanskar feeling inscribed into it.
11. Try to get them feeling of student life, what vidya and Sanskar we are giving, why we have school mission, how we are implementing mission statement, personality development, holistic learning, how teacher and mentor system works. Basically introduction to words that describe our education philosophy
12. While they are roaming around in school, do not talk much to them. Do not say much. Let them have feel and smell of the school. If child is accompanying, let me have a seat in an empty class, let play in the field, try a few basket ball or snooker shots.
13. Hear carefully what he says, what they speak and what they are worried about. Important is that school appeal to their senses, ideas and beliefs with genuineness and honesty of efforts.
14. If they ask question, do not exaggerate. You do not have to lie. Let them see as much as they want, do not cut them short, unless they are taking too much time and u have something super urgent in hands.
15. It is our duty to clarify doubts of parents and remove their fears about the school. You don't have to make anything happen, you have to let it happen. It is their child, his/her future, it should be their choice, your responsibility is to facilitate the decision.

16. Listen what he/she says, give him a practical demo or real life example of what he has just asked/ his concern.
17. In counseling meeting: Talk Positive, Strictly! Try reading parents. Ask about their child, his current school. Praise about highlights or good points that u see. Do not complete their words, just listen. You do not have to reply everything.
18. On your way, to academic block, show them inauguration stone. You could also mention about recent events or happenings in the school, like about QUEST, Kapil dev visited out campus in winter carnival. In fact we have had an assembly in our school on this topic, similar to slogan theme of your t-shirt...
19. You never want to tell him anything that will make him or you feel foolish later.
20. Counselor should have capacity to offer/mention discount on fees, particularly if the students' past performance was outstanding.
21. Do not argue with parents. If he asking something technical on CIE, and u think he knows more about you on the subject, say, you are right, u surely are well aware and know lot about CIE. This would also keep yr conversation without interruption, by looking into a book or calling someone for clarification.
22. In one-on-one counselor meeting should start by relaxing the prospects. Entire show should be one person show, non stop, uninterrupted by any person or telephone or any event. Give un-divided attention to each prospect.
23. You can never get caught by speaking truth or making a prospect feel good if the meeting is stretching. Turning Anger into smile is what you have to do and turning fear into trust. Turn no into yes.
24. Counselor desk and room should be absolutely neat and clean.
25. Dress & Appearance: If counselor is wearing very expensive clothes. They will think school is going to rip me off my money.
26. Counselor should look and talk as much as possible like the people to whom he is selling. You have to look like u are one of them, you understand economics, their family background, where they come from, Tell that u have kids too and is in same boat.
27. Starting meeting - From admission form get info about them – kids, hobbies, travels, whatever you learn about them, talk about the things in which he is interested. There is nothing more effective in selling anything than getting customer to really believe that you like him and care about him.
28. Check the parent: Is he worried about fees? Is he worried about child's personality development? Is he worried about English speaking? Is he worried about hostel and facilities? Is he worried about student life style? **What are his areas of concerns? Write all these points in the backside of the admission form. So that next time, we have good answers/points to address these**

29. Every prospect, every parent is a VIP. Every person knows at least 250 people. If we are able to see 50 people in a month and if all of them are unhappy about the way they were treated at school, it means that 7,500 people, almost a stadium full of people know one thing – Vidya Sanskar is not a good school. Every time a prospect is turned off, we have turned off 250 more.
30. Parents are here because they know what school looks like, they know what vidya and Sanskar means. So they already have an expectation and mindset. In the end, the only two things they care about is that their child becomes good and they get value for the money they are spending.
31. Let visitors take as much brochures, prospectus, cards etc take from the school, as much as possible. He is going to show it to his wife, children, co workers, friends, relatives. Everyone sees our school; it promotes marketing and builds awareness.
32. If he/she says, I am here only to inquire, or just see. It means he has enough interest to become our customer but may be he is scared of taking admission now. Maybe he needs some time to get over that fear/hesitation or apprehension first. You do not have to make parents enroll into school. You have to let them enroll, by themselves, by their choice.
33. Vidya Sanskar is not a business, it is school in concurrence with traditions of India, value based education school which grooms international leaders of tomorrow. We create relationship with parents and see them as our partners on the voyage of education. This relationship is not just with parents but also their friends and relatives.

34. Don't give a big form for parents/students to fill. While counseling start talking to customer, ask his name, address, phone, student name etc write it down yourself ask him, politely "Could you please okay this for me?" Indicating where to sign.
35. Important: listen to the parents enough. Your win is to narrow the gap and finally eliminating the gap between you and parents. Your victory is satisfying parents and get their child enrolled.
36. It all comes down to one word – Trust. If they trust you, they will enroll their child. In the End. Ask, is there anything that you would like to know? Have I left out or missed anything?

POST MEETING ANALYSIS

Counselor's self analysis: What did I say that made this fellow finally get convinced? What was his main concern? Why did that madam earlier to this did not buy? Was she just inquiring for sport? Did I do any mistakes? What better could I have said?

Suggestions

1. Visiting Card of sales person should be distinctively unique, why not have their picture on it?
2. Prepare an Vidya Sanskar Entrance Exam Preparation booklet. Also, prepare a sample question paper or practice test paper book.
3. Organization of Examination will be first impression of the international management standards of the school to parents. Best show of international services must be demonstrated.

systematization of admissions department

SALES INITIATIVES OF ADMISSIONS DEPTT.

1. Admissions office to work as sales department. They are separate from school staff. Isolated from school's pace. They should spend all time in maintaining relationships support calls, brand building, personalized marketing/sales letters, customer care activities, brand building, awareness exercises, value creation etc
2. Why not BREAK DOWN THE PRICE? Academic Fee is X amount + Food + Books and Copies. + Uniform is Y amount. Detail the various additional services included in fee Bank Loans, Education loan, association with banks. NSK To advise?
3. Will it be good idea to get fees in Monthly installments? Ask NSK
4. Extend discounts to influencing people. We can give 10% discount on yearly fee of enrolled students. If people feel guilty about getting paid for doing a favor, give them complementary free family lunches at a 5* hotel,.. Ask current customers for referrals. I have already made a letter for the same.
5. Overseas Study Agents: Regularly keep in touch with them. Give many school visiting cards and brochures to agents.
6. We can also create other agents on commission basis, such as CA's, Tution/Coaching Centers, local union presidents, some one political, in journalism, in business. Recognize people who are worth a lot of effort, because if they get a good deal, they will work hard for us, and working hard for themselves.

7. Get leads from visiting people. Ask them if they know anyone who is looking for admissions. Make your own prospect list. Get references and in 3/5 years time, you will have a proper diary or file of clients. Maintain a database. Have this list alphabetically, and also by date wise, when last called/mailed.

MARKETING, BRANDING OF SCHOOL AND NETWORKING WITH PARENTS

Satisfied parents are best bet for future sales.

Keep in touch with parents, few ways could be:

1. Call on birthday, on wedding anniversary OR send birthday cards made by school children. Personalized mail, to let parents know that u r thinking of them specifically. All drawings that students are making are going for constructive, use anyways.
2. People by default connect with the name Vidya Sanskar. Secret is how creative and interesting we can be to promote our brand value, our name into their homes.
3. Our name is our theme for brand building, in all advertisement or promotion initiatives, associate school name with emotions, respect for tradition, with pictures supporting student life at Vidya Sanskar.
4. He would probably memorize and suggest Vidya Sanskar school to people, whenever they are asked about a good school. If their students are in the school, they are our best prospects now.

FINAL MEETING FOR REGISTRATION

1. Talk in the language of closing the deal But do not try too hard and too soon. Don't ask for payments in rush.
2. Don't ask "So do u want to get your child admitted"? Instead Ask On which day would you like your child's classes to start?
3. Again, I don't like filling big forms. So Fill lengthy admission form by yourself. Give him a pen in his hand and again ask just OK this.
4. "Give me 1000Rs and I will get the admission reserved for you." Don't wait for full fees to get child registered. Everyone has 1000 Rs in pocket.
5. **Payment by Cheque:** Don't mind fees by cheque. Lot of people are happy about cheque because they think, they can stop payment, if they change their mind. If the parents are intelligent, they must've inquired fee standards of international schools.
6. **Discount and Bargaining:** Normally service class people do not bargain but some business men do. People also like to brag about discount they got, so cut a few rupees when they ask for discount. Besides u want to make them your friend, so discount is not a bad idea.
7. If in the concluding meeting a parents says, I will be back, consider him lost the moment he moves out of that door. You do not want parents to feel they are being pressured. Ask him straight, what particular kind of information he is looking for? Or a second person could pitch in just before he/she leaves, asking what did the counselor not told you that you needed?

8. **Setting up for deal closing:** Check the ability to pay finances. Let him know that fees can be arranged by bank loans, If required. You have associations with bank.
9. **Always close the deal on positive note.** Say the magic words that will make him happy and satisfied about the good deal he has won. Remember, u have noted their concerns about child's education earlier? Mention them.
10. **Again, Is Discount Possible?** Earning money makes people happy and so does saving money. Save their money, keep some buffer of discount for most students and make them happy. **This discount will be because of their child's excellent performance in sport, or in recognition of the prizes she has won in dance.**
11. Once again, what characteristics of Vidya Sanskar will give them value for their well-spent money.

POST ENROLLMENT

1. **IMPORTANT:** Please Please Please Thank the parents for getting their child into vidya Sanskar and welcome them into Vidya Sanskar family. Its pretty obvious thing to do, but we do it with thank you letter, a small gift for child, a small souvenir for home.
2. **What type of gifts?** Cost effective doesn't mean cheap it means getting moneys worth however much or little you are spending. Gift them Bamboo plants, for gift, they will keep it for a long time and remember who gave it to them.

Follow up, post admission

1. Admission Officer to follow up with child's parents till the end of one month from date of enrollment. Keep in touch with them to make sure things are going as per agreement and expectations. Any things to be done?
2. **Incase if parents come with a problem or dissatisfaction to the counselor. Admission Officer to always take parents side.**
3. Parents are admission officers friend, the will give him/her more customers and they need to stand strongly behind them. It's a long term investment, also brand management, customer care and admission support.
4. Seek the potential in parents. These parents can also bring in sponsorships for school events, student activities, referrals for more admissions? Why not?
5. Irrespective of the nationality or family background. All parents must get same treatment and respect.
6. It is important for admission officer to keep good relationship with mentor and parents. This trio Network will be new and unique to Vidya Sanskar's parent care initiatives.
7. Admission officer to keep in touch with all parents. One call is a must in a month, for first three months. After which a student is completely becomes mentor's responsibility

game plan in the admission theater

Admission Theater

Three layers of counseling:

1. Top Management Level: NSK + SK
2. Second Senior Level: Helen + Neerja
3. First level: Pradeep + Kavya + Puja



Important: Choice of First level and Second level counselor will be selected by looking at the type of customers. Business Type, Professional, or International students. Pradeep, Kavya and Puja S. are purposely selected, because they are non-threatening personalities. They will keep parents on upper hand in first interaction.

What will Pradeep, Kavya and Puja do?

Apart from school tour and basic introduction, they will collect info about parents, their family and professional background, details about child – class in which admission sought, his current school and most importantly parents concerns for education. They will write it in their records. After school tour, they will formally introduce them to senior counselors, if they seek so or if they have any particular questions/concerns.

They will give senior counselor and all important feedbacks, about their children's age, current school, family type, what are they looking for in new school, what are their interest, and expectations? why they want to change the school and things like that. Senior Incharge will give a 10 minute serious meeting

Senior Counselor will take second level meetings towards conclusion, providing them with technical details, admission process, entrance test, CIE university, its acceptability etc.

Thereafter just before school fee payments, introduction to directors will be done. Only after admission is verbally confirmed. This could also be a chance to discuss discounts or rebates.

Counseling is like Operation by a Doctor

Let First counselor do his/her job, collect info – dissect the problem areas, concerns. Step by step organically move towards the core.

As a counselor, You are like a surgeon with patient on operating table. Do not start cutting until you are sure what u have to do. Do not want to take out his heart, if he has problems appendicitis. If he kidney is troubling u do not want operate on his liver. Meaning, you need to do intelligence job before senior takes charge.

While admission in-charge is the surgeon, who will do the final conversion task. Junior guys will do the BP checking, blood test, ECG, change dressing, get lights on and things like that. In-charge will do the surgery of conversion.

How to motivate counselors? In addition to salary, Why don't we associate financial benefit or incentive for these people with their performance that is converting prospects into customers. Say, 2000Rs to first level, 3000Rs to senior level.

Teachers lack training and time to do customer support duties. Why don't we hire two sales people for this job? And make them rotating heads within mentors. Sales people will do customer care or parents support.

