

International Student Recruitment Realities

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Biography

Dr. Philip Perkins has been in the field of higher education in a variety of administrative and teaching areas for almost 20 years. His experiences include management as a director (of an office, institute, and campus), study abroad, international student advising, intensive English language instruction and management, enrollment management, and international recruitment. He has increased international student enrollment at every institution in which he has worked where recruitment has been a responsibility of his position. He has traveled, worked, and lived extensively in Europe and South America, and has recruited in western Africa as well. His language background is in German and Spanish. His primary research interest is associated with cultural interaction between Americans and international students on higher education campuses in the United States. Dr. Perkins has endeavored to increase cross-cultural interaction through programming wherever he has worked. In addition to his administrative duties, he has also taught undergraduate and graduate level courses in multicultural education, comparative education, modern languages, and language education. Dr. Perkins works as a paid consultant in international education. He is married, has a daughter, and is originally from Atlanta, Georgia.

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**Common Mistakes and Misperceptions
of Administrators New to
International Recruitment**

- **Lack of understanding that serious recruitment is fast becoming difficult to do on a part-time basis - Competition is great and it takes resources**
- **Not understanding that domestic recruitment is different from international recruitment**
- **Impatience – poor understanding (or overly optimistic prediction) of how long it will take to get results**
- **Failure to establish realistic growth expectations**
- **Inflexibility in admission requirements**
- **Lack of on-campus ESL program or resources**
- **Misallocation of resources**

- **Don't consider scholarships for internationals and or discounting of tuition**
- **Sending inappropriate, inexperienced, or ill-trained personnel to recruit**
- **Website of institution is unprepared to be used as a recruiting tool for international students (mobile friendly, translations on major admissions pages, etc.)**
- **Recruiting places because other institutions recruit there**
- **No serious, appropriate, and or consistent follow-up plan is in place**
- **Failure to understand that students cannot easily be tracked to particular recruitment events or strategies (for purposes of ROI)**
- **Agents cannot provide the bulk of an institution's international students, but usually only a small percentage, and an institution must be ready to pay at least the "standard" rate**
- **There is often an assumption that international prospects will know the institution, its name, and or reputation**

SAMPLE BUDGETS

\$7,500 – while this is “bare bones” something can be done with it, but it will be a limited effort (focus is on a limited number of countries, 2 or so)

- **An annual trip for a week to embassies in DC to attract foreign government funded students (\$4,000 covers two staff members' travel and expenses)**
- **Set up a student ambassadors social networking team to stay in contact with prospects (\$1,000)**
- **Consider use of a lead generator where you pay per lead (\$3,000)**

\$20,000 – This level provides more opportunities through additional strategies (3-4 countries)

- **An annual trip for a week to embassies in DC to attract foreign government funded students (\$4,000)**
- **Set up student ambassadors social networking team to stay in contact with prospects (\$1,000)**
- **Consider use of a lead generator where you pay per lead (\$2,500)**
- **Conduct on-line webinars (3 x \$2,500)**
- **Conduct live in-country seminar as a follow up to a webinars (\$5,000 plus \$1,500 for travel)**
- **Visit individual high schools and Education USA, if possible, when overseas**

\$50,000 – Provides more opportunities for a few branding strategies and more countries (5-7)

- **An annual trip for a week to embassies in DC to attract foreign government funded students (\$4,000)**
- **Set up student ambassadors social networking team to stay in contact with prospects (\$1,500)**
- **Consider use of a lead generator where you pay per lead (\$2,000)**
- **Conduct on-line webinars (3 x \$2,500)**
- **Conduct live in-country seminars as a follow up to your webinars (3 x \$5,000 plus \$4,500 for travel)**
- **Attend overseas recruiting fairs (\$1,500 x 6 plus \$8,000 for travel)**
- **Go on an arranged high school tour (\$8,500 plus \$1,500 for travel)**
- **Visit individual high schools and Education USA, if possible, when overseas**

\$100,000 – the budget of an institution with at least one full-time dedicated recruitment position and allows for branding strategies

- **An annual trip for a week to embassies in DC to attract foreign government funded students (\$4,000)**
- **Set up student ambassadors social networking team to stay in contact with prospects (\$1,500)**
- **Consider use of a lead generator where you pay per lead (\$2,000)**
- **Conduct on-line webinars (3 x \$2,500)**
- **Conduct live in-country seminars as a follow up to your webinars (2 x \$5,000 plus \$3,000 for travel)**
- **Attend overseas recruiting fairs (\$1,500 x 15 plus \$20,000 for travel)**
- **Go on arranged high school tours (\$8,500 x 2 plus \$3,000 for travel)**
- **Advertise on-line via recruitment sites (\$10,000 annually)**
- **Visit individual high schools and Education USA, if possible, when overseas**
- **Country follow up visits to DC embassies visited (travel - \$4,000)**
- **Sponsorships at fairs (costs and types vary)**

Strategies/tools that may belong in other budgets, but should be considered, regardless of your budget size

- Offer scholarships and or tuition discounts
- On-line and printed brochures translated into the target languages (\$3,000)
- Provide agents with significant enough return to send you students (for example, American institutions may consider paying at least 15% of initial annual tuition)
- Shipping of materials to recruitment sites
- Cost of immunizations for personnel traveling overseas

QUESTIONS?

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