The Importance of Opening and Closing Statements for Recruiting Online Students

By Alea Chamberlin, Senior Enrollment Advisor
UW Extended Campus
Good morning, starshine. The Earth says hello
BYE  BYE

Bye Bye Bye

SO LONG, FAREWELL
These are all perfectly appropriate ways of saying hello and good bye.....for opening and/or closing a conversation.....

But what are we lacking here........

(I’ll tell you in a minute)
Who am I?

Aliya Chaplin, Senior Enrollment Adviser for UW Extended Campus

• 7 years as an Enrollment professional specifically working with non-traditional, adult online learners.

• Traditional online and competency based programs offered through partnership's between several UW campuses ranging from certificate programs, Associate, Bachelor and Master degree programs.

• 8 Advisers who recruit students for over 20 different programs covering the industries of IT, healthcare, management, business and general studies.
Why am I qualified to talk on this topic?

• I have been an adult non-traditional learner (I earned my MBA online via a competency based program at WGU)

• I have put my husband through school, also an adult non-traditional learner.

• I have worked for 2 online universities working with these populations (WGU and UW Extended Campus) that serve the adult non-traditional learner populations.
Who we are connecting with:

According to an Inside HigherEd article from Dec 11, 2019, there are roughly 20 million students studying in the United States and of those, 3.5 million are exclusively studying via online/distance programs.

• Adult students seeking online programs often find themselves with unique situations that don’t apply to first-time, traditional college students. (such as working full time, having families, etc).

• Our Enrollment team communicates entirely through virtual avenues which makes it crucial that clear expectations and great customer service are at the forefront of every interaction be it verbal or written.

A Snapshot of my team’s volume:

In the year 2019 our 8 member Enrollment Advising team fielded:

- 3,137 advising interviews with prospects interested in over 20 different degree tracks. (average of 10 per week)
- 57,716 phone calls (average of 290 activities per week)
- 93,523 personal emails
  - ( Doesn’t include mass blasts or marketing emails)

Not all campuses have the capacity in staffing resources and time to do the above, but we have found this work to be extremely valuable in setting proper expectations and positively influencing enrollments.
Making a Successful opening statement

What are these greetings/good byes lacking???????
A great opening will not only set the stage for the conversation, but will allow you to get crucial information across that will create great conversation flow.

HELLO. MY NAME IS INIGO MONTOYA. YOU KILLED MY FATHER. PREPARE TO DIE.

INIGO’S GUIDE TO NETWORKING SUCCESS
1. POLITE GREETING
2. NAME
3. RELEVANT PERSONAL LINK
4. MANAGE EXPECTATIONS
Example of NO Opening Statement:

ME: UW Extended Campus, this is Aliya, may I help you?
Student identifies what he’s interested in.
ME: Yes I can help you with that, who am I speaking with today?
Student tells me who he is and what he wants.
A better way to start a conversation:
Staying on point!

It took me 15 seconds in the first call to derail my own efforts.

It took me 15 more seconds in the 2nd call to set expectations and have an excellent customer service call for both my own purposes and the student’s benefit.
Craft your own opening statement!
A great closing statement will help you not only end the conversation succinctly, but will allow you to get crucial information across on what the student needs to do next.

INIGO’S GUIDE TO NETWORKING SUCCESS

1. POLITE GREETING
2. NAME
3. RELEVANT PERSONAL LINK
4. MANAGE EXPECTATIONS
What makes up a great closing?

• Conduct a check-point.
• Outline next steps.
• We are the experts in our programs, process, and deadlines. The prospect is the expert in their life. Ask what their timeline is for the application steps and refine them if needed.
Craft your own closing statement/plan!
Again, my name is Aliya. Thank you to everyone who attended today! It has been wonderful sharing this last hour with all of you fellow Admissions and Recruitment professionals. I hope you found these tips and tricks helpful and can incorporate them into your routine. Your next step is to go out and be prosperous with these tools!!!
Questions/Comments!

Contact Info:
Aliya Chaplin, Senior Enrollment Adviser
UW Extended Campus
Aliya.chaplin@uwex.edu