

Student Recruitment Initiatives Contest

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Summary

The recruitment program that the University of Indianapolis School of Occupational Therapy intends to implement will consist of an occupational therapy recruitment/awareness fair. Occupational therapy graduate students, alumni, faculty, and admission staff members of the University of Indianapolis will travel to local high schools and educate prospective students about the unique profession of occupational therapy.

The fair will consist of a variety of interactive booths that discuss many interesting and innovative areas of occupational therapy practice. The number of individuals needed to implement the recruiting fair is dependant on the number of booths that will be set up at the fair. Depending on the topic, it may be appropriate for more than one person to staff a booth. The estimated cost of the project is \$371.50 for the initial fair and \$121.50 for each fair thereafter.

In order to implement this student recruitment plan, the University of Indianapolis School of Occupational Therapy could correspond this project with its curriculum. The recruitment project would become a two week spring term topical seminar course. The first week of the course would be spent planning the booths, and discussing marketing/advertisement issues. If it is deemed that one week advance notice is not enough notice for the high schools, the topical seminar course could start earlier (and spread out the hours that the graduate students would be in class). The second week (or the equivalent amount of time) would consist of traveling to the high schools, fair set-up, the fair itself, fair clean-up, and contacting prospective students. In addition to placing phone-calls and thank-you e-mails to prospective students, the graduate students will also need to create a database that contains the contact information of prospective students, the number of these students who attend the University of Indianapolis School of Occupational Therapy Open House, and most importantly, application rates.

This recruitment plan is unique for multiple reasons. First, we will be using a wide variety of interactive booths to engage the students and teach them about the many innovative areas of occupational therapy practice. In addition, the occupational therapy graduate students will be traveling to the high schools, rather than having the prospective students come to our campus. Finally, the fact that the recruitment program could be implemented into our curriculum (thus, the graduate students will be doing much of the work) is unique because it teaches the graduate students about recruitment/marketing techniques, and integrates them into the community to explain occupational therapy to others.

Plan Description/Marketing Plan

Each year, the University of Indianapolis School of Occupational Therapy has a fair at an Indianapolis high school, in order to promote disability awareness and corresponding occupational therapy interventions. This fair has been extremely successful, as well as popular. Many high school students have learned about occupational therapy through hands-on activities and one-on-one interaction with occupational therapy students.

We would like to fine-tune this fair by increasing the focus on occupation, occupational therapy interventions, specialty areas of practice, general occupational therapy awareness, and recruitment into the University of Indianapolis School of Occupational Therapy. Additionally, we plan to bring the fair to more area high schools so that we can inform a greater number of prospective students about occupational therapy and the graduate program that the University of Indianapolis provides.

The target audience for the occupational fair will be high school students in the Indianapolis area. We believe that going to high schools instead of having the students come to the University of Indianapolis will help us reach more high school students. Once the students learn about occupational therapy and receive University of Indianapolis literature, we hope they will consider applying to the occupational therapy program at the University of Indianapolis.

The fair will also allow graduate students in the occupational therapy program to interact with the high school students considering occupational therapy. Communication with the high school students will use both hands-on activities and face-to-face interaction. We hope our interesting displays and activities will generate great interest in the field of occupational therapy, thus increasing enrollment rates at the university (Appendix A).

Advertisement for the occupational therapy awareness/recruitment fair will be accomplished by sending fliers to local high schools (Appendix B). In addition, we will contact high school faculty and tell them what the fair includes, and that we have had past success with similar fairs.

Our plan is different from other plans for a few reasons. First, we will travel to high schools to recruit students, rather than bringing them to the University of Indianapolis. The idea is also unique because we will do hands-on activities and interact with the students, rather than just tell them about occupational therapy. Another positive aspect of the fair is that it will be integrated into the University of Indianapolis curriculum, as a topical seminar course, for first year graduate students. As well as being a great learning opportunity, this curriculum addition will give graduate students the opportunity to gain valuable marketing experience. More importantly, it will give the students a chance to explain the unique profession of occupational therapy to the community.

The goal of this project is to attract potential students to the occupational therapy program at the University of Indianapolis, thus, increasing enrollment at the University of

Indianapolis. We would also like to give occupational therapy students the chance to demonstrate the skills they are learning in the classroom, increase occupational therapy awareness in the community, and gain marketing experience.

Effectiveness of Plan

The effectiveness of the plan will be measured in multiple ways. First, we will count the number of students that we interact with. Additionally, the prospective students' opinions of the fair will be assessed through personal phone calls and e-mails. Finally, we will keep track of the actual number of applications that are received for the 4-1 admission program, the direct freshman guaranteed admission option, and the professional entry-level program in occupational therapy (MOT).

At the occupational therapy awareness/recruitment fairs, we will pass out University of Indianapolis School of Occupational Therapy Brochures. This brochure will briefly discuss:

- The University of Indianapolis
- What is Occupational Therapy?
- Professional (MOT) degree
- The School of OT's goals
- Why the University of Indianapolis?
- Fieldwork Opportunities
- Research and Publishing
- Admission Options
- How to Apply
- Prerequisite Requirements

The brochure would also request that the student fill out personal information so that we can contact them with more information on University of Indianapolis Occupational Therapy programs. The University of Indianapolis School of Occupational Therapy Open House registration forms can also be distributed and tracked in the same manner.

Once the occupational therapy school has received these returned brochures, the graduate students can make personal phone calls to each and every prospective student. The graduate students will ask for feedback regarding the occupational therapy awareness/recruitment fair. The prospective student will then have the opportunity to ask additional questions and build a mentor/mentee relationship with the current student. After each phone conversation has occurred, the graduate student would send the prospective student an e-mail thanking them for their time and interest in the program/profession. The prospective student would be advised to call the graduate student (at the school) or the admissions staff whenever new questions or concerns arise.

Finally, a database can be made that records the percentage of students who attended the occupational therapy awareness/recruitment fair and returned the University of Indianapolis School of Occupational Therapy brochure and/or attend the University of

Indianapolis School of Occupational Therapy Open House. The database would also contain the number of students who apply to the University of Indianapolis undergraduate 4-1 option, direct freshman admittance option, and graduate occupational therapy programs each year. The graduate school admissions would make this database and then send it to the undergraduate admission office, in order to benefit the tracking of undergraduate programs at the school, as well.

Cost of Plan

This is the estimated budget for a topical seminar group of 10 students to do the first presentation at one high school. The preparation uses an example booth (ocular dysfunction) to calculate the estimate. Then, the estimate is multiplied by 10 students, who are each responsible for running a booth, to reach a preparation total (\$300.00).

Estimated Expense Budget

First time presentation
Group of 5 students

Advertisements

Copy cost for brochure	\$0.50
Postage	\$0.50
Call confirmation	

Total		\$1.00
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Preparation

1 booth (e.g., coloring with ocular dysfunction)	
1 display white board	\$5.00
100 copies of coloring pages, \$0.05 each	\$5.00
Large box of crayons	\$5.00
3 pairs of goggles, \$5 each	\$15.00

Total for one booth	\$30.00
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x	10
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Total for 10 booths		\$300.00
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Travel Expenses

Van rental (optional, same day return)	\$50.00
Gas (within 50 mile travel radius)	\$20.00

Total		\$70.00
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Follow Up

Thank you letter to teacher	
Postage	\$0.50

Total		\$0.50
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Estimated Total for the First Presentation: \$371.50

The initial cost of preparation has been invested, so the subsequent presentations do not include the initial preparation cost. This example uses a topical seminar group of 10 students to provide one high school presentation, as well.

Estimated Expense Budget

Every presentation thereafter
Group of 10 Students

Advertisements

Copy cost for brochure	\$0.50	
Postage	\$0.50	
Call Confirmation		
Total		\$1.00

Preparation

1 booth (e.g., coloring with ocular dysfunction)		
100 copies of coloring pages, \$0.05 each	\$5.00	
Total for one booth	\$5.00	
	x 10	
Total for 10 booths		\$50.00

Travel Expenses

Van rental (optional, same day return)	\$50.00	
Gas (within 50 mile travel radius)	\$20.00	
Total		\$70.00

Follow Up

Thank you letter to teacher		
Postage	\$0.50	
Total		\$0.50

Estimated Total for Presentation: \$121.50

Appendix A: Booth Ideas for Occupational Therapy Recruitment/Awareness Fair

Adaptive Equipment Booth – This booth will contain many pieces of adaptive equipment that occupational therapists often prescribe (reacher, sock aid, long handled sponge, shoe horn, button hook, built-up handles, built-up commode, shower seat, etc.). Each piece of equipment will be properly explained and demonstrated by the person working the booth.

Range of Motion/Manual Muscle Testing (ROM/MMT) Booth – This booth will give a quick over overview and demonstration of the main concepts of ROM/MMT of the upper extremity.

Hand Rehabilitation Booth – This booth will describe the purpose behind a variety of splints static and dynamic splints. Individuals will have the opportunity to try on the different varieties of splints. In addition, a Jamar dynamometer, a pinch meter, and various strengthening tools (e.g., Theraputty, exercise regimens, and functional exercise activities/modifications) will be included. The proper use of adjunctive treatment modalities, such as a paraffin bath, could also be explained at this booth.

Alumni Booth – An occupational therapy alumni that has successfully marketed an innovative idea will give a quick overview of his/her services. The alumni may pass out brochures for additional information about the services he or she provides.

Driver Rehabilitation Booth – Driver rehabilitation has quickly become a new focus in occupational therapy. This booth will have glossy photos and literature about driver rehabilitation technology. A driver rehabilitation specialist (who is an occupational therapist) would be a wonderful addition to this booth.

Pet Therapy Booth – Members of the University of Indianapolis community (or others) who are in pet therapy programs could discuss this aspect of care. Possibly, hippotherapy could also be discussed at this booth.

Sensory Integration (SI) Booth – The main concepts of SI could be discussed at this booth. SI toys and activities could also be discussed and set out for all to see (swings, buckets with rice/popcorn, etc).

Ocular Dysfunction Booth – This booth will give the prospective students a brief opportunity to experience the feel of ocular dysfunction. Occupational therapy interventions for ocular dysfunction will also be discussed at this booth.

Occupational Therapy in the School System Booth – The #1 employer of occupational therapists are school systems. Therefore, it is appropriate that a booth be devoted to this topic. The role of the occupational therapist in the school system could be discussed at this booth (consulting and direct patient services). Handwriting issues could also be discussed because poor handwriting is a large reason for occupational therapy referrals in the schools.

Occupational Therapy and Community-Based Practice Booth – Occupational therapists are increasingly moving away from medical model settings. The person at this booth could discuss the role of occupational therapy in adult day care settings, homeless shelters, work hardening programs, etc.

Faculty Booth – University of Indianapolis School of Occupational Therapy faculty members can use this booth to discuss any of their particular interests.

University of Indianapolis School of Occupational Therapy Admissions Booth – This will be a booth with University of Indianapolis School of Occupational Therapy literature for both the graduate programs, undergraduate programs, and more specifically, the unique 4-1 option that is offered by University of Indianapolis. Students admitted to the 4-1 program will spend their first three years as undergraduates majoring in psychology. The fourth year of undergraduate work would also count as their first year of graduate level work.

Appendix B: Occupational Therapy Fair Advertisement

University of
Indianapolis


Date: May 16-20, 2005
Time: 8:00am-12:00pm

Let us come to your high school on any one of the days listed above. Give the students an opportunity to learn hands-on what occupational therapy is all about. Call to reserve a day with the occupational therapy students from the University of Indianapolis.



Occupational Therapy Fair

Let Us Come To You



The occupational therapy students at the University of Indianapolis would like to come to your high school to give your students a fun and exciting hands-on opportunity to learn about the field of occupational therapy. There will be different booths set up for the students to rotate through in order for them to get a feel for all the different aspects of occupational therapy. The students would rotate into the gym, or other given area, during a set class period to experience the different booths. The students at the University of Indianapolis are very excited about educating high school students about the University of Indianapolis and the field of occupational therapy.

Sample Booth Activities:

- * Adaptive equipment
- * Wheelchairs
- * Pet therapy
- * Meet the U of I faculty
- * Splinting

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To American Occupational Therapy Association:

The American Occupational Therapy Association has permission from the University of Indianapolis, the School of Occupational Therapy, and the students who collaborated on this project to disseminate our ideas to all occupational therapy and occupational therapy assistant educational programs for use and replication.

Sincerely,



Candace Beitman, OTR, EdD, Interim Dean



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