

Student Recruitment Initiatives Contest

A Marketing Plan for all OT and OTA Educational Centers

Submitted to
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Program Summary

In response to the low enrollment rates in 2001, Pacific University's SOTA organization created a Pre-OT Representative position. This position is responsible for coordinating publicity efforts to students throughout the university campus and the surrounding community high schools. This solution shows a strong potential of being an organized and inexpensive method to promote occupational therapy as a viable career choice. In addition, this marketing plan provides the opportunity to join forces with your school's faculty members and state occupational therapy association to promote OT across the entire state.

The submitted marketing plan gives a step-by-step process in how to:

- Create Pre-OT positions in your school's SOTA organization
- Design a PowerPoint presentation
- Develop interactive activities
- Contact local high schools
- Organize educational booths
- Submit a formal proposal to faculty and staff
- Build momentum across the state

With a yearly budget of \$500, the Pre-OT Representatives can purchase necessary supplies and begin giving presentations and organizing educational booths at Health/Career Fairs within a few weeks.

Introduction

Occupational therapy is a diverse career which offer flexibility, creativity, problem-solving, and collaborative work. However, occupational therapy is also one of the least known and misunderstood health professions. In 2001, enrollment in all occupational therapy programs descended across the nation, resulting in an increased effort to raise awareness of occupational therapy and thus ensure sufficient enrollment. In 2002, Pacific University's Student Occupational Therapy Association (SOTA) responded to this call and created the position of a Pre-OT Club Representative with the expectations of coordinating publicity efforts throughout the university campus and the surrounding community. The creation of this SOTA position has proven successful, and its enrollment is rapidly growing. To build upon this success, I propose a marketing plan for SOTA organizations that would increase awareness of occupational therapy as a viable career choice and thereby raise enrollment rates.

Plan Description/Marketing Plan

This marketing plan serves two populations: high school students interested in a health career or currently learning about health careers and college students who are undecided in a major or who are interested in occupational therapy as a possible career. This plan provides an organized and inexpensive description of how to promote occupational therapy through SOTA organizations to local high schools and on your university campus.

Create Two Pre-OT Representative Positions Within Your SOTA Organization

These representatives should be elected as voting members of the Executive SOTA Board and receive a budget of at least \$500.

Pre-OT representative responsibilities are:

- Market and Coordinate Pre-OT Club meetings for interested students on campus
- Coordinate presentations and activities to area high school health career programs
- Assist SOTA president in coordinating involvement in health/career fairs at University and surrounding community

Other recommendations:

- Establish Pre-OT Club as an official university club to qualify for additional university money and for campus-wide recognition through student life handbooks and/or on your university's web page .
- Create a marketing committee consisting of at least four people to assist with presentations and educational booths at fairs.

Design a PowerPoint CD-ROM

A PowerPoint presentation is an efficient and effective tool for dispersing information to audiences of varying sizes. PowerPoint presentations are quick to produce, easy to update, and inject visual interest into the presentation.

(Refer to Appendix A for sample presentation outline.)

Develop Activities

Occupational therapy is a “doing” profession. Create activities for high school and college students to introduce occupational therapy and the domain of practice. Activities can be a powerful tool to empower participants to actively communicate, develop relations, and acquire knowledge.

(Refer to Appendixes B and C for sample activity.)

Contact Area High Schools

- Explain that you are an occupational therapy student interested in providing a presentation explaining the profession of occupational therapy.
- Gather teacher contact information to set up presentation dates.

Note: This should be done early in the school year (i.e., September) in order to coordinate with high school class schedules.

Schedule presentation dates with teams of two from the marketing committee.

- Find university and local fairs where you can set-up educational booths (health and career fairs are sound choices to begin your search)
- Provide occupational therapy information pamphlets and gifts (i.e., occupational therapy pens)
- Decorate booths with balloons and posters
- Allow participants to engage in an activity (refer to Appendixes B and C).

Submit Proposal to Occupational Therapy Faculty to Provide Incentives

Submit a formal proposal to your faculty to offer student incentives for presenting to high school health career classes and for creating new marketing activities for high school and college students. As part of Pacific University Occupational Therapy curriculum, students develop skills by designing and implementing group activities for people across the lifespan. This would be an easy option to meet student requirements and continue producing innovative activities so as to increase awareness of OT for high school and college students. (Refer to Appendix D for a sample proposal letter.)

Keep the Momentum Growing: Get Your State Occupational Therapy Organization Involved

Partner with your state occupational therapy association’s marketing committee to solicit community practitioners to make presentations at their local high school health career classes, health classes, or science classes as a viable way of promoting occupational therapy as a possible career choice. Offer practitioners a promotional CD-ROM and activity ideas.

Outcome Measurements

Overall Vision—Occupational therapy and occupational therapy assistant schools across the United States will use this marketing plan to promote occupational therapy as a viable career choice. The design facilitates an interactive experience that will encourage discussions and inquiry from the target audience and thereby increase the number of

- Pre-OT Club members
- Presentations and educational booths
- Follow-up contacts
- Applications to the program.

Financial Analysis

The proposed marketing plan is a feasible solution in advertising occupational therapy as a viable career choice. Those responsible for running the program are volunteer SOTA members and practitioners willing to provide presentations to promote OT. The Pre-OT Representative will have a budget of at least \$500 to purchase supplies and equipment for PowerPoint presentations, educational booths, and activities. (Refer to Appendix E for a financial chart for needed supplies to get started.)

Appendix A

PowerPoint Presentation Outline

- I. What is occupational therapy?
- II. What are some major focuses of occupational therapy?
 - A. Occupational Areas
 - B. Personal characteristics (strengths and challenges)
 - C. Environments
- III. What ages of people do Occupational Therapists work with?
- IV. What are some types of dysfunctions that Occupational Therapists see?
- V. Where do Occupational Therapists work?
- VI. How much school do I need?
 - A. Master occupational therapy degree
 - B. Occupational therapy assistant
- VII. How much money do Occupational Therapists make?
 - A. Occupational Therapists
 - B. Occupational Therapy Assistants
- VIII. Are there jobs available in Occupational Therapy?
- IX. How can I get more information (Resources)?

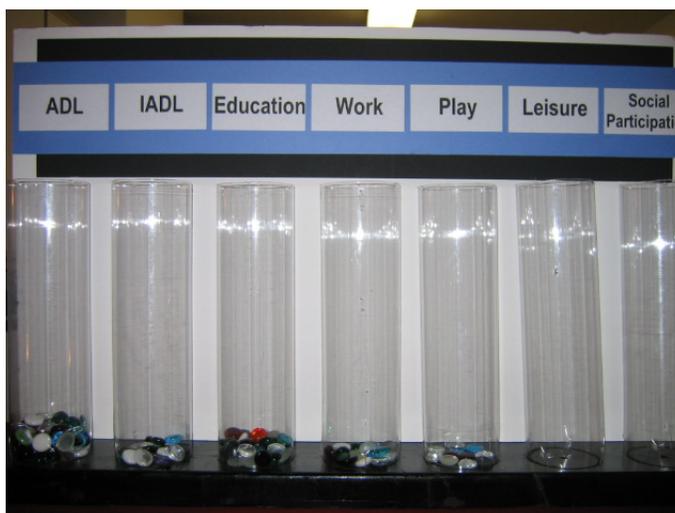
Appendix B

“Enhance your health through *engagement* in a balance of meaningful activities”

Purpose: To allow individuals to participate in an activity to increase awareness of themselves and others in how they occupy their time from an occupational therapy view.

- Steps:**
1. Give each student the daily occupational log and have them fill it out.
 2. Give each student a bag of 24 marbles (1 marble represents 1 hour of the day).
 3. Choose 5 volunteers to place marbles in the occupational area from the sheet they filled out to give them a visual of how they occupy their time on a daily basis.

Time: 15 minutes



Appendix C

(Please attach the brochure titled “Where would you be without your occupations?”)

Appendix D

FORMAL PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

TO: Pacific University Occupational Therapy Faculty and Staff

From: Kelley Redwine, MOTS

RE: Provide students with initiatives to design and implement activities for marketing presentations

Date: February 14, 2005

Dear Pacific Occupational Therapy Faculty and Staff:

I am submitting this proposal in hopes that you will collaborate with SOTA's marketing plan to increase awareness of occupational therapy as a viable career choice. This marketing plan specifically targets high school students interested in a health career and in need of a professional interactive presentation to educate them about our diverse profession.

As part of the Pacific University occupational therapy curriculum, students are required to develop skills by designing and implementing group activities for people across the lifespan. By offering students class credit to design and implement activities and an opportunity to enhance their public speaking skills, this would be an easy option to meet both student requirements and our marketing plans to increase awareness of occupational therapy for high school students.

After reviewing course descriptions and conversing with several faculty members, three courses seem like possible options to implement initiatives:

1. Professional Skills Development Practicum
2. Exploration of Occupational Therapy II &/or III
3. Tutorials/Independent Study

If you are interested, please let me know and we can work together to contact area high schools that are interested in an occupational therapy presentation. I am very excited to be able to provide outreach into our community high schools and about the possibility of collaborating with faculty to accomplish this together.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Kelley Redwine, OTS

Appendix E

Detailed Financial Analysis

Promotional Item	Location	Quantity	Amount
CD-R w/slim cases	Office Depot Web site	15	\$9.99
OT Brochures	AOTA Web site		
	Skills for Living	50	\$11.50
	Building Skills	50	\$20.00
	Design Yourself	100	\$20.00
12" Balloons	E-Latex.com		
	Custom Designed with your School Logo	1000	\$190
	Regular assortment	144	\$11.00
	AOTA Web site Skills for Living	15	\$5.00
Pens	AOTA Web site Skills for Living	100	\$45
	Total Amount to Get Started		\$321.49