

The Admission Game[®]

An interactive introduction to the selective college admission process, “The Admission Game” captures the perspectives of both “Dean” and “Dad” in a presentation that is sure to inform and motivate. Former Dean of Admission and father of three young adults, Peter Van Buskirk brings candor and humor to what can otherwise be a grim and clinical process especially at a time when economic uncertainty has changed many of the assumptions about access. His unique approach has helped more than 100,000 students and parents worldwide create productive and less stressful strategies for finding and getting into the colleges of their choice.

By transforming the audience into an admission committee at a mythical college, Peter reveals the seemingly capricious “back room” logic that often determines who is accepted and who is rejected at colleges every year. During this interactive session he provides insight and instruction regarding course selections, essay preparation and the role of standardized tests. He also unveils the “Hidden Agenda,” often overlooked factors that can mean the difference between acceptance and rejection.

Participants learn the importance of finding a good college “fit” and discover which criteria influence admission committee decisions. They are taught how to use those criteria for their own advantage. Peter then introduces them to four fictitious candidates. A spirited discussion about the candidates ensues as the audience weighs the relative merits of each, only one of which will be admitted to the fictitious college.

As the participants learn about the context for decision-making, they are left with practical strategies for competing successfully in a field of equally qualified applicants. They understand how the choices they make in the classroom and in life have a bearing on their competitiveness as candidates for admission. And they learn how to reveal their “Hooks” and tell their stories in a manner that will give them the competitive edge in the college admission process.

Program Outline: “The Admission Game” (2 hours)

- I. Why College?
- II. Define Selectivity
 - A. Pyramid of Selectivity
 - B. Enrollment Model
 - C. The importance of finding a good college fit
- III. The Agenda (“Fit” from the College’s Perspective)
- IV. The Hidden Agenda™
- V. Introduction to the Committee Process
- VI. Application
 - A. Hotspots & Hooks™
 - B. Preliminary Application Review
- VII. Candidate Review (PVB leads an evaluation of four candidates)
 - A. What are Your “Gifts?”
 - B. Rate the Academic Program
 - C. Tell Your Story
 - D. Write a Winning Essay
 - E. Summary discussion of academic program: “What is a ‘5’?”
- VIII. The Vote
 - A. Anatomy of the Outcome
 - B. What does this mean for you?