



AMCIS

Admissions, Marketing and Communications
in Independent Schools

RESOURCE:

You Never Get a Second Chance to Make a First Impression – A Few Reminders

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First Encounters	Web Site	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Where are you?• What kind of school are you?• Where is the Admissions tab?• Where are the contact details?• Who is the admissions contact – picture and name please. Check your website regularly to ensure all links and pages are working.• Don't use 'page turning' prospectuses they don't work – opt for PDF and invest money in a short video.
	Telephone	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Multi-option answering machines are both frustrating and off-putting – opt for a human if you can but at the very least Admissions should be the second option.• Listen to tone and inflection what does it say about your school?• When waiting to be put through – add school choir or orchestra or band music.
	Email	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• If this is from a web enquiry form and receives an automated response, make sure it correctly addresses the enquirer and comes from a person with a name and call back details.• ALWAYS add sign off and contact details to emails, even when emailing colleagues.• Make sure out-of-office messages, both on email and telephone, are up-to-date – obvious but often overlooked after holiday breaks for example.

<p>Closer Encounters (signs and senses)</p>	<p>Signage</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear signs and obvious entry points (get someone to try and find their way in from outside the area). • PLEASE is an under used word – check that signs ask politely. Check that signs make sense – you can use humour and it really works to make you memorable but make sure you meant it to be funny! • Reserved and named parking slots for visitors.
	<p>Reception</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observe how they are greeted. • What does reception look like? – not just to the visiting parents but to visiting children of various ages. • Remember the other senses (smell and hearing). • Visitor's loos are really important.
	<p>Visitors Room</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See it through the eyes of all members of the family and try to cater for all. • One fresh flower is better than no flowers. • Pupils' work is more impressive than historical artefacts! • Keep literature and rolling presentations up-to-date.
	<p>The Tour</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a mystery shop! • Remember to start and end with big impact.
<p>Last Impressions</p>	<p>And finally ...</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walk visitors to their car. Make the exit sign memorable. • Always follow up visits with a 'thank you' note and call to action.

Author:

This article was taken from a presentation given by Jan Evans, RSAdmissions. T: 01420 563 547 jan@rsadmissions.co.uk For more help and advice consider enrolling on the AMCIS Certificate in Admissions Management Course.

About the Company:

RSAdmissions is the only Admissions and Marketing database for Independent Schools designed and supported by people who have 'done the job'. The system is designed to be **easy to use** and **flexible**. It uses everyday technology for letters and reporting and includes over 100 reports for the administration of admissions and to enable the presentation of up to date management information on the recruitment process and marketing initiatives.