

Becoming Kingdom Minded Territory Managers

(Personal Assessment Paper)

Curtis Isozaki

LDRS 563

Azusa Pacific University

Summer I 2018

### Becoming Kingdom Minded Territory Managers

With constant pressure and changing realities in higher education, undergraduate admissions is not only regularly facing the pressures of a secular market but essentially survival in a liberal sphere. Education is one of the most influence spheres in the world today as students and communities are transformed by the impact of a student's education and trajectory that has the potential to not just change the people around them, but their city, nation, and ultimately, the world. This paper addresses the challenge of higher education recruitment and proposes a Kingdom minded approach to territory management while reevaluating a current decision-making process in place for fall recruiting. As a result, Newton's (2013) ethical decision-making process DISORDER evaluates the current strategies and challenges from the last cycle while options and outcomes are organized through ADAPT, which evaluates strategies for the next cycle. These processes reinforce the importance of the development of a Senior Admissions Counselor role dedicated to Training and Territory Management. Resulting in a culture dedicated to becoming territory managers who leverage five key recruiting strategies empowered by a compelling vision with theological implications that engage the challenge of regaining access to higher education for minorities and effectively maximizing the recruitment of students.

#### **Kingdom Minded Admissions Professionals**

In a world governed by the laws of the land, ethical decision-making is checked by policies when informed by morality. According to Crook (2013), every "faith group has its own distinctive approach to morality" and ethics of principles, law, or values. For Christian ethics, assumptions are made about human nature based off of their relationship with one another and their relationship with God. Considering that such rational, it is necessary for making sound decisions as an admissions professional. For that reason, admissions professionals are able to

operate in such a way that illuminates their faith. According to Crook (2013), “faith gives reason the impetus to search for meaning. Faith needs reason in its quest for truth. Reason functions as the instrument of faith” (p. 62). By faith alone, could Christian ethics inform such sacrificial agape acts of kindness, sacrifice, and opportunities that put others above themselves. Christian ethics allows believers to act in faith for the impossible and believe in a pathway that put love before egocentric decisions.

From a territory management perspective, admissions professionals are assigned particular regions where they recruit students, review applications, and respond to how they can best serve their market. Throughout Jesus’ ministry, He invited people into the Kingdom of Heaven, understood their stories, and responded to their needs. In turn, His disciples were sent out two by two in the neighboring region to do the same (Luke 10, New International Version). Furthermore, when He left His disciples, He declared, “you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth” (Act 1:8, New International Version). When Jesus commissioned and sent out his disciples they were to go to their Jerusalem which was their home, family and friends, their Judea and Samaria, which was their surrounding region or state and country, and then to the ends of the earth.

From the perspective of an admissions professional, Jerusalem would be their local territory (market one), Judea would be their California State University (CSU) territory (market two), Samaria would be their travel territory (market three) and the ends of the earth would be their file review territory (market four). Furthermore, the disciples shared the Good News to the people around them (Acts 2:42-46, New International Version), when scattered Philip was in Samaria where there was brokenness and joy when the Message was heard (Acts 8:4-25, New

International Version), then while traveling Philip met the Ethiopian Eunuch who a lot of influence and resources (Acts 26-40, New International Version), and finally, Cornelius the Centurion reached out to Peter and the Gospel was spread throughout the nations of the Earth (Act 10, New International Version). In comparison, admission professionals build upon familiar relationships in their Jerusalem (market one), while in their Judea and Samaria there are often financial challenges and brokenness in their CSU territory accompanied by great joy (market two), while in their travel territories there are often people with both influence and resources (market three), and towards the end of the earth once a person hears about the opportunity that excitement spreads (market four). By understanding Christian ethics and having a Biblical perspective, admissions professionals are able to shift their understanding of territory management in a way that is Kingdom minded with multiplying ramifications.

### **Regaining Minority Access to Higher Education**

However, in every territory, there is often financial challenges when it comes to access to higher education, but for travel and out of area territories, resources are not as often a concern considering their means, but rather the importance of influence after graduation. Therefore, recognizing the importance of regaining access to higher education while managing the data that informs the how a territory should be managed and how recruitment should be strategically planned. Education predicts major disparities in chance, outcomes, and incomes making the “opportunity for every American to pursue an education that could potentially unlock a life of reward and fulfillment (as cited in Engberg and Allen, 2011, p. 787). As a source of that fulfillment, academia and financial aid are recognized as most essential to the college decision-making process, which prioritizes the importance of resourcing high counselors with tools and resources to support their students (Ruffalo Noel Levitz, 2016). Over the years, the enrollment in

higher education has increased, but not for students who come from low-income families due to sensitivity to costs and lower preferences for education as well as academic ability (Declercq and Verboven, 2015). Becoming aware of these realities help admissions professional recognize the importance of access while reconciling institutional goals.

As the gatekeepers to higher education, NACAC admissions professionals are positioned to meet the challenge of equity as they control recruitment, exercise influence on retention, and develop strategies to enhance the quality of education for minority students (Jackson, 2012). In the article, “Minority Access to Higher Education,” Jackson (2012) suggests that “all institutions must be willing to accept the responsibility and meet the challenges associated with educating greater numbers of minority students, who in disproportionate numbers are also disadvantaged” (Jackson, 2012, p. 57). There are four essential objectives for NACAC admissions professional to help meet: improve communication with students’ family and staff, broadened admissions standards that consider cognitive factors for minority performance, greater accountability on standardized testing that helps and not hinders minority students, and increased responsibility for minority communities to teach self-sacrifice to achieve personal success (Jackson, 2012). Therefore, when it comes to recruitment, it is important to recognize these four objectives that advocates for regaining minority access, but also, essential to inform territory management.

### **Professional Territory Managers**

For admissions professionals, the “acquisition of skills requires a regular environment, an adequate opportunity to practice, and rapid and unequivocal feedback about the correctness of thoughts and actions” (Kahneman, 2011, p. 416). College admissions is a profession or an occupational group that consists of knowledge, dedication, ethics, and intention (Newton, 2016). According to Newton (2013),

The professional of any kind is committed to quality and integrity: he or she is obliged to practice the art at its most advanced state, defend the honor of the profession (in part by helpful to weed out the dishonorable members) and to advance the state of the art through research, writing and teaching (p. 41).

However, admissions professionals committed to quality and integrity are often challenged by conflicting moral and ethical scenarios that requires decision-making. Kahneman (2011) suggests that decisions are made based off of two systems: “the intuitive System 1, which does the fast thinking, and the effortful and slower System 2, which does the slow thinking, monitors System 1 and maintains control as best it can within its limited resources” (p. 408). These two systems inform how decisions are made and evaluate for admissions professional as the made strategic decisions as territory managers.

To evaluate the current strategies and challenges of the last college admissions cycle, Newton’s (2013) DISORDER decision procedure for ethical dilemmas will inform the rationale for a potential change. The DISORDER procedure consists of the definition of the dilemma, inquiry to obtain all necessary information, sorting out the stakeholders, options and outcomes, rights and rules, determination and decision, evaluation of effects, and review and reconsider (Newton, 2013). In proceeding with this approach, it is understood that “the commitment to reason entails a willingness to subject one’s moral judgments to critical scrutiny oneself” (Newton, 2013, p. 19). However, the DISORDER approach has the potential to lead to the evolution and transformation of Kingdom minded admissions professionals into Kingdom minded territory managers.

**Current Limitations in a Competitive Society (Definition of the Dilemma).** Within a competitive society, there is a survival of the fittest reality in the race to enter into college.

Students work hard to receive an acceptance letter from colleges across the nation. According to Wilkens (2011), these evolutionary ethics determines behavior, leads to hostility, freely chosen actions, and altruistic impulses. Evolutionary ethics is an either-or choice that relies on science and evolution while trusting God by faith is unreliable. With a science-based approach to territory management, quantitative data is the most reliable source that empowers the driving force of data-driven decision. As a result, with evolutionary ethics, regaining access to higher education would potentially be disregarded as students become number in the higher education competitive marketing machine. There must be an approach to territory management that is less transactional and more relational in its overarching approach in the profession.

**Analysis of the Current Territory Management Process (Inquiry to Obtain All Necessary Information).** Currently, the admissions model consists of three components: territory management, Ruffalo Noel Levitz (RNL) data-driven decision making, and recruitment planning. Territory management consists of ten freshmen admissions counselors who are assigned a territory cluster that consists of three markets: local memorandum of understanding guaranteed admissions partnerships (market one), California State University (CSU) region (market two), and out of area and file review (market three). While data-driven decision making consists of Ruffalo Noel Levitz (RNL) data, which provides data that articulates where students are coming from and Customer Relationship Management (CRM) systems provide data of relational connections. Furthermore, customer relationship management (CRM) that consists of three primary business practices: contact management (touch points and information), campaign management (proactive and reactive), and data-driven decision making (capturing, enhancing, and analyzing data) (Campbell & Roberts, 2007). According to Campbell and Roberts (2007), when an “institution commits to a CRM philosophy, it will forever change how you do business

and how you view your ‘customer’” (Campbell & Roberts, 2007, p. 82). Finally, recruitment planning consists of understanding the institutional goals for matriculation, understanding financial limitations and access in neighborhood clusters, and scheduling visits and fairs during the recruitment cycle. These three components are the current key resources that have been utilized in admissions recruitment, which has proven to be basic recruitment strategies that only requires being able to articulate the data. However, when data is manipulated to understand the dynamics of a particular market, admissions professionals have the potential to start developing strategies as a territory manager.

**Collaborative University-wide Effort (Sorting Out the Stakeholders).** Within the current organizational structure, the stakeholders consist of five particular groupings: the Vice President of University Enrollment, the Undergraduate Admissions Leadership Team (UALT), the Office of Undergraduate Admissions, the Office of Alumni and Parent Engagement, and the Office of Campus Pastors. Ultimately, for funding and higher-level strategic initiatives, the Vice President of Enrollment will have the final authority to launch campus-wide initiatives. While the Undergraduate Admissions Leadership Team (UALT) whose role is to develop recruitment strategies and maintain processing systems has the autonomy to develop these strategic initiatives. As a result, the Office of Undergraduate Admissions initiates the changes in the overall recruitment strategies on the ground with students and families. In addition, the Office of Alumni and Parent Engagement as well as the Office of Campus Pastors can provide the context, capacity, and connections needed to launch possible alumni and church recruitment initiatives. Ultimately, these five groupings of stakeholders are those who will provide the necessary influence to develop the role and capacity of professional territory managers.



**Evaluate Strategies for Next Cycle to the ADAPT Process (Organize Options and Outcomes).** Through Newton's (2013), ethical framework, ADAPT, future strategies are able to be evaluated for the next cycle through moral reasoning. The ADAPT procedure consists of captured Attention, Dialogue conducted, incorporated moral Assumptions, Proposals for action, and results of the action are Tested again for expected results (Newton, 2013, p. 8). Attention is captured by understanding the current limitations in a competitive society and by analyzing the decision-making process. Dialogue is conducted through initial conversation with the Assistant Direct for Freshmen Recruitment, which incorporates moral assumptions with a Christian worldview. As a result, proposals for action are presented to develop a position for a Senior Admissions Counselor for Training and Territory Management who will act as a liaison dedicated to the leadership development of territory managers focused on understanding context, clarifying messages, and strategic outreach as well as overseeing Alumni and Church recruitment. Finally, the results of the action are tested again, and results are expected through monthly and weekly goal evaluations with the Assistant Director.

**Empowered Through Ethical Guidelines (Rights and Rules).** When it comes to the rights and rules of admissions professionals, they are empowered through ethical guidelines through non-negotiables of a kingdom-minded admissions professional, the four cornerstones of the university, and the NACAC Statement of Principles of Good Practice (SPGP). Through qualitative research, the non-negotiables were developed, which were servant leadership (agapao love, humility, altruism, vision, trust, empowerment, and service) (Patterson, 2003), generational leader, contextualization, effective communication, time management, and self-care (Isozaki, 2017). While organizationally, the admissions professional at the university are guided by the four cornerstones: Christ, Scholarship, Community, and Service. However, across higher

education, admissions professionals are guided by the National Association for College Admissions Counseling (NACAC) has an established code of ethics through the NACAC's Statement of Principles of Good Practice (SPGP). "The SPGP is a living document that adapts to changes in the ways that students are recruited, counseled and enrolled. When new ideas lead to a change in our professional practices, it is the SPGP that helps us determine how to respond" (Anderson & Weede, 2011, p. 6). These three sets of rights and rules, admissions professionals are well informed to be able to make sound decisions in their role as a territory manager.

**Becoming a Territory Manager (Determination and Decision).** Through the ethical guidelines, it can be determined that becoming a territory manager is a process that has the potential to transform admissions practices from transactional to relational. There are three key components to becoming a territory manager: becoming a customer relational manager, broadening RNL data for informed decision making, and budgeting time and resources. Becoming a customer relationship manager consists of knowing your students who demonstrate interest by developing a tracking system, developing reports to understand key markets, creating goals to relational connect with students and becoming a trusted guide. Broadening RNL Data for informed decision making consists of research neighborhood clusters, developing strategic initiative contextualized to each area, and leveraging information for strategic recruitment plans for travel. Finally, budgeting time and resources articulate the understanding the balance of providing access while growing out of area markets. Providing accessibility and access if both an individual and team effort, making it important to not forget about the years of out of state affinity, investments, and relationships with neighborhood clusters.

**Setting Clear Expectations through Five Key Recruitment Strategies (Evaluation of Effects).** Being able to set clear expectations of the evaluation of effects necessary for effective

territory management through five key recruitment strategies: admissions, church and community, alumni and parent, reception, and fair recruitment. Admissions recruitment is a form of discovering demonstrative interest through admissions professional's daily big three tasks: email, reviews, and calls. Church and community recruitment philosophy could consist of connecting with leaders over coffee to discuss partnering with local churches for outreach service opportunities with current students, alumni, incoming, and prospective students. Such a collaborative effort with the Office of Alumni and Parent Engagement could lead to a summer service project and launch party event for incoming first-year students and families. Through alumni & parent recruitment, an alumni liaison partnered with the Office of Alumni and Parent Engagement to connect with potential recruiters who could become crucial guides from various territories. There would be a need to discuss key resources and guides for best practices at fairs or word of mouth conversations, develop an efficient remote training system, and maintaining a contact management system. Reception recruitment consists of planning events during the Winter and Spring to provide a space to engage demonstrated interested students while partnering with parent and alumni for a panel discussion. Having a contextualize event will meet the needs of the specific territories in a way that looks different than visiting the campus. Finally, fair recruitment consists of attending college fairs to provide information for interested students where awareness is built off of being present and engaging. Actionable points of discussion about academic and student life are essential for distinguishing the university from others. Overall the evaluation of the decision made by a territory manager leads to these five recruitment strategies that will carry long-term effects and roots in a specific territory.

**Progress Assessed Through Strategic Recognition and Reconsiderations (Review and Reconsider).** One of the ways that progress can be accessed is through strategic recognition

in the admissions cycles and the reconsideration needed for pivoting or focusing in on specific recruiting strategies. Providing monthly, quarterly, and yearly territory management reviews could provide both quantitative and qualitative data needed for evaluation throughout the cycle. Establishing and pivoting territory management goals leads to the successful stewardship of the time and resources invested in the overall cost of investment. Repeating the DISORDER and ADAPT decision-making processes is one of the ways that reviews, and reconsiderations can take place. As admissions professional regularly recognizing and reconsidering goals is essential to the overall development of Kingdom-minded territory management.

Becoming a Kingdom-minded territory manager is necessary for making sound decisions, which causes admissions professionals to operate in such a way that illuminates faith. According to Crook (2013), “faith gives reason the impetus to search for meaning. Faith needs reason in its quest for truth. Reason functions as the instrument of faith” (p. 62). For faith alone, could Christian ethics inform such sacrificial agape acts of kindness, sacrifice, and opportunities that put others above themselves? Christian ethics allows believers to act in faith for the impossible and believe in a pathway that put love before egocentric decisions. Through the ethical decision-making process DISORDER and ADAPT both the last and next admissions cycles are evaluated to empower the importance of the development of a Senior Admissions Counselor dedicated and devoted to training and territory management. Where recruitment becomes empowered by the compelling vision to regain access to higher education for minorities while maximizing the recruitment of students with a Kingdom mindset.

## References

- Anderson, S., & Weede, T. (2011). Core Values as Our Compass. *Journal of College Admission*(210), 4-6.
- Crook, R. (2013). *Introduction to Christian ethics (6th edition)*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall Publishing, Inc.
- Declercq, K., & Verboven, F. (2015). Socio-economic status and enrollment in higher education: do costs matter?. *Education Economics*, 23(5), 532-556.
- Engberg, M., & Allen, D. (2011). Uncontrolled Destinies: Improving Opportunity for Low-Income Students in American Higher Education. *Research In Higher Education*, 52(8), 786-807.
- Isozaki, C. (2017). The Effectiveness of the MOU Partnership (Unpublished research paper). Azusa Pacific University, Azusa, CA
- Jackson, N. (2012). Minority Access to Higher Education. *Journal of College Admission*(214), 56-62.
- Kahneman, D. (2011). *Thinking fast and slow*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.
- NACAC Adopts New SPGP: NACAC's Code of Ethics And Professional Practice (2017). *Journal of College Admission*(237), 21-21.
- Newton, L. (2013). *Ethical decision making: Introduction to cases and concepts in ethics*. New York, NY: Springer Publishing.
- Ruffalo Noel Levitz. (2017). *2017 research report: High school counselors and their role in college planning*. Cedar Rapids, Iowa: Ruffalo Noel Levitz. Retrieved from [www.RuffaloNL.com/PapersAndResearch](http://www.RuffaloNL.com/PapersAndResearch).

Washburn, J. H., & Petrosius, S. M. (2004). A Collaborative Effort at Marketing the University: Detailing a Student-Centered Approach. *Journal Of Education For Business*, 80(1), 35-

40.

Wilkins, S. (2011). *Beyond bumper sticker ethics: An introduction to theories of right and wrong*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Press.