



Your Personal Marketing Plan

Everyone wants to play college sports, but few know how to go about it. It all begins with having a personal marketing plan. So who needs a personal marketing plan? You do, and every other student or athlete interested in going to college. No longer can you sit back and wait for the coach to come calling for you. Coaches don't know you, and to become a recruited athlete, they need to. That's your job. You need to be ready to market yourself. Here are our **five key components** to a quality and effective personal marketing plan.

1. **Broadcast your interest with an introductory email:** There are 2.5 million high school senior athletes competing each year for 100,000 college roster spots. Just 1 in 25 senior athletes will receive a college jersey one day. If college coaches don't know you, they can't recruit you no matter how much money you pay for travel teams, showcase events, and college camps. It's your job to identify yourself to college coaches and inform them of your intention to play college sports. It begins with an introductory email that's sent to college coaches. An introductory email memo reflects your intentions to continue with your sport in college and specifically references your interests in their college. It implies your qualifications. It is short and easy to read. It is grammatically correct with proper spelling throughout. Anything longer or challenging to read will not get the initial interest of the coach. Therefore, the role of the introductory email is to gain initial interest of college coaches. Without it, you will likely remain unknown to coaches and they will remain unaware of your intentions.
2. **Your Profile page:** A student-athlete profile is a brief, one-page, accumulation of personal information that is important to college coaches and admissions counselors. It is designed for their quick and easy reference. It is important to have your photos and information current at all times. That includes- contact information, high school information, academic record of grades and board scores, athletic record of high school and club sports, special achievements and awards for both on and off the field activities, volunteer record, and leadership achievement. Flash and fancy is not necessary, but good order is. Your personal profile represents you. It is a snapshot of you in time. It is your record of qualifications and achievement. It reflects in your organizational skills. The purpose of a well-constructed, easy to read profile is to give college coaches a quick insight into you the person, not just you the athlete. The profile is working well if the coach spends 30 seconds looking at it; therefore, the layout is important. Your profile must be easy for spotting vital bits of information and cannot be bogged down by irrelevant or disorganized data. The goal here is to pique the coach's interests leaving detail for a future conversation.
3. **Video:** You're an athlete, a good one at that. You want to play college sports, land a real opportunity. You're trying to get the attention of a college coach to go from prospect to recruit. You're hopeful of a college scholarship. You need video to show the coaches. And don't stop at just one either, create a new video 2-3 times a year as you get older, stronger, faster, and better. Be sure to begin with a simple introductory clip, good tone of voice, looking

straight into the camera. "Hi coach, my name is Jeff Hanson, 2016 grad, Weston High School, here in Connecticut. Thank you for spending a couple minutes watching my videotape". Then proceed with the best one minute of quality video that you have available. The coach's interest will decline after the first minute, so don't save your best for last. A "quality" video does not mean fancy, flashy, and musically enhanced. It means that it properly reflects you and your abilities, is easy to access, and clear to watch. To keep a coaches attention beyond 20 seconds, you must keep the video interesting, relevant, and without distractions. A quality video is an important tool used in building value in you as a possible recruit.

The addition of video to an introductory email and personal profile page completes your personal marketing package. Now you're ready to roll out the plan by introducing yourself to college coaches and make plans to meet them.

4. **Calling college coaches:** Calling college coaches is where you can draw a line in the sand with recruits on one side and prospects on the other side. I have spoken in front of thousands of student-athletes who all wanted to play college sports. But in the end result, few of them pick up the phone and call a coach, remaining a prospect rather than becoming a recruit. Calling college coaches is a simple task, though nerve-wracking to most kids. The key to overcoming nerves is to be well-prepared. Be knowledgeable about the school and the sports team. Have a brief call script in front of you. And dial the number. It can be that simple. High school athletes willingly to call college coaches improve their odds of playing in college by 20 times. Calling college coaches and scheduling recruiting trips is a vital element to building relationships and gaining trust. It is your first big step towards landing a college roster spot and earning your sports opportunity.
5. **Plan to visit colleges and meet coaches:** This is the final component of your personal marketing plan. No personal marketing plan is complete without putting it into effect. This is the fun part. Map out your trip. Plan to visit 2-3 colleges each day while spending 2 hours on each campus. Do your homework on the college in advance. Identify probing and relevant questions to ask the coach. Build trust in you by being well organized, prepared, and focused. Find out what the coaches situation is regarding his team and your recruiting class. Only then can you begin to assess your own opportunity.

In closing, consider this- ***"Your recruiting can not begin until you have earned the trust of a college coach, and it cannot end until the coach has earned your trust."*** - Hans Hanson

For questions or comments on the college search, recruiting, admissions, or scholarship process, call 203.470.3704; or send an email to hans@totalcollegeadvisory.com, or visit our website at www.totalcollegeadvisory.com