

ENROLLMENT & BUYER CYCLES IN HIGHER ED

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VALUE BASED, INC.

PHONE: 800-597-1873

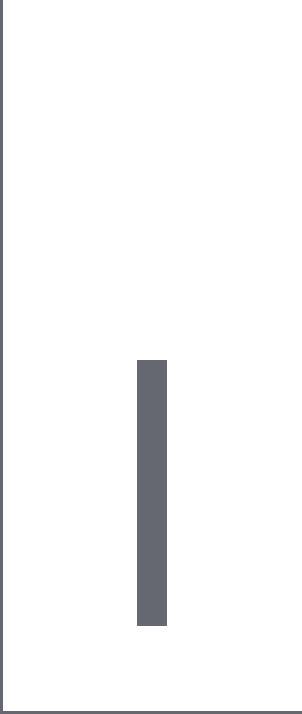
VALUEBASED.COM

INFO@VALUEBASED.COM

ARMANDTHRILLPUBLISHING.CA

The concept of Enrollment Cycles isn't new, but tuning your cycle to the Buyer's Cycle—in this case, the Prospective Student who is buying in to your school's value—can revolutionize Enrollment.





WELCOME



WELCOME

This eBook is meant to be a part of the Value Based Enrollment Methodology (VBEM), specifically Module 4: Buying and Sales Cycles. The VBEM is specifically tailored for higher education institutions that use, or wish to use, an integrity-based, highly relational, consultative sales methodology to represent their college or university to prospective students and their constituents.

This eBook emphasizes that there's a relationship between the familiar Enrollment Cycles and the sales term "Buyer's Cycle" (which we define as the process your prospective student and their constituents are going through simultaneously). Aligning these two ensures the Enrollment Team utilizes messaging around the school's values that specifically answers the needs of the buyer/prospective student at the right times.

This curriculum can be completed as part of a live seminar/workshop; an online course; or a blended course offering both a live and an on-line learning experience together. This course is designed to reinforce all learning channels—auditory, kinesthetic and visual—as well as to offer flexibility in how a learner might experience it. The curriculum includes 14 modules:

- Module 1: Representing the Value(s) of Your School
- Module 2: Long-Term Vision
- Module 3: The Service-Centered Counselor
- Module 4: Buying and Sales Cycles
- Module 5: Enrollment & Personal Goal Setting
- Module 6: Establishing Trust and Confidence
- Module 7: Telephone Techniques and Email Etiquette
- Module 8: Qualification I: People, Time and Money
- Module 9: Qualification II: Identify and Manage Issues
- Module 10: Establishing Value
- Module 11: Value Based Representation
- Module 12: Objections: Opportunities To Represent Value
- Module 13: Value Based Summarization
- Module 14: Value Based Closing

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SECTION 1

SALES (ENROLLMENT) CYCLE



DEFINITIONS

Enrollment (Sales) Cycle:

Is a series of stages and activities that an Admissions Counselor moves through to represent their programs and offerings to a prospective student and their constituents.

DEFINITIONS

The length and content of an enrollment (sales) cycle is dependent upon WHAT is being "sold" and to WHOM its being "sold".

Some organizations invest hundreds of thousands of dollars to research and develop Sales Cycle processes that maximize sales and margins and serve their goals/objectives but do not take into account the goals/objectives of their target markets or prospective clients. Some Higher Educational institutions have done the same for their Enrollment Cycles.

However, if an Institution's focus is solely on their "Enrollment Cycle" it may give their Admissions Counselors a false confidence that they have some degree of control over the Prospective Student's (buying) behaviors.

In order for Admissions Counselors to better anticipate and serve Prospective Student/Constituent's needs and wants, it's important for them to understand and adapt to the Buying Cycles of their Prospective Students/Constituents.

The truth: We rarely have control over the buyer's purchasing process.

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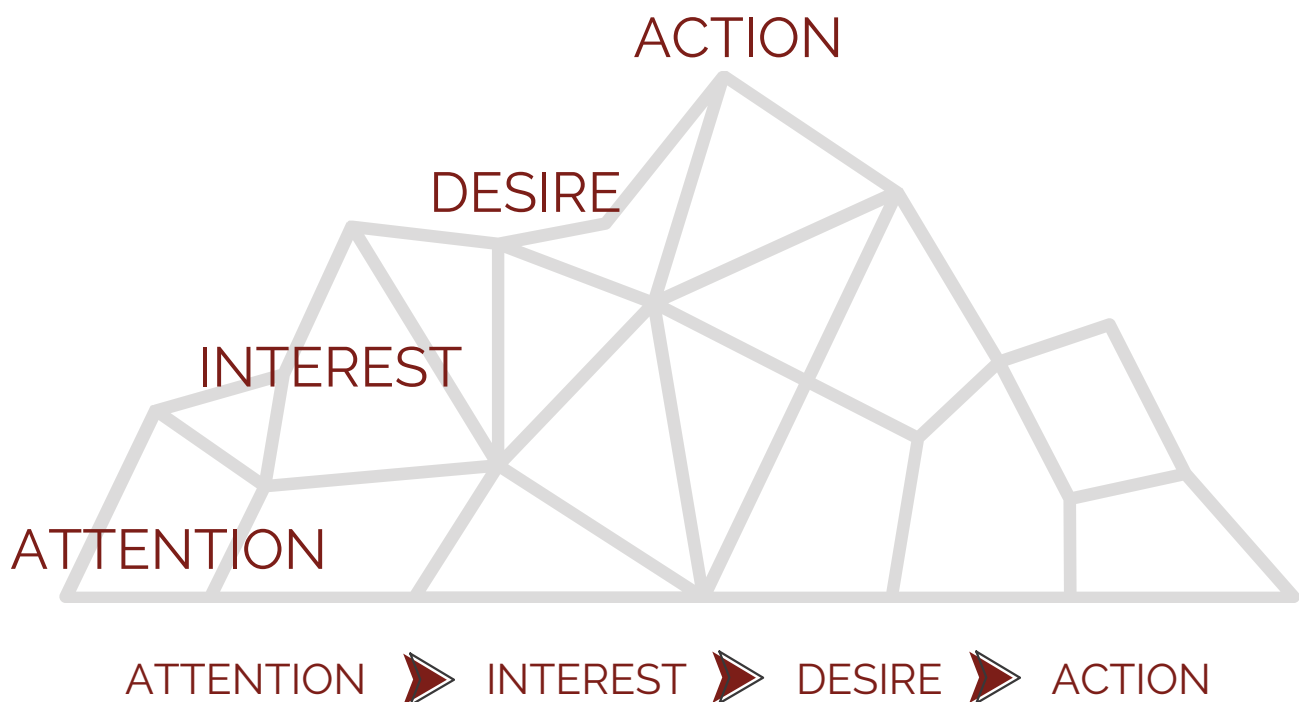
SECTION 2

BUYER'S CYCLE



BUYER'S CYCLE

The concept of a Buyer's Cycle is rather new to Higher Education, but all Admissions Counselors conduct specific enrollment (sales) activities in response to a need or opportunity the Prospective Student/Constituent has shared. When a salesperson or Admissions Counselor performs sales or enrollment activities in response to a corresponding set of buying activities conducted by the prospect or Prospective Student/Constituent, this indicates there is an understanding of, and an adaptation to, a **Buying Cycle in addition to a Enrollment (Sales) Cycle.**



ATTENTION (BUYERS PERSPECTIVE)

- Something gets the student/buyer's attention
- The student/buyer becomes aware of a need/desire/opportunity

INTEREST (BUYERS PERSPECTIVE)

- Interest is high enough to motivate the student/buyer
- The student/buyer begins to invest more time to learn more

DESIRE (BUYERS PERSPECTIVE)

- The need/desire increases
- The buyer believes the product/service/value addresses the need/desire
- The buyer can see what life would be like after their need/desires has been resolved

ACTION (BUYERS PERSPECTIVE)

- The buyer knows enough and is ready to act
- They make a choice to purchase one of the options available

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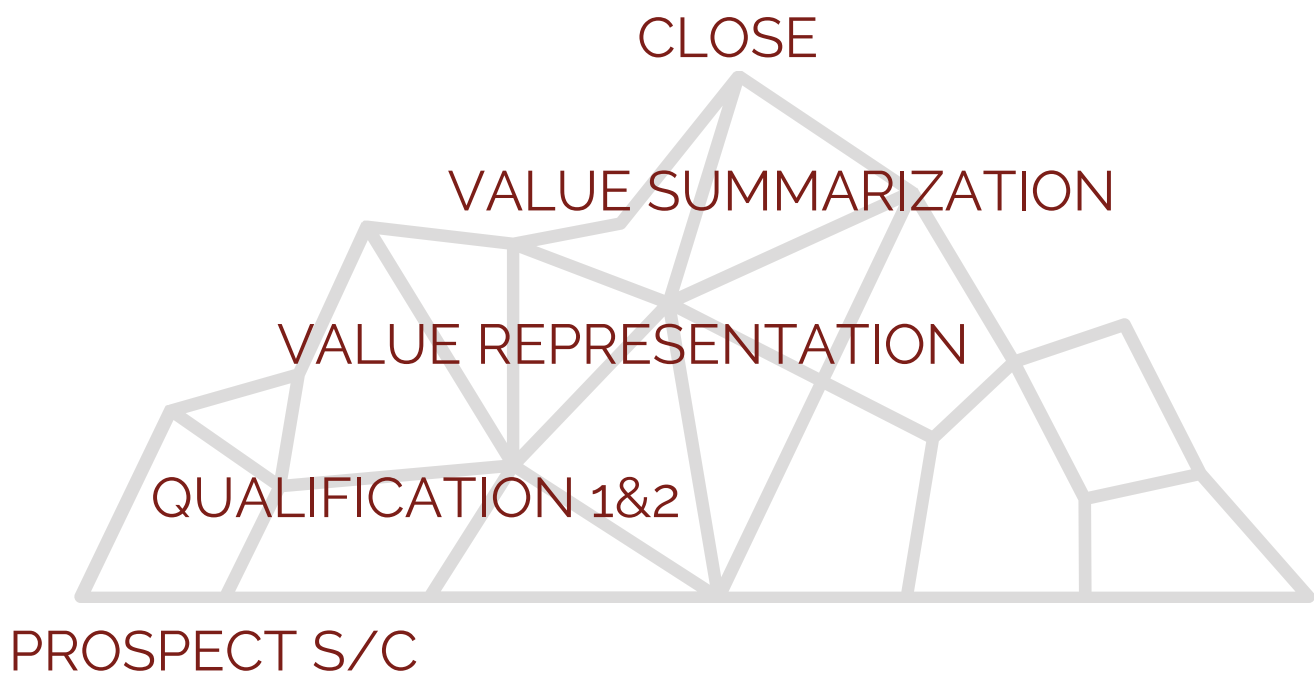
MODULE 3

VALUE BASED ENROLLMENT CYCLE



VALUE BASED SALES (ENROLLMENT) CYCLE – 5 STAGES

A Sales or Enrollment Cycle is a set of stages and activities conducted by a salesperson or Admissions Counselor that is a response to a buying activity. The Value Based Sales cycle is comprised of five stages: Prospect, Qualification 1 & 2, Value Representation, Value Summarization, and Close. Let's look at some of the activities within each stage.



PROSPECT (INQUIRY)

- Target audience identification and definition
- Market research and analysis
- Web-based search advertising
- Social media
- Public relations
- College fairs, direct and email campaigns

QUALIFICATION STAGES 1 & 2

- Q1 Requires - Discover People, Time & Money
- Q2 Requires - Discover Issues of the Prospective Student/Constituent.

QUALIFICATION 1: P-T-M ((PRE-)/APPLICANT)

- Need to know ALL the PEOPLE involved in decision (i.e. Students, constituents, other influencers)
- Need to know the TIME frame when they will attend and make a decision (i.e. Fall term/semester, current or future year)
- Need to know if there is sufficient MONEY (i.e. Budget established; Tuition & Financial Aid expectations; Bottom line or range amount; "Full Pay" potential)

QUALIFICATION 2: ISSUES ((PRE-)/APPLICANT)

- Must have an understanding of the Prospect Student and/or Constituents Issues (i.e. needs, desires, dreams, visions and opportunities).

VALUE REPRESENTATION ((PRE-)/APPLICANT)

- Presentations and experiential activities (i.e. college fair, high school, community college presentations, etc.)
- Demonstrates how the college's offerings (i.e. campus visits, videos, web conference calls, etc.) will meet the Prospective Student's/Constituent's specific needs and opportunities.

VALUE SUMMARIZATION (ADMITTED/FINANCIAL AID)

- Summarization of the cost and value of the college's offerings
- Presents both the value and the cost of attending the college to justify the expense

CLOSE (DEPOSITED/ENROLLED)

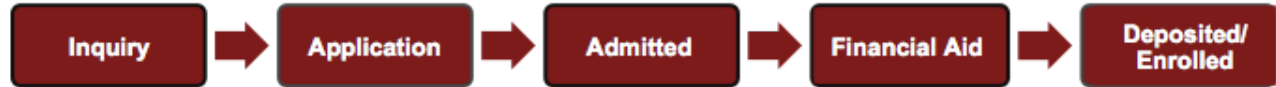
- The Prospective Student makes the commitment to attend the college
- An enrollment and deposit decision is confirmed
- Does not have to be a stress and tension filled experience
- Should be a comfortable conclusion to a natural discovery and value based decision-making process

Misalignment occurs when...

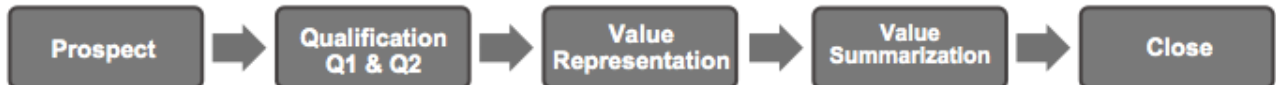
An Admissions Counselor becomes out of sync with a Prospective Student/Constituent when either one requests something that is out of the sequence of the other's cycle.

ALIGN & SYNCHRONIZE THREE CYCLES

Enrollment Cycle



Sales Cycle

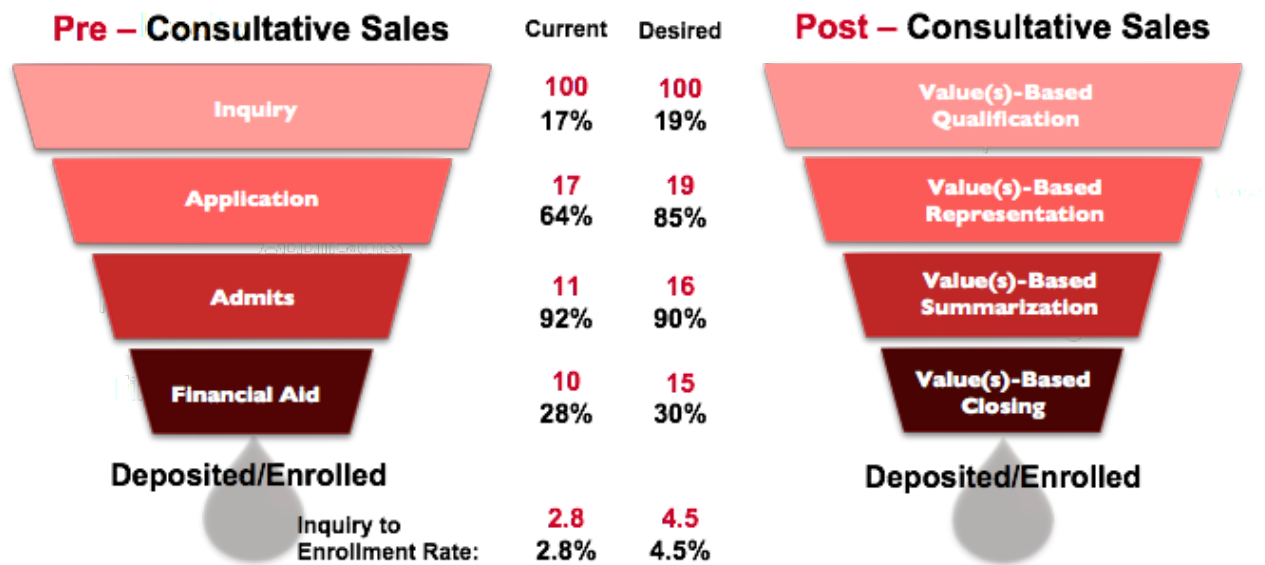


Buying Cycle



PROFICIENCY RATES - BY TEAM/BYCOUNSELOR

In addition to aligning the three cycles, it's imperative enrollment leaders track proficiency rates not only by team/department but also by each counselor.



The above image shows the stages in an enrollment "funnel" view. On the left is an example of some performance metrics tracked before the introduction of consultive sales practices/processes and on the right, performance metrics tracked after the introduction consultive sales practices/processes.

The middle column shows actual student counts along with what we call *proficiency rates*. Proficiency rates are the rates at which prospective students move through the stages of your enrollment funnel.

In this case, enrolled students increased from 2.8 to 4.5 for every 100 inquiries.

ADMISSIONS REPORT BY COUNSELOR

The following example report shows proficiency rates by counselor. The first section contains the goals broken out by team member as well as totals. The second section contains the actual results broken out by team member as well as the totals. The bottom section contains a four-year history of actual proficiency rates moving through each stage, which helped to inform the goals for the current year.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U
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MISALIGNMENT EXAMPLE

- Prospective Student asks who to write their deposit check to prior to submitting an application and sending in their transcript.
- The Counselor is uncertain if they meet the minimum requirements
- Awkward tension results as the Prospective Student is at the Action stage of their Buying Cycle while the Admissions Counselor is at the Qualification (Pre-App) stage of the sales and enrollment cycles.

Misalignment: Someone (buyer or seller) moves ahead or falls behind the other in their respective cycles.

YOUR RESPONSIBILITY IS TO:

- Point out the discrepancy.
- Attempt to align both you and the Prospective Student.
- Until all both are on track, there will be tension in the relationship.
- Both of you expected the other to be in a different place or step in your respective cycles.

REMEMBER

Things work well as long as everyone is at the same stage, at the same time.

If misalignment is not corrected, the result is a breakdown in trust and confidence between one or both parties. Coordination of Buying & Enrollment Cycles may mean slowing down or speeding up the Enrollment Cycle.

It's imperative that both parties agree to the importance of sharing information and to follow a parallel cycle in reaching the best selection decision.

The Value Enrollment Methodology is about being prospective student- and constituent-centered and not self-centered. This requires that Admissions Counselors match their selling patterns to the buyer's preferred buying patterns reflected in their Buying Cycle.