

INSIDER SECRETS

WHAT YOU DON'T KNOW ABOUT CONTACTING COACHES

College coaches are busy people, but connecting with them is the most important step you can take to find the right school. Here's everything you need to know to make sure you get that connection.

EMAIL OPEN PERCENTAGES BASED ON TIME OF DAY



ENSURE YOUR EMAIL IS OPENED

07% decrease in the likelihood coaches will view your email if you send it out on a Monday.

TIMING MATTERS

60% of emails are opened within three hours. You can increase in the likelihood coaches will view your email by 25% if you send it at the right time.

ESSENTIALS TO INCLUDE



Academic and athletic awards & stats



Reasons you want to play for that college



Link to your athletic profile



Your contact information

BE PERSONAL

MAKE AN INTRODUCTION

You have to set yourself apart. Email can be a quick way to reach out to coaches, but taking the time to send written letters may get you noticed as well.



Contact at least one coach each week, or around 50 a year.



Research each school and coach. Find out specific information about the athletic program you're contacting.

GIVING COACHES WHAT THEY WANT



90% of NCSA profiles viewed by college coaches have video. **Coaches want to see you play.** Getting your video in front of coaches is crucial.



89% of NCSA profiles viewed by college coaches have a transcript. Coaches want to know that you can compete **athletically and academically.**

WHAT NOT TO SAY

Email Do's and Don'ts



Do's

- ✓ *Personalize each email for each coach*
- ✓ *Include important information like your GPA, SAT/ACT Scores, major accomplishments that set you apart from your competition*
- ✓ *Direct coaches to your NCSA profile and highlight video*
- ✓ *Express interest in their athletic program as well as their academics!*
- ✓ *Ask questions at the end of your email to trigger a response!*
- ✓ *Proofread your emails*



Don'ts

- X *Send mass emails! Think about what it feels like to you when you get Spam, do you want coaches to react that way to your emails!?*
- X *Use slang or sentence fragments*
- X *Use general subject lines! Avoid the "Interested Athlete" subject line*
- X *Send the same email over and over – Change it up! The more personal and specific the better!*
- X *Just email the Head Coach. A lot of programs rely on Assistant Coaches to do most of the recruiting*

Questions to Ask a COACH

Academic/Admissions Questions:

- *Will my specific major interfere with my athletic schedule?*
- *What are the admission requirements for an athlete?*
- *Does your program have a full-time academic adviser?*
- *Are there team study halls?*
- *Do most of your players graduate in four years?*
- *Can the application fee be waived for athletes?*



Athletic Questions:

- *What are the key positions you are looking to fill in the (your grad year) class?*
- *How many players are you recruiting at my position?*
- *What type of player are you looking for at my position?*
- *What is your recruiting timeline? When would you like your recruiting done for the class of (your grad year)?*
- *What is your coaching style/philosophy?*
- *What is a typical "day in the life" like for a member of your team during the season? What about during the off-season?*



Tips on how to use your Twitter account the right way in the recruiting process.

DO!

- ***Search your name and delete old accounts***
- ***Follow coaches***
- ***DM coaches that follow you***
- ***Take 30 seconds before you post anything***
- ***Post updates on your recruiting***
 - ***Awards/accolades***
 - ***Recaps of combine/camp performance***
 - ***College visits***
 - ***Firm scholarship offers***
- ***Be gracious and humble!***
- ***Monitor people you follow***



WHAT COLLEGE COACHES SAY FRUSTRATES THEM THE MOST IN RECRUITING

Dan Tudor has worked with hundreds of college coaches in all sports. As President and Founder of Tudor Collegiate Strategies, Dan works with colleges around the country, teaching their coaches to recruit more effectively. As a result, he has had thousands of conversations with them about the recruiting process. I recently interviewed Dan to learn what college coaches are saying about the recruiting process. His answers can help you understand what you can be doing better to be more recruited.

CHARLIE ADAMS: Dan, What do college coaches tell you is the most frustrating part of the recruiting process from their perspective?

DAN TUDOR: Initially, they are frustrated that prospects (and their parents) aren't more open to considering their school as an option. Many coaches have great things to offer, both from their program and at their college, and they really want the chance to tell talented athletes about what they have to offer. However, many college recruits are too narrowly focused – especially at the start of the process, when many kids think the only acceptable option is high level Division I athletics. My advice to college athletes is to show interest to many college coaches, and let them get the chance to show you what they can provide athletically and academically.

CHARLIE ADAMS: What are some other things college coaches tell you about recruiting, that could help families?

DAN TUDOR: The biggest obstacle for college coaches these days is communication with prospects. It's happening earlier and earlier, yet there are significant limits on how and when a coach can contact a recruit. If a family is proactive and calls, emails or communicates through social media with a coach they are interested in – or a program that is trying to get in touch with them – they could really jump to the front of the line with that particular coach. DO NOT be a family that is hard to reach, or appears to be disinterested at the start of the process...it will kill the process before it gets started.

CHARLIE ADAMS: Where do you think the greatest lack of education is regarding families in recruiting?

DAN TUDOR: One of the biggest is that coaches will just "discover" an athlete. Certainly, that's true for the top 1-2% of top level athletes, but the vast majority of recruits are brought in after they initially communicate with a coach. I think families are still under the impression that they should sit back and wait for a coach to come knocking, and the truth is that just doesn't happen very often. It's a huge misconception that really ruins some opportunities for good student-athletes.

The other aspect is just the lack of communication skills on the part of athletes and parents. More often than not, it's a lack of communication on the recruit's part that ends the recruiting process. It's extremely competitive, so if you are a recruit who is scared of talking to a coach or hesitates in answering their email and expresses interest in what their college has to offer, be prepared to see scholarship and college playing opportunities dry up.

CHARLIE ADAMS: People assume college coaches know every prospect there is so they should wait to be contacted. That's not necessarily so, right?

DAN TUDOR: Not at all. As I said earlier, waiting around for a coach to "discover" you is a horrible strategy...even if you're All-Region and a varsity starter in their sport for four years, colleges outside your immediate area may not know about you. College coaches tell me all the time that they are most interested in the athletes that show interest in them and their program. It makes sense, right? We all want to be wanted, and college coaches are no different. Athletes that are proactive – whether that is registering for a resource like NCSA or picking up the telephone and calling a coach – are going to be the athletes that have the most opportunities. This is a competitive process, and coaches want to know who wants to compete for them. A serious prospect should be asking themselves every week, "How did I demonstrate my interest to that coach this week?"

CHARLIE ADAMS: What do college coaches look for in recruits, beyond talent?

DAN TUDOR: Academics are a key component, obviously. If an athlete has good grades and test scores, a college coach knows that they won't have to babysit that athlete and worry about whether or not he or she goes to class. After that, one of the things coaches mention to me might surprise families: They look to see how the prospect treats his or her parents when they visit the school. Are they polite, courteous and respectful towards them? College coaches look for that, because they are wanting mature, respectful student-athletes as a part of their program. So, just like a family is observing a coach when they visit a school, that coach is probably watching them, as well.

CHARLIE ADAMS: Dan, you have a daughter who is going to run in the Big Ten Conference as a member of the University of Iowa women's cross country and track and field team. As a parent that went through recruiting, what did you learn and observe?

DAN TUDOR: My daughter, Cambria Tudor, fell in love with the team and coaching staff at Iowa, and that happened very early on in the process. She wanted a big school with lots of spirit, and someplace away from home (we live in California).

As she went through the process and I observed her as a parent, I felt it was my job to direct her and make sure that she was managing the “process” correctly. That is to say, I was clear about being prompt in returning a coach’s email or phone call, and making sure to ask coaches the right questions at the right time. However, I didn’t want to be “that dad” that makes college coaches cringe...the kind that acts as a manager and gatekeeper, and runs the process on behalf of their son or daughter. College coaches DO NOT like that...they want to hear from the recruit they are recruiting primarily, and get to know parents along the way.

In the end, once my daughter found a school and a coach that fit her goals and meshed well with her personality, I was fine with her committing and supported her decision to be a Hawkeye. In her case, she picked a school where she won’t be the “star” right out of the gate...she’ll have to work extremely hard as an incoming Freshman, but she wanted that challenge and I am very proud of her for choosing that tougher road.

My advice for parents: Direct your athlete, but don’t run interference for them. This is their life, and while they will obviously look to their parents for advice and direction, it needs to be their choice. And, how they “feel” about the coach, program and school matters...it can’t be strictly based on facts or who offers them the most money, if possible. This is four years of their life, and they need to feel good about their decision and excited about taking on the challenge of competing in college athletics, no matter what level it is.

CHARLIE ADAMS: What are trends you see in college sports, including recruiting?

DAN TUDOR: Earlier and earlier communication from coaches and athletes. A serious athlete should be approaching the process aggressively beginning (in my opinion) in their Sophomore year of high school. Visit campuses, call coaches, and get on the radar. If an athlete is eligible and can register for a resource like NCSA, they should do it sooner rather than later. There is no logical reason why a solid student-athlete should sit around and wait for a coach to contact them. If earlier communication is the trend, make sure your family is on the leading edge of that trend.

Charlie Adams was a sports anchor for 23 years, where he saw many families struggle with the recruiting process because of a lack of education on the subject. His son Jack was a college cross country and track athlete while his 17- year old daughter Abby is currently going through the recruiting process as a swimmer. Since 2005 he has been an internationally known motivational speaker with his keynotes and seminars often being based on sports-related themes. He has written four books on peak performance and the power of attitude. For more information on his programs go to StokeTheFireWithin.com