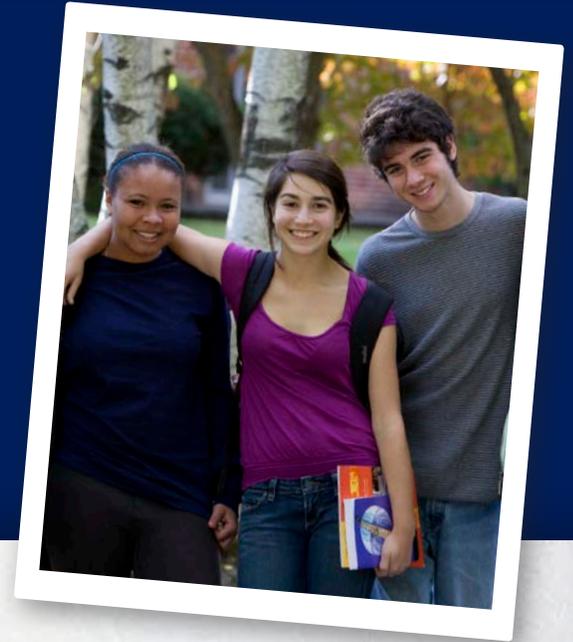


# College Consultant Checklist

The college admissions process is a complicated undertaking, one in which professional assistance can make the difference between the elation of an acceptance...and the disappointment of a denial. But finding the right consultant can itself be a challenge. Without industry regulation, college consulting is an open field; many come to the industry with only high school guidance counselor experience (which, even among the best guidance counselors, isn't as relevant as experience in the decision-maker's chair) or no experience at all.



Thinking about getting help? Check out our full list of things to consider as you begin your search.

## Experience

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- What is the consultant's background?
- Does he/she have experience in a college admissions office?
- Where?
- For how long?
- Has the consultant read applications and, most importantly, made admit decisions?
- How long has he/she been consulting?
- How many students has he/she worked with?

## Stability and Fit

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- How long has the office been in business?
- How many consultants does the office have?
- Who will be working with your student?
- Will you be working with one person exclusively or with a team of people?
- Will you have access to an alternative consultant if you are unhappy?
- Does the office have support staff to provide administrative customer service?
- What contingency plans are in place for service delivery if a consultant is not available?

## Approach

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- Will the consultant provide a timetable and plan of action for your applications?
- Is the consultant able to answer questions outside his/her specific area of expertise?
- If not, does he/she have someone to consult?
- How do you resolve questions about approach (e.g., on essay topics, whether or not to pursue Early Action at a given university, demonstrating interest, etc.)?
- Can the consultant set up mock admissions interviews with other professionals?
- Does the consultant have knowledge of a broad range of campuses throughout the U.S.?
- What resources does the consultant have to stay current in the field?

## Proven Success

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- What does the consultant guarantee? (Be very wary of anyone who guarantees. There are no guarantees in college admissions.)
- What is the consultant's track record with students similar to the one seeking a consultant?
- How does the consultant measure success?
- Can prospective students talk to a previous student/parent as a reference?

## Location and Service Delivery

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- What is the consultant's availability?
- Where is the consultant located?
- How will you be consulting (in person/by phone/online)?
- How frequently will the student and consultant meet/be in contact?
- Is the consultant available between scheduled meetings?
- Is there a mechanism for contact in case of emergency?
- How quickly can the student expect an answer to emailed questions?
- How long is the consultant's turnaround for things like essay reviews?

## Cost

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- How much does the consultant charge?
- Does the consultant charge a fee per session or a fee for overall service?
- Are there any additional fees?
- Is there a grace period during which you can get a refund if you're unhappy?
- Does the cost include any scholarship-search advice/financial expertise?