









How to Avoid the 5 Common Mistakes Associated with the College Admissions Process

Mistake 1: The only year that makes a difference in the admissions process is the junior year of high school.

Reality	What can Step Into The Maze do to students for the college admissions process
Colleges look at the entire 4 years of high school. Mr. Green from Cornell University school of Agriculture and Science stated "We are looking for the best match between the total student (Character) and the college program that they have indicated they are interested in. We want a student that is prepared academically and socially so that when they get here they can succeed in their major, graduate and pursue their career path."	Individualized training programs that focus on these key areas- <ul style="list-style-type: none">  Development of the 10 Essential Job Skills  Career exploration and Job Shadow Experience leading to selection of a college major  Leadership Training based on a Service Learning Project
When asked what indicators they look for in that best match, he stated that there are 7 things that go into a decision to admit or not admit. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Character: How you present yourself in the admissions essay questions 2. Academic Rigor of Course selections-challenging courses build from freshmen year through senior year. This is more important than GPA or SAT scores. 3. Extra-curricular Activities 4. Leadership and Community Service 5. GPA 6. College Admissions Testing-SAT/ACT 7. Letters of Recommendation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  Creation of a Professional Portfolio that documents all the successes that a student completes over 4 years of high school  Study Skills  Financial Aid and Scholarship Prep  Completion of the College Application, Scholarship and Financial Aid Applications  College Research process

Mistake 2: High School Guidance Departments will do all the work to prepare your child to complete the college applications process including financial aid and scholarships.

Reality	What can Step Into The Maze do to students for the college admissions process
High School Guidance departments are responsible for more than 150 students per year. That means there is little opportunity to work individually with students on career explorations and skill assessments that leads to selection of college majors.	Mrs. Milks has spent the last 8 years of her high school teaching career working directly with the respected Guidance departments. The work that Mrs. Milks does with her students allows the guidance departments to expedite the submission of college and scholarship applications.

Mistake 3: Making a career choice (college major) without truly understanding the realities of the everyday responsibilities

Reality	What can Step Into The Maze do to students for the college admissions process
66% of all incoming freshmen will change their major or drop out of school by the end of their sophomore year. 70% of students do not graduate within the traditional 4 years of college. The extension to a traditional 4 year college program has a direct impact on financial aid packages. The average college graduate will have \$20,000.00 worth of student loans after 4 years.	Current high school graduates that have completed the 4 year training programs have earned an average of \$6,000.00 in scholarship aid. One senior has earned \$19,000.00 in scholarship and financial aid.

Mistake 4: Only select students have leadership opportunities

Reality	What can Step Into The Maze do to students for the college admissions process
Students and parents believe that the only way to demonstrate leadership is the "C" attached to a sports jersey or a student council member.	Junior year is focused on leadership training that utilizes a service learning project to allow every student take on a leadership role
The reality that leadership can include any number of roles that an individual participates in, to accomplish a stated goal either in school or outside of school.	Leadership training focuses on the 10 universal essential skills that one would have to perform
Awards earned in Scouting (Boy, Girl or Explorers) 4-H experiences, sports, extra-curricular clubs or church are all experiences where one can document their leadership contributions.	Creation of a leadership profile that identifies skills, strengths and weaknesses of a student
Leadership is a major component to scholarship decisions	All seniors that have completed the four years of training have earned leadership scholarships

Mistake 5: Each high school has a minimum requirement for community service and that is all that is required for the college application process

Reality	What can Step Into The Maze do to students for the college admissions process
Colleges are looking for a minimum of 100 hours of community service over the course of 4 years of high school.	Students have the opportunity to participate in community service projects beginning their Freshmen year.
Colleges want a commitment to one or two specific organizations for an extensive number of hours. They do not want to see 8 hours for one organization and then 4 for another one. Ideally they would like to see the student make a commitment to the selected organizations every year of high school	Average student earns 200 hours of community service which includes 50 hours of leadership experience as part of the service learning project.