



Maximizing Your Potential

From Statement of Interest
to the
Campus Visit

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Moving from Candidate to Finalist to Placement . . .

- Reviewing the Position Announcement
- Writing the Statement of Interest
- Preparing for the Campus Visit
- Completing the Interview

Reviewing the Announcement

- How close is this placement a match for your experience and skills?
- Do the start and end dates of the placement conflict with your responsibilities and commitments?
- Are you comfortable with both the institution and the salary?
- Are the expectations for the Interim within your skill set and comfort zone?
- If this opportunity is confidential, the name and details of the institution may be available only by phone. If so, we recommend a call to the Registry principal before developing your materials.
- Review the suggestions from The Registry about developing effective Statements of Interest that are included in all Position Announcements.

If the answers to these questions are yes . . .

Develop an Effective Statement of Interest

- Begin by explaining why you are interested in the position
- Emphasize key items and issues that are important to the college or university
- Key Point: Make your statement about what you can do for the institution rather than a history of your prior work
- Finish with a strong concluding statement that links specifically to the institution and their immediate needs
- Set a limit of **500 words** for your completed statement, and typically shape it into three paragraphs. Also, remember that The Registry only sends the school those three paragraphs, so extra headings and closings are unnecessary.

Sample Position Announcement

(Passages in **bold type** are suggested key points to address)

The College is **a small faith-based institution** located in an urban setting and near multiple amenities including shopping, parks and resort venues.

This opportunity is in response to **the anticipated separation of the incumbent**, which the President wishes to coordinate with the appointment of a Registry Interim. That is the reason for confidentiality, however details will be shared by phone with individuals who are interested in becoming a candidate.

Expectations for this position include **oversight of admissions (there is a director of admissions in place), financial aid and the adult and graduate studies (GAS) division**. The **Interim must be supportive of the faith-based mission of the institution**.

Additional information provided by phone: **high need for stability** in EM areas; **enrollments have declined**, especially in adult and graduate area; there is **a new structure being introduced in the Adult and Graduate Studies area**; the **work culture in EM is problematic**; the **College is an evangelical Christian institution**.

Effective Statement of Interest

My interest is high because my most memorable and enjoyable experience as a vice president was at what started out as a **small faith-based institution** that soon quadrupled in size and became one of the most remarkable turn-around stories in higher education in the last twenty years. There was no silver bullet, just a lot of disciplined strategic planning and execution and a collaborative group of colleagues who worked well together for years. But more importantly, there was a **sense of mission and vision and a set of ideals that guided us** and our every decision. It was a **place where prayer played a large part** of the daily life of the institution and I fully believe was a primary reason for our success. It would be good to experience that sense of purpose and spirituality again, even as an interim participant.

My fit for the position and the situation as described in the brief posting is that I have filled positions in enrollment at times of institutional stress, when there were difficult personnel issues, difficult financial issues, financial aid office penalties, or failure over periods of time to meet enrollment targets. In each place, I have been able to bring **stability** and **move the enrollment division forward**. I understood quickly that the same policies and procedures would not work everywhere, but I have the tools to adapt actions to different institutions and circumstances. I am able to **bring a sense of teamwork** even as I work to bring a discipline and levels of assessment to the work of the enrollment team. By providing a plan and establishing goals that enhance the mission of the university, the team and each of its members builds a sense of purpose and progress and the achievement of the University's goals. (297 words)

2nd Sample Position Announcement

The Interim Provost will be responsible for oversight of the academic areas of the institution, including the following:

- Organizational structure—*reorganize and restructure* the academic side of the University,
- Program and Curriculum planning—*new program development, instructional planning, scheduling, forecasting, workload planning*, and
- *Enrollment planning and budget/finance integration*—oversight of the Director of Academic Forecasting and Budget Analysis role, developing the relationship between Enrollment Planning and Budget and Financing within the academic arena;
- Assisting the President with the recruitment of the permanent Provost as requested.

Less Effective Statement of Interest

I am pleased to offer my experience, passion, and commitment to higher education for your consideration of candidates to serve as Interim Provost. The focus to integrate academic preparation to practical real-world experiences and to link the classroom to the community is a challenge and an opportunity. Efforts to develop students to have the values and skills to transform and lead the world in a socially responsible and sustainable way are important missions. I am committed to the kind of mission, vision, and values of

I am a graduate of UMA, where I earned my doctorate, and I spent two decades working in academic institutions in Boston, Cambridge, and Salem. I was active in community service and leadership roles within the academia and within the state. . . . (continued on next slide)

SOI Continued...

I have held significant academic leadership roles as Provost and as School Dean. I am an institution builder, a consensus builder, and a change agent. I have been a strong advocate and committed to advancing higher education access, quality, and standards. In each institution I served, I have significantly strengthened the academic dimensions and elevated the institution's ranking; increased enrollment; achieved and maintained balanced budget; promoted a culture of innovation, advancing faculty and student research, development, and diversity; created support to enhance student learning and removed barriers to success; strengthened relationships with deans and faculty, built consensus among faculty, students, and administration to achieve harmony and collaboration; increased resources. . . . (250+ words)

Preparing for the Campus Visit

Complete your due diligence:

- Review the institution's website in depth
- Also consult other sources such as Google, IPEDS, and regional accrediting agency sites
- Carefully review the Preparation Documents that the institution provides prior to the visit
- Contact the Registry Principal if there are additional documents you would like to see prior to the visit.

Completing a Successful Interview

- Be sure to answer the questions asked of you
- Continually watch your audience to gauge the effectiveness of your responses and be as concise as possible
- When asked what you would do in a given situation, start with a positive, “On the basis of the information I have, I would . . .”
- Give the interviewer time to complete each question
- Provide a brief 2-minute introduction of yourself and then say, “What questions do you have for me?”
- Have at least 3 questions ready that you would like answered
- Save questions about logistics for the Registry Principal
- Be prepared to answer, “When can you start?”

Finally: Be true to yourself—present the real you, both in your statement and during the campus visit. While being professional, let your personality shine through....

