Suggestions for High School Visits

According to an anonymous college counselor: Our senior surveys have shown that our students find the college rep visits extremely valuable. Creating quality successful rep visits requires collaboration and communication between the stakeholders: the college, the visiting college reps, the high school host, the high school teacher and the student.

Notes for the college rep (from a high school counselor):

- Please be professional. You are an ambassador for your university. The way you dress, act, speak and carry yourself is a complete reflection of your school. At a recent reception for a university, I visited with two alumni who happened to be graduates of my high school. They said they were drawn to the school solely because of the personality and presentation of the rep during the high school visit.
- Please confirm your visit via email a few days in advance, when possible.
- Please arrive a few minutes early to allow time for any last minute adjustments and a brief welcome with the college counseling staff.
- Please be sure you have the right school, the right location, and right time. Once, I had a rep arrive, thinking they were at another school because the names were so similar. One rep also thought her next school was 30 minutes from us when in fact it was 7 hours north of us!
- Study the map of the high school and be sure you have been notified of where to park.
- Please be flexible with the space we have for your meeting. Sometimes we have to do a bit of juggling to accommodate the rep visit.
- The rep and the high school host should have a conversation in advance regarding the procedure if no students have signed up for the visit. I try to contact my rep to let them know in advance that no students have signed up. Sometimes the rep wishes to use their time in another way or they still wish to come and I give them a tour of our school.

Other notes for the college rep (from a college rep):

- Find out ahead of time if there will be a high school counselor or parent volunteer present during your presentation. Students are supposed to be informed of proper etiquette during college rep visits. However, if students are being disrespectful or chatty (and there is no counselor or chaperone present) you have three options:
  - Stop your presentation and ask them to be quiet. You can also stop and ask them something like “I'm sorry, did you have a question for me?”
  - Walk towards them or look directly at them as you continue to present – it always seems to work for me!
- Don’t simply show up and ask the students if they have questions. This can be too overwhelming for the students! Have a presentation prepared and save a little bit of time to answer specific questions.
- Make notes about the visit right after, especially if your office requires an evaluation.
- A thank you note to the high school counselor after the visit is a nice touch.
- Be flexible about time. Though your allotted time should be figured out ahead of time, students might take long to arrive at the presentation or you might find yourself with extra time. Be able to condense your presentation down to 30 minutes and expand your presentation to 60 minutes, as needed.
- Always take a second to meet with the counselor – to give them a quick 2 minute update (i.e. what’s new on campus, new admission trends, etc.)