

WELCOME TO PAGE 217* - an introduction to and resource for the world of higher education presented by Eric J. Furda, Dean of Admissions at the University of Pennsylvania, and Penn class of 1987.

5 I's

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When looking at colleges, I always ask students to first look within yourself, a self assessment that I call the 5 I's:

1. Identity: How do you see yourself and how do others see you?
2. Intellect: How do you think and approach the acquisition of knowledge?
3. Ideas: What do you think and why?
4. Interests: What do you choose to do when you have the time and flexibility?
5. Inspiration: What really motivates you?

IDENTITY: To figure out this piece, you must ask yourself who you are as an individual. How do you see yourself and how do you think that others see you? How do you drill into—essentially, unpack—the definition you create for yourself? Forget putting a name to a college now—don't say I have to get into Penn or any other school. That comes later. Think about who you are without connecting yourself to anything external, such as brands, people, grades, etc. Think about who you are at your core.

INTELLECT: Part of your identity is your intellect. How do you think and how do you take in information? We want to know about your mind. Pretty simple, right? As educators, we know that all students have a unique intellect with different strengths and learning styles. Recognize that your intellect comes into play in a range of activities, not only while you are in class or doing homework. The problem solving skills that you utilize during club meeting, your perseverance during track practice, and the public speaking ability you employ while running for leadership positions are all positive manifestations of an intellect that is alive and growing.

IDEAS: We want to know what you think about and why. When you have time to hang out, what are your ideas? What do you think about big issues like global warming? What do you think about local issues right here in your backyard? What are your ideas and what has informed those ideas? Ideas are what make college communities really interesting. When diverse students with unique intellectual paths share their thoughts with one another, it results in a great synergy. Students who work together, crossing traditional academic boundaries, have the potential to make waves in their community and world. So yes, your ideas, even if at this point they don't seem realistic, can help you get into college. We are interested in the intellectual innovation you will bring to campus. We are interested in your spark.

INTERESTS: What do you like to do? What do you like to do when someone is not telling you to do it? What are your hobbies? This is one way that I think about interests: If you could pick up three books or three magazines, what would they be? Sometimes we need to pick books or magazines up because they feed into the courses that we are taking; other times it is a reflection of our natural acclimations and interests. You can do the same exercise with films, or museums. When you walk into a museum, what is the first section that you go to? All these things are going to be interesting to you and they're going to be interesting to the community that you are looking to be part of in college.

INSPIRATION: What really motivates and inspires you? We can sit down for forty-five minutes and you might not be sure how you want to answer this question or you might be thinking too hard about it. But then, there is this point in the conversation where I ask you something and your eyes light up and your arms start to move about. You are inspired; something really moves you. Tap into this power source and build on it.



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