

12 Warning Signs that an Independent Educational Consultant is Not Worth Hiring

1. They promise to use their 'pull' or 'connection' to secure admission to a particular school or college.
2. They guarantee you'll be accepted into one of your top choices.
3. They guarantee a certain dollar value in scholarships that are just waiting for you.
4. They have no formal training, and don't attend workshops or conferences, but they "helped their own child" so they can help yours, too.
5. They haven't gone through the IECA vetting process, 'but expect to, one of these days.'
6. They promise to "package" you as a way to secure admission. (*You should strive to be admitted based on who you are; admission directors can see through a slick package.*)
7. They tell you not to worry about all the details on the application forms...they'll take care of those for you.
8. They tell you that while they accept "finders fees" from certain schools and colleges, they would *never* let that influence their suggestions.
9. They don't spell out exactly what services you get in exchange for their fee.
10. They indicate that their background, training, and years of experience are unimportant details not worth going into.
11. They do not visit college campuses, but admission representatives sometimes visit them and that's just as good (*or they do not visit campuses but review their catalogs and Web sites, which they falsely claim to be just as effective*).
12. They indicate that they will significantly edit the essay to make sure it's perfect, as if admission directors can be fooled.

One way to ensure that an independent educational consultant is ethical is to hire an IECA member consultant who has been vetted through IECA's intense application process.

