

Pre-College Experience Research: A Case Study on Approaching Research with Millennials



Objective:

To understand the “pre-college” experiences of high school seniors and their parents



Challenge:

- Required longitudinal qualitative approach across several months (spring of senior year through college orientation)
- Traditional challenges of reaching and engaging Millennials over an extended period of time were compounded with concern over this being a particularly busy and anxious time for students and parents

Solution:



- Developed methodology that required email responses to 2-3 questions (weekly or bi-weekly), followed by wrap-up telephone interview after college orientation
- Expectations for participation established upfront
- Only 2-3 questions per email/Succinct answers accepted
- Limited probing/Probes sent back via email as quick follow-ups
- Able to respond via email/mobile device
- Well-compensated for time and participation



Outcome:

- Successfully followed 21 students and 8 parents from March through August/September with low attrition (n=2 who discontinued during email phase, n=1 who did not complete interview)
- Two learnings moving forward: Add phone conversation upfront to better establish rapport/relationship and set-up response entry mechanism to easily track responses