

POWER Careers Pre-Engagement Strategies

Providing Opportunities for Women in Energy Related Careers

Pre-engagement: Reaching out to potential students to make personal connections and to keep them involved and excited about the program they have chosen from the time they first express interest until their first day of class.

POWER Careers Project recognizes the opportunities pre-engagement efforts benefit enrollment in the programs offered at the Energy Systems Technology and Education Center (ESTEC). Pre-engagement is an effective tool that we utilize to make personal connections with women who show interest in energy related careers. Not only do these strategies help us to reach out to prospective students, they also help us to keep them enthusiastic and connected during the period of time between starting the application process and their first day of class. Program tours, START Program, university and community events, social media, and POWER Careers activities help us to get prospective students involved and keep them excited and engaged.

Individual and small group tours are a great way to make personal connections. ESTEC tours begin with a brief overview and introduction of all five of the programs our center has to offer. Tours include a walk-through of our classrooms, laboratories, and facilities. A POWER Careers representative and an instructor are available to meet with prospective students and add a personal touch. During the tour we are able to answer questions and give more in-depth information on specific programs as the individual shows interest. We make a priority of following up with those who have toured our programs by phone call or email within a week of their tour.

Occasionally a student may not enroll in the ESTEC program they have chosen right away due to limited space, personal issues, or because they are still in the decision making process. We recently had a prospective student who wanted to enroll in the Mechanical Engineering Technology program but missed the dead-line and had to wait until the next semester. In her case, we recommended the START Program. This option gives her something to begin working on until she is able to register for her program. The START (Successful Transitions And Retention Track) Program at the College of Technology provides career and educational counseling for potential students who desire to further their education and work toward a better life. Students are able to take "College Success" preparation courses and receive tutoring. Many of the students who enter programs at ESTEC have successfully completed START. Completion from the START Program equips students to be better prepared for our courses. Another option we present to students who must wait to enter a program is to begin taking some of the general education classes that are required for them to fulfill their degree.

Social media has been a beneficial approach in keeping students informed about our current events. We utilize facebook, instagram, and twitter as a means to stay in touch, message information, chat with individual students, post pictures of recent activities, send newsletters, and announce employment and internship opportunities. We update and post to social media on a regular basis.

The POWER Careers Project hosts monthly events with the intent of bringing past, present, and future female students together to socialize, network, and develop mentorships. Our events are organized with the goal of creating a nurturing community and providing an opportunity for camaraderie for our POWER Careers students. These gatherings help our students get to know other ESTEC students who are one step ahead of them. Prospective students are able to meet our current students which allows them to ask questions and become better prepared as they enter their program. Current students have the opportunity to get to know some of our recent graduates and learn about their experiences working in energy related careers. POWER Career events allow all students to collaborate and form relationships which is important in helping our students feel connected to each other and to ESTEC. POWER Careers gatherings have included coffee dates, BBQ's, group painting sessions, university events, ice-cream socials, and rodeo night.

POWER Careers Pre-Engagement Strategies

I. Pre-Engagement Strategies can help:

A. Make personal connections with women interested in energy related careers.

1. Tours

a. *Individual*

b. *Small group*

(1) *Follow up telephone call or email*



2. Invitations to POWER Career Events

a. *Coffee Dates*

b. *Summer BBQs*

c. *University Events*

d. *Ice-cream Social*

e. *Rodeo Night*

f. *Group Painting*



B. Keep prospective students enthusiastic and connected before entering their program.

1. Social Media

a. *Facebook*

b. *Instagram*

c. *Twitter*



2. START Program

3. General Education Classes

4. University and POWER Careers Events

5. Consistent contact through message, phone call, or email



C. Create a supportive culture for networking and mentorship.

1. POWER Careers Events

2. ESTEC Newsletters

3. MentorNet

