

Cheryl Broom [00:00:04]:

Hi, I'm Cheryl Broom, CEO of GradComm and host of Higher Ed conversations sponsored by EdTech Connect. Today I have such a fun guest on Teege Mattille. Mattille is a seasoned admissions professional. And I bet you didn't think fun and admissions would go together, but after you listen to this conversation, you are going to be changed because Teege is fantastic. He has so much passion and insight into why admissions personnel are so overworked and so burned out. And some great messages to institutions on how to not only support the admissions office, but also make the admissions process better for students as well. He is an author, a podcast co host, and a keynote speaker at education conferences across the United States. He's super passionate about helping institutions not only meet their enrollment goals, but do doing so in ways that really prioritize integrity, ethics, and the well being of students.

Cheryl Broom [00:01:05]:

During our discussion, we talked about trends in college admissions. We talked about the role that AI is playing in admissions, and really the role of AI tech in transforming the admissions process. But perhaps my biggest takeaways, not just for admissions, but for anybody working in higher education, is how the business of higher education can often take away the joy, the joy that brought us into this profession to begin with. So sit down, grab your favorite beverage and enjoy this conversation with Teege. All right, Teege. Well, thank you so much for joining me today on the podcast.

Teege Mattille [00:01:46]:

Yeah, thank you so much for having me. I am thrilled to be here and looking forward to this conversation.

Cheryl Broom [00:01:50]:

And I think you are my first podcast guest that deals with admissions.

Teege Mattille [00:01:57]:

Yes, I think that's right.

Cheryl Broom [00:01:59]:

And I think it's going to be a very popular episode.

Teege Mattille [00:02:02]:

You know, people love admissions and I can't decide if they love admissions as it is or admissions as they think it is. Either way, they love to talk about it, pro or con, good or bad. Whether it's trashing us for what we do or praising us for how we do it, whatever, it's always a hot topic. Yeah.

Cheryl Broom [00:02:17]:

Yeah. Well, I think admissions is the, is the center of colleges. It's a student. So a lot of times their first touch, their first interaction was on campus. So it's such an important part of the

student journey. But before we dive into that, tell me a little bit about yourself. Your background, your book.

Teege Mattille [00:02:33]:

Yes, all the book. Well, my name is Teeje Mattille. I currently am the director of enrollment success at Enroll ML, which is an ed tech company that helps admissions offices connect students to counselors. But my background is entirely college admissions. I went to school as a first generation college student. Believe me, Cheryl, when I tell you I was not tracked for college. In high school, when I went to some of the work, the rep visits, I remember once clearly the guiding secretary saying, teacher, are you really thinking about college or are you just trying to get out of class? Right. Because nobody saw me as college bound.

Teege Mattille [00:03:10]:

College was my college experience was life changing, as I think it is for everybody. And I am so grateful for the opportunities I had and took advantage of at UW Whitewater here in Wisconsin. And so when I had the opportunity to jump over to the admissions world and help students who needed that nudge, that needed that boost, that needed someone to help them see the potential they maybe don't see in themselves yet jumped at the chance. And then I've been admissions counselor, director, dean, vice president of enrollment, financial aid, et cetera, the whole nine yards before coming over here. And now I'm in a position where I've written this book, the Admissions Counselor Malaise, which I think we're going to talk about all about staff morale and college admissions. And I co host the Admissions Director's Lunchcast really podcast for about 500 people in the country. It's tailor targeted for admissions directors. So if that's you, check it out.

Teege Mattille [00:04:03]:

But it really digs into very specific, tangible, tactical issues related to the admissions counseling process.

Cheryl Broom [00:04:09]:

Great. I love that title, the Admissions Counselor Malaise. I like to call it the Cranky Admission Counselor. What led you to write the book and in particular focus on morale?

Teege Mattille [00:04:25]:

Yeah, yeah. So, you know, everywhere coming out of the pandemic, morale had been a problem. Something different is happening in admissions. And I think college is generally, but pretty specific to admissions. And at the NACAC conference in 2023 in Baltimore, I went to a session where a liberal arts institution won't name it, but you've heard of it. If you're listening to this podcast, you've heard of this college. And they, it was the dean and the vice president of enrollment. They gave a presentation on all the changes they made to improve morale.

Teege Mattille [00:04:55]:

They listened to the counselors, they surveyed them, they interviewed them, they talked to them, they increased staffing, they lowered application volume, they increased work from home,

everything you'd want. It was a really expensive proposition. They had to get support from the cabinet. And at the end of the year, staff turnover continued, morale went down and enrollment went down. Okay. And I left feeling like I was really spinning on this. Like, what is it? And this is what I got stuck on. What is it about this problem that when you ask admissions counselors, plainly what do you need? And they tell you honestly, it's not what they need.

Teege Mattille [00:05:30]:

When I touched back to my own college experience, Cheryl, I was a women's studies major, which let me tell you, as a first generation student, to call home and say I'm going to change from pre law to women's studies is quite a conversation, especially for a kid.

Cheryl Broom [00:05:46]:

Who is never going to go to college.

Teege Mattille [00:05:48]:

Correct? Correct. But I read, I was assigned, I should say, when I was in college, I was assigned the book the Feminine Mystique by Betty Friedan. I read it for the first time recently, maybe should have read it when assigned, but that's a whole nother story.

Cheryl Broom [00:06:01]:

Wait a second, let's back up.

Teege Mattille [00:06:04]:

But the Feminine Mystique, if you're familiar with it, it needs no introduction. But if you're not, for your listeners, it's. It was a book, it was published in 1963, and it was all about the plight of suburban housewives in the 1950s who had every modern convenience. They had an idyllic life. The house in the suburbs, the husband, the children, the best CRM or MOP or whatever tools they needed. Right. And yet they just. Something was missing and they couldn't fix it because they couldn't name it because they wouldn't talk about it.

Teege Mattille [00:06:35]:

So Betty Friedan referred to that as the problem that has no name. And it hit me that the admissions counselors, we have a problem and it has no name. Nobody's kind of pinning it correctly. We've all focused on the pandemic. And what I trace through in the book is actually, over the course of a generation, colleges and universities have become much more corporatized, much more revenue driven. And the mission and the value and the meaning has been zapped out. The joy has been zapped out of the work of admissions, admissions counseling. And that's at the core of what's leading to the malaise.

Teege Mattille [00:07:06]:

That's the argument I make in the book.

Cheryl Broom [00:07:09]:

Wow. I mean that, I mean, it really can apply to anybody that's working almost in any industry. I mean, you can, you can have the salary, you can have the lifestyle, but if there's not meaning behind your work, then it's hard to find love for it and continue to have love for it.

Teege Mattille [00:07:28]:

I agree so much. And I mean, this is why, right? I watched a show, don't laugh at me. This is, remember TLC had this period of time where they went through everything was a reality show. They were just throwing things against the wall. And there's one segment, reality show about parking enforcers. Okay, this will, this will connect in a second. I think it was like 20, almost 20 years ago, but I remember an interview with a person, her job was just driving around giving out parking tickets on the day they were supposed to be cleaning the streets with a street sweeper and she was giving out tickets and she explained to camera that this is making the lives better for people in the city because you can't park here, because we can't clean the streets and if the streets aren't clean and blah, blah, blah, all that to say, I think the sense of purpose is so important to everyone that we will go through some pretty extreme rationalizations to get there. And I think that parking enforcer did with admissions counselors and college of personnel specifically.

Teege Mattille [00:08:24]:

I think the added component is there's a degree of gaslighting in that when we bring folks in. What we talk about when we hire admissions counselors, I'll speak to that specifically because that's what I can do when I bring an admissions counselor in. When I hired them, I did not say, great news, you're going to come here, you're going to spend a third of your time in spreadsheets and data analysis and you're going to, if all goes well, have a modest impact on the net tuition revenue for a regional institution. That's not it. I tell stories of like, you're going to make a difference, you're going to impact students and yes, you're going to be paid less than you should, the hours suck, the work is difficult. It's a lot of rejection to you, not from you, but you're going to feel the impact you're making. And what I contend, and I kind of lay out over time in the book, the way we've increased the applications per counselor over a generation, counselors can't feel the impact of their work because they're too watered down. And so that's where the joy has come.

Teege Mattille [00:09:21]:

And we still bring them in. And here's the thing. Colleges and universities, we could bring in different people to be admissions counselors. We could look for people that will be motivated by net tuition revenue. We could post the jobs as sales rep, we could do that. But we won't because of two things. Colleges will not pay those people what they would expect. And we don't want people who are not mission driven in these roles.

Cheryl Broom [00:09:44]:

Right. I mean, and that's really the difference between higher education as a nonprofit institution versus a for profit. I mean, if you do work with admission counselors for for profits I mean they are looking at the money, looking at their numbers. I mean, we've done secret shopping for for

profit institutions where we just put an inquiry into the website and we're all of a sudden just like bombarded.

Teege Mattille [00:10:10]:

You know, I, I did that with my counseling team one year when this was when I was a dean of admissions and had every admissions counselor before our mid year retreat. Here's a hot tip for everybody, actually. I had them go sign up as an inquiry for one of our competitor schools and just some other random school and do a presentation at the retreat. And one of the counselors, I just won't forget, she just played all the voicemails she got in one week from the for profit college. It was a lot and friendly, energetic, bubbly person that did not seem like they were working to call this. So they didn't want to. They were happy to be reaching out to the students. It's a very different experience and I can see how a lot of people are taken in by them now.

Cheryl Broom [00:10:52]:

I think I love the focus of your book because all the admissions that I have worked, all the admissions counselors I have worked with in my own career have been in the position a long time and were very cranky. And I just thought they were cranky people. I had never come out of that. This other lens, they're stressed out. They got into the career because they want to work with students. And now a lot of their work is actually probably taking them away from working one on one with students. Right. They have this burden of telling people that they're not accepted or they've done something wrong, or they filled up paperwork wrong, or they have to go back and do something.

Cheryl Broom [00:11:33]:

So I'm sure that they get a lot of angry clients. Right. And I had never really thought about the institution taking on, not the burden, but taking on morale in order to improve the service that students get. I think it's such a great thing that you've put your finger on.

Teege Mattille [00:11:55]:

Thank you for saying that. You know, with EnrollML, that's the company I work for, we are software. This is not the enroll ML pitch. But at the core we identify based on student behaviors which students are ready to engage with a counselor. So. So counselors are able to stop the mindless calling list and focus in on students who are engaged with the institution. And when we rolled it out, the director I was working with there, the feedback was staff morale has skyrocketed. Right.

Teege Mattille [00:12:21]:

And of course we were like, you need to do a webinar for us. Right. Like let's put that out there. So if anyone wants to read, I can show it to you. But it shows. And that was part of kind of what unlocked this for me is admissions counselors want to work with students, but there's too many students. I just trained an admissions counselor on our software earlier this week and I asked her, what are you excited about for this job? She's brand new to the role and she said, I am excited to walk alongside students through this process. And then I looked at her dashboard and I said, you've got 500 applicants.

Teege Mattille [00:12:52]:

That's too much walking. Right. We're going to have to narrow it down. And admissions counselors were very focused. And I say we, I think of myself this way. We're very focused on fairness, equity. We want to treat all students equally. And so at a for profit institution, they might be inclined to only focus on those that are most likely to come through.

Teege Mattille [00:13:13]:

On the not for profit end. We want to treat everybody equally. So what we've ended up doing is just every year by 5 to 10%, which is the application volume growth every year. We've been watering down our relationships with students to the point that they're virtually, with some exceptions, they're not particularly deep and counselors don't feel the work that they're doing now.

Cheryl Broom [00:13:35]:

Why, why has there been such a growth? I mean, we hear everywhere like college, college going is going down, it's decreasing, there's less students. So why are the admissions people feeling such a growth in what they do?

Teege Mattille [00:13:49]:

Well, there's two things happening at once. One is in the interest of increasing access to our institutions, colleges have been making the application process frictionless. They've been reducing the application fee, test scores, self report your transcripts if you want, no essay required. Right. They've been making it easier and easier, and that's with good intentions. Students who would have been kept out by those barriers are now able to get in. Where we miss the mark is when we don't have the staffing levels to support to match the volume increase and support students. We end up admitting students who need counseling and guidance to know how to make it work.

Teege Mattille [00:14:31]:

But we don't have anyone who can give it to them. So I think we're kind of self defeating our own purpose. The other thing and the other reason, and this answers your question directly, Cheryl. At the core of it, students are applying to more colleges every year. On average, it's about 10 to 12 now. Which means, you know, yes, we do deny some students, but more often than not Students are denying us because if they get in, they apply to 10, they get admitted to 8, they can only go to 1. Right. And so the average yield rate is, I don't quote me on this, I don't have exact statistics, but it's somewhere between 10 and 15% for the typical institution is the yield rate the number of students who enroll after getting admitted.

Cheryl Broom [00:15:06]:

So, I mean, institutions then have like a reason to go out and get even more applicants because their yield rate is decreasing. Right. But they're not hiring, probably admissions counselors to deal with the increase in applications.

Teege Mattille [00:15:22]:

You got it. Because, because the enrollment numbers aren't increasing. Right. Just the application volume. And I, listen, I get it. Cheryl, I've sent out the press release of, like, more applications than ever before. And you can, those press releases are flying around right now. You go see them on LinkedIn.

Teege Mattille [00:15:37]:

They are rarely, rarely are they linked to a press release in May saying, more students than ever before. We don't often hear that. Right. Because students are applying to more colleges. It's not a big deal to have more applications than ever before.

Cheryl Broom [00:15:51]:

You know, this is so interesting from a marketing perspective. And that's, you know, my, where I'm coming from is marketing loves more applications. I mean, that's what we, that's what we gotta do, is we gotta bring in the applications, and then when enrollment doesn't go up, who do we blame? You know, can't blame marketing. Cause our job is applications.

Teege Mattille [00:16:11]:

Yeah. They blame us. Yeah. What. And the challenge is, and you know this from marketing. Right. Like, it's not just, can you get a lead, can you qualify that lead? And the admissions counselors, that business concept is not intuitive to admissions counselors. It's not something they're likely to do.

Teege Mattille [00:16:29]:

Because if I were, as an admissions director to say, these students over here, whatever group they are, are very unlikely to enroll. Don't spend your time with them. And I, I, I've delivered that message. And what I thought would be met with, oh, thank goodness, this is a more manageable workload was met with skepticism. And why, why are you telling me to ignore those students? Is it because of money? Is it because they're not the right type of students, blah, blah, blah, blah. And it took me a while to realize we need to find a way to show counselors not that you're ignoring students, but that you're respecting them enough when they are telling you, clear as day, they're not interested in you. If you call them, they're going to hang up on you or they're going to swear at you or they're going to say, I never applied to your institution. And if you can get the students, as I said to that counselor, who want someone, need someone to walk alongside them, you'll have a much better experience and you'll feel the impact of your work.

Cheryl Broom [00:17:22]:

Well, I want to ask you about how you can qualify a lead. But before we do that, we're going to take a really quick break and hear from our sponsor.

Cheryl Broom [00:17:30]:

How do higher education decision makers find the right solution when technology evolves at light speed? Well, we usually start with our network. EdTechConnect is the network that's democratizing the higher ed technology conversation. EdTech Connect is free, so anyone with a

edu email address can sign up and list the software and services they use in their role at their school. Once you're in, you can find out what solutions similar schools are doing all over the country. Whether you're looking to find the hot new AI tool or maybe learn options, you have to upgrade your campus search engine or even get to your short list of marketing solution vendors. EdTech Connect is the place to go. So visit edtechconnect.com and set up your free profile to get a pulse for what's happening with higher ed technology today.

Cheryl Broom [00:18:22]:

All right, we're back from our break, and beforehand we were talking about this colleges and universities creating this frictionless application which has made more students apply than ever before, which has not resulted in growing enrollments, but has made our admissions colleagues overwhelmed and burdened. Right? So us marketers are over here cheering that we have great application numbers. And the admission people are like, can you please stop already? Can you please stop? And I know, especially working with our community college clients, we've done some secret shopping experiments. You know, college president has come in and said, gosh, our applications are up 25%, but we're not converting into enrollments. What's going on? Can you shop admissions and see your customer service? And I'd say nine times out of 10, the customer service is horrible. I mean, we had one school where we called 16 times and left 16 voicemails and never got a call back from admissions. And of course, then, you know, the poor admissions people, I actually feel, now that I've talked to you, I actually feel bad, so bad about this. It's not that they don't want to call back.

Cheryl Broom [00:19:35]:

It's that they're dealing with hundreds, if not thousands of students. They're completely overwhelmed, especially during these key enrollment periods. So I think helping them know the outreach they need to do. What makes a student more likely to pick up the phone? Who they need to be calling would be really helpful. So do you have, do you have tools for that or suggestions?

Teege Mattille [00:19:59]:

Oh, indeed we do. But I want to just take a step back to any of my colleagues from the not for profit, especially small liberal arts colleges. That story, Cheryl, that you just said, they didn't call back, that would not have happened at Western Governors, Southern New Hampshire or any of the for profits. They would have been on the phone immediately.

Cheryl Broom [00:20:19]:

They wouldn't have even let it go to voicemail.

Teege Mattille [00:20:22]:

Correct? Correct. Meanwhile, I will be mindful not to give any hint of the institution, but there was a large public institution that I am aware, aware of that, at least for a while. All of their counselors were told to put an out of office away message on their email for the fall. All of the fall. So that nobody expected a reply back. Because whatever, you know what works. Can I just, I just want to talk about the FAFSAs a little bit. This will make sense.

Teege Mattille [00:20:49]:

FAFSA. Almost every admissions director you talk to, Cheryl, they will tell you our students don't enroll without the fafsa. Therefore, the FAFSA is one of the most important indicators, which is backwards. Anyone listening who's thinking that, you're thinking about it wrong. And we can take that offline if you would like, because almost all of your students that submit the FAFSA still don't enroll as well. But whatever, take that aside. Ten years ago and fire. When we would get a FAFSA submitted from a student to our institution, it would not only give us the student data and their financial information and their etc, it would tell us where they listed us on the 10 slots they had to put a college in, whether we were first, second, third, fourth, fifth.

Teege Mattille [00:21:30]:

Students were never told to prioritize us, they just did. And what we found, and this is not unique to us, but at my institution, if we were listed first, we would enroll 60 to 70% of them. If we were listed second, that would be cut roughly in half. We were listed third in half again, and then it just trailed off to virtually nothing. If we came in 8th, 9th, 10th, none of those students are coming. I don't know why they listed us on the fafsa. I don't know why they applied, but they're not interested.

Cheryl Broom [00:21:57]:

Okay, so let's pause right there because I didn't even know you could get that information. Like who gets that information?

Teege Mattille [00:22:03]:

Well, you can't. You can't anymore.

Cheryl Broom [00:22:05]:

Because I was like, this is, this is great. I want this information.

Teege Mattille [00:22:09]:

Yes, well, because a couple colleges now, what most of us did, the vast majority of us used it to identify who needs attention. Some colleges said, oh, if you listed us first, you don't need as much financial aid to come. And so. Which is an inappropriate, unethical use of that information. And the Department of Ed got wind of it and took it away from us.

Cheryl Broom [00:22:29]:

Okay.

Teege Mattille [00:22:29]:

Okay.

Cheryl Broom [00:22:30]:

Oh, that's a bummer.

Teege Mattille [00:22:32]:

Yeah. But I say that because anyone who's been in admissions at least for 10 years or more will remember that time and will know we now don't have it. So now we're back to a position of just saying FAFSA, yes or no, and we're treating all FAFSAs the same. But we know from our own lived experience in this lifetime, in this professional lifetime. But that's not the case. There are many FAFSAs that are not serious, not interested. And the same is true for applications and admits and on campus visits. But because we can't tell the difference, we're just treating all FAFSAs the same.

Teege Mattille [00:23:05]:

We're treating all visits the same, all applicants the same at enrollment. What we do, right, and this is what answers your question, we plug into an institution's CRM, we pull all the data out, and we use artificial intelligence and a machine learning engine to identify the behaviors and signals of students who end up enrolling. Now, the type of. And so then we measure all current applicants against that to drive counselors to the right students or the students, you know, as that counselor said earlier this week, they want someone to walk alongside them. So the things that come up, which was your, Your, your specific question, Cheryl, the things that come up are less about did they do this or that. It's not about did they submit, did they apply, did they visit? The things that come up the most are what is the time space between when they applied and when they visited? Or how long did it take them to get admitted? Or when did they submit the fafsa? Not just did they submit the fafsa. And we always find. Not always. I should say every institution is unique, but we so often find kind of ideal time windows with some institutions.

Teege Mattille [00:24:06]:

I can tell you, if they apply and are not admitted within 72 days, they're not coming, don't cancel them, don't deny them. But if they wanted to come, they, they would, they would have gone through the admissions process, right? Similar things with visit dates, FAFSAs on campus, orientation, etc. So the first trick I would say is don't just measure two events, measure the time window between them. The other thing, and this is not going to be a surprise, but it's the incoming messages from students, not just, are you emailing them? What are they emailing you? Are they writing back? Or can you talk about who they are and what is interesting, what matters to them, and if so, you're probably in a good spot with them.

Cheryl Broom [00:24:47]:

Gosh, it's so fascinating. I love this, and I especially love, like, that you've been able to quantify the time. You know, I don't know of any of my clients who have done the work to see how long in between certain events that's taken students before they've become a student. I know very few of our, of our institutions have done that type of work. So that's a really interesting and a pretty simple way, I would think, for an institution to see, like, you know, to put priority on who they need to get support to.

Teege Mattille [00:25:21]:

There's a simple way to get kind of a thumbnail version of it. It is our data science team that kind of gets drills down to the, like, 72 days. Right. When I was an admissions director, I would

measure ping data, website traffic, right, we call it ping, for our CRM slate. And one of the things I would do to break students in or out of our contact list was, have they been on more than 10 pages in the website in the last 30 days? Okay, now, why did I pick 10? I have no idea, Cheryl. I really have. No. I don't know if 10 was right.

Teege Mattille [00:25:50]:

Maybe it was three, maybe it was 13. Maybe in February it was different than April. And that's the type of thing our data science team gets to and really gets to precision. But admissions leaders, right now, without those tools, this is a place to get started. Add that when you're doing your end of the year or your summer analysis and looking at the power of the FAFSA or the high school visit or whatever. Fine, do all that. Roll these in and see what that starts to tell you. It won't be as precise, it will not be perfect, but it's a really good place to go.

Cheryl Broom [00:26:19]:

So you've given one great example of how you use AI in admissions. Are there other ways that AI has been used to make jobs easier or better?

Teege Mattille [00:26:30]:

Oh, my. My goodness, Cheryl, Yes. Okay, so I mean, my favorite is using AI to empower admissions counselors to connect with the right students. Because the, the work of admissions is so important to me. The morale of our profession really matters. So, you know, that's why I point to that things that have come up a lot currently. There's the basic things like AI is reading transcripts. Now to me that's boring, whatever, great.

Teege Mattille [00:26:55]:

But that saves a lot of time. AI is processing applications fine. We have this weird thing where AI is reviewing essays that are often written by a different AI. And so like that seems weird to me. That's fine. But the other big thing and this, this I have nothing to do with that. But I want to tell you about it because there's a big breakthrough moment. I think there's a company called College Fine that are.

Teege Mattille [00:27:18]:

They're doing some great work. But specifically they have an AI recruiter that communicates with students by email, by text and by phone and operates the admissions process. So students earlier in the funnel, especially at the search phase. This is where I think that is the best case for it. Cheryl Students who are interested in a college or open to it, but not ready to talk to a human. College vine reports that their survey data says they are eager to talk to a. They asked me not to say robot, but to an artificial intelligence recruiter as opposed to human because they don't have to worry about feeling stupid or saying the wrong thing. The results are pretty impressive.

Teege Mattille [00:27:56]:

And anyone listening, if you want to check this out, just search for College Vine AI recruiter. They you can type in your name and the AI recruiter will give you a call and like you can see what the experience is.

Cheryl Broom [00:28:06]:

Like, it's called college Find. Like F, I N D. Like I'm finding something.

Teege Mattille [00:28:10]:

Or vine, like what, what you get before wine. Yeah. V, I, N E. Yeah.

Cheryl Broom [00:28:17]:

Okay, good. I'm going to do that. I mean, I have a 16 year old actually tonight. I have to go to college tonight at his high school. So this conversation has me like fired up right now for college.

Teege Mattille [00:28:31]:

Be so kind to those admissions counselors.

Cheryl Broom [00:28:34]:

I'm so nicer to them now. I never, you know, and I just. You're so passionate and enthusiastic. I just love the energy that you bring to this conversation. I Because you think of your education and you love your faculty. Like you love your career counselor, your guidance counselor. Like the poor admissions people, they don't ever get any love. I mean they're probably not getting thank you letters and connections on True, but.

Teege Mattille [00:29:03]:

We do get essentially an unending supply of free Panera during the fall. So like, there's trade offs, there's trade offs.

Cheryl Broom [00:29:11]:

Well, before we wrap up our conversation, a lot of our podcast listeners are college presidents. So I would love if you had some advice to them, because I'm sure if they have a more happy, more productive admissions department, the entire institution's going to benefit. So what advice could you give to them?

Teege Mattille [00:29:30]:

Yes. Yes. Yes. College presidents or anyone kind of in a leadership role. Your admissions counselors are not motivated by enrollment targets. They're just not. But if you ask your enrollment VP are they motivated by the targets, they will say yes. Because then they will go ask the director, who will say yes, who will ask the counselors, who will say yes.

Teege Mattille [00:29:46]:

But they're not. They're motivated not by hitting numbers, but by the stories, by the lives they're impacting. So a college president, if you want to make a positive impact in the enrollment office, it's not saying, I'll call students. That's not helpful because the enrollment VP is only going to give you the students who are most excited to come already. Okay. If you want to make a positive impact on the enrollment division, after you've done the product stuff and made sure the

programs are fit, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. Just walk through the admissions office and don't ask about numbers. Ask about students.

Teege Mattille [00:30:15]:

Say, tell me about a student you're really excited about. Who am I going to love to meet next year? Show them that you care about. It will energize them. They're motivated by the students they work with. And you can motivate them to hit numbers by showing that you recognize that.

Cheryl Broom [00:30:32]:

I mean, at the end of the day, this is why I got into higher education marketing is I wanted to bring students to college. Like, my college experience was amazing. I loved marketing. I'm like, what a perfect thing to market is this amazing time in your life where you grow so much as a human being. And it's so easy to lose sight of that when you are just getting hounded with numbers and calls and bureaucracy.

Teege Mattille [00:31:03]:

Cheryl, where did you go to college? Where you said it was an amazing experience. Give them a shout.

Cheryl Broom [00:31:07]:

Yes, I went to UC Santa Barbara for my undergrad.

Teege Mattille [00:31:11]:

Sounds great, right?

Cheryl Broom [00:31:12]:

And then I went to Cal State Chico for my graduate.

Teege Mattille [00:31:16]:

Yeah, I almost spent a year at Cal State Chico in an RA exchange, but I ran for student government president and had to stay behind at Whitewater. But maybe we would have ran.

Cheryl Broom [00:31:25]:

Did you win? That's why you stayed behind?

Teege Mattille [00:31:27]:

That's a much longer story. I got the most votes but did not win the roll, so that's a whole other story. I won by eight.

Cheryl Broom [00:31:35]:

Oh, my gosh. Wow. No recount.

Teege Mattille [00:31:38]:

No recount. It's Too long of a story and irrelevant. But I love Cal State Chico too. I was excited. I mean, just. I don't know if it's still true, at least at the time. What I understood a very significant deaf population as well and just a different approach to student services and student body. I was excited to be a part of it, but ultimately didn't get to do it.

Cheryl Broom [00:31:56]:

Yeah, well, you'll have to come out and walk Bidwell park one day and float down the Sacramento river and do all the great things that we did at Chico State.

Teege Mattille [00:32:03]:

It's a deal.

Cheryl Broom [00:32:05]:

I know that you do speaking engagements. You have your book. If people want to connect with you. What's the best way to get in touch with you?

Teege Mattille [00:32:13]:

Oh, that's a great question. Thank you. Yeah, I do speaking engagements. Usually admissions offices, right. Or admissions conferences, but it's pretty basic. Teege.matilrollml.com would be the way to go. Happy to talk about data science work, the admissions counselor, morale, anything else related to admissions, how to help?

Cheryl Broom [00:32:30]:

Well, I really think that your take on morale, it goes way beyond the admissions office. As higher education becomes more and more of a business, I see my clients suffering from the same problems you're bringing up with admission. So I would encourage listeners who want to improve morale on their campus to pick up your book, to listen to your podcast and go to one of your webinars. Been a great conversation.

Teege Mattille [00:32:57]:

Thank you.

Cheryl Broom [00:32:58]:

Well, thank you so much.

Cheryl Broom [00:32:59]:

And that wraps up this episode of the Higher Education Conversations podcast. I'm host and GradComm CEO Cheryl Broom. A big thank you to our sponsor, EdTech Connect. EdTech Connect is free, so anyone with a Edu email address can sign up and list the software and services they use in their role at their school. So visit edtechconnect.com and set up your free profile to get a pulse for what's happening with higher ed technology today. And while you're online, take a few minutes to leave our podcast a five star review. It will help other colleges and universities find us and learn from the great experts we have on the show. That's it for now.

Cheryl Broom [00:33:39]:
Until next time.