

Guide to Crafting Buying Cycle-Based Communications

Crafting communication material suited to prospects' changing needs and expectations as they move through the funnel is a highly effective way of keeping leads engaged. However, most recruiting units—either unaware of the value of this strategy or wary of how work-intensive it seems—fail to adapt content to meet evolving needs and instead use easier-to-make, one-size-fits-all communications across the funnel.

The Guide to Crafting Buying-Cycle Based Communications will provide you with a checklist of content that will better meets leads' desires as they progress through the funnel. It also includes examples of effective communications at each stage in the funnel.

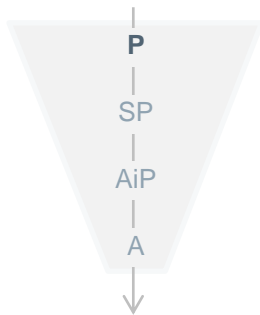
Buying Cycle-Based Lead Nurturing Checklist

Stage in the Funnel	Place in Buying Cycle	Preferred Messaging	Targeted Content Checklist
Prospect: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initiated contact (email, phone call, inquiry form, visit) Was referred by someone else Visited website and explored net price calculator and/or other tools Sent standardized test scores 	Interested	High-level information: risk, reward, logistics	Emails covering: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Roadmap to application <input type="checkbox"/> Financial aid overview <input type="checkbox"/> FAQ <input type="checkbox"/> Testimonials & outcomes
	Researching	Specific program information	Emails covering: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Faculty profiles <input type="checkbox"/> Curriculum <input type="checkbox"/> Student profiles
	Considering		
Stalled Prospect: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stopped responding to email/calls Completed one or some of the above actions but has not applied/enrolled 	Anxious / No longer interested	Soft touch anxiety relief	Emails and conversation talking points covering: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Additional resources to turn to with questions (faculty, students, enrollment counselors) <input type="checkbox"/> Support services for adult/online students <input type="checkbox"/> Testimonials & outcomes
Application in Progress: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Started an application 	Anxious	Reassurance & reminders	Emails, talking points for conversations & live chats covering: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Outcomes <input type="checkbox"/> Where to go with Qs <input type="checkbox"/> Deadlines
Applied / Admitted: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed application Admitted 			Emails, talking points for conversations & events covering: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Outcomes <input type="checkbox"/> Student support services
Enrolled			

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Sample Communications

In the following section, we will provide you with sample communications inspired by our extensive secret shopping of COE institutions. In addition to meeting the basic parameters of effective email protocol (reasonable length, strong organization, clear writing), note that they also speak to buying-cycle-centric needs and expectations. We provide a variety of examples primarily to highlight the critical features in each that you should consider including in your own versions. Whether you choose to adapt versions of any of the samples to include in your own communication plans depends on a number of factors including whether you have the kinds of materials referenced in the emails (e.g., brochures, webinars of student success topics, etc.), what types of students your program tends to cater to (e.g., mid-career professionals looking for an additional credentials, career transitioners, etc.), and the other components of your communication plan. Mostly likely, the best plan of action is to learn from the critical features called out in these examples and mix and match those features to improve your currently-existing emails.



Critical Features:

- ✓ Provides links to basic institutional and program reputation-bolstering information
- ✓ Uses compelling numbers to further develop impression
- ✓ Introduces the enrollment advisor from whom all future emails will come and encourages personal contact with her
- ✓ Includes a link to the application for those who are ready to jump straight to that step

Delilah, Information about Example U's Ed.S. in Educational Technology

Dear Delilah,

Thank you for contacting us about our [Education Specialist \(Ed.S.\)](#) program.

More than 104,000 working professionals like you have chosen Example University as an educational partner. To learn why Example U has been a leader in distance learning for more than 40 years, [download our Gateway brochure](#).

This brochure explains the Example U difference—our social change mission, our expert faculty, our student-focused online learning environment, and more. You'll learn about our programs and our 24/7 student support services, and you'll find links to videos that describe the Example U student experience and our graduates' accomplishments.

After you've reviewed the brochure, please contact me with any questions. As your enrollment advisor, I'm available to help you choose the right program or explore your funding options.

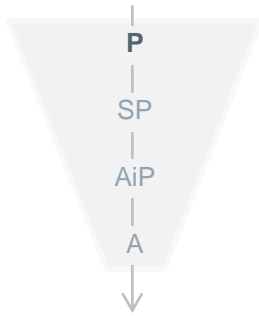
I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Amelia Bedelia
 Enrollment Advisor
 Example University
 1-XXX-XXX-XXXX, ext. XXXXX
ameliabedelia@exampleu.edu

P.S. If you are ready to start your application, visit ExampleUniversity.edu/apply

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Critical Features:

- ✓ Encourages a unique way of engaging with the institution
- ✓ Uses “students-like-you” language
- ✓ Offers opportunity for phone contact

Are you ready to move forward? Example University is here to help.

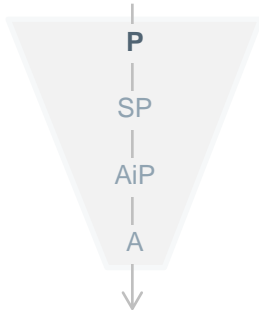
Dear Delilah,

Your personal enrollment advisor can help you find a degree program that best meets your educational and professional goals. Please take a moment to **share your goal with us**. You can also indicate if you’re ready to discuss your goal and pathway to achieving it with Example University.

In speaking with prospective students like you, we’ve learned that many are motivated by the desire to move ahead in their careers, or even change careers, while others are seeking to fulfill a lifelong goal. I look forward to learning your motivating goal.

Sincerely,

Amelia Bedelia
 Enrollment Advisor
 Example University
 1-XXX-XXX-XXXX, ext. XXXXX
ameliabedelia@exampleu.edu



Critical Features:

- ✓ Uses “prospects like you” language
- ✓ Incorporates quick bullets of easily shared information (e.g., tuition) into the email itself
- ✓ Provides quick links to more complex, highly sought-after information

Congratulations on taking the first step!

Dear Delilah,

Thank you for your interest in Example University’s online master’s of social work.

If you are ready to apply, complete Example University’s graduate school [application](#) online.

Here is some important information most future students in your position request:

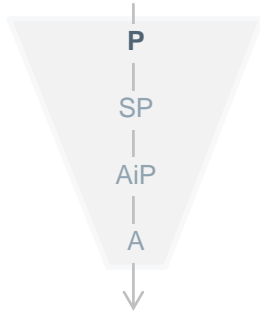
- [Entrance requirements for your program](#)
- [Financial aid information for graduate students](#)
- [Academic calendar with start dates](#)
- More information about the [GRE](#)
- [Tuition](#) (\$660/credit hour. Active-duty military tuition rate: \$250 per credit hour)
- [Payment options](#)

Please let me know if you have any questions. Thank you again for considering Example U!

Sincerely,

Amelia Bedelia
 Enrollment Advisor
 Example University
 1-XXX-XXX-XXXX, ext. XXXXX
ameliabedelia@exampleu.edu

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Critical Features:

- ✓ Offers easy-to-access and meaningful connection with alumni

See what other students did with their certificate in clinical trials management!

Dear Delilah,

I know you're considering returning to school and are interested in clinical trials management. To help you understand what our alumni have gone on to do with their certificate in clinical trials management, I encourage you to check out these [alumni profiles](#).

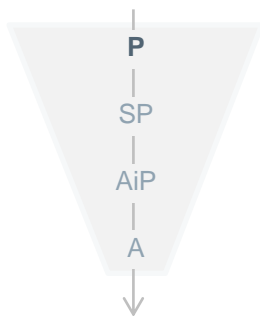
If you're interested in learning more, I would be happy to connect you to an alumnus mentor who can talk to you in more detail about his or her experience in the program and getting a job after.

Please be in touch!

Sincerely,

Amelia Bedelia
Enrollment Advisor
Example University
1-XXX-XXX-XXXX, ext. XXXXX
ameliabedelia@exampleu.edu

P.S. If you are ready to start your application, visit [ExampleUniversity.edu](#)



Critical Features:

- ✓ Offers easy-to-access and meaningful connection with faculty

Meet your future professors!

Dear Delilah,

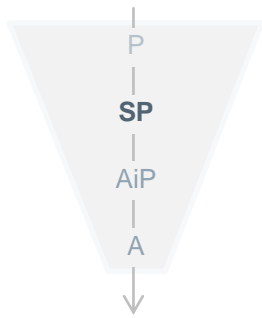
As you consider the Master's in Civil Engineering offered here at Example U, I thought it would be helpful to introduce you to some of the wonderful faculty members teaching in that program. Check out these [faculty profiles](#) and consider [tuning in](#) for our Hot Topic webinar series. Next week, Professor Xavier, will discuss high performance green buildings.

As always, I am here and happy to answer questions.

Sincerely,

Amelia Bedelia
Enrollment Advisor
Example University
1-XXX-XXX-XXXX, ext. XXXXX
ameliabedelia@exampleu.edu

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Critical Features:

- ✓ Provides a gentle reminder that application remains unfinished
- ✓ Underscores urgency by providing dates
- ✓ Offers high-touch assistance with the application

Reminder to finish application

Dear Delilah,

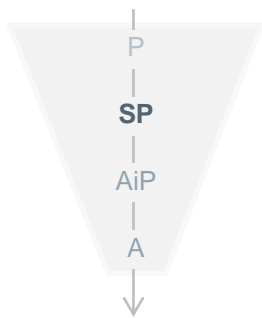
In the past, you expressed interest in Example University's M.S. in Education program. I want you to know that you can begin classes as soon as October 29, 2012, but you'll need to [complete your online application](#) immediately.

One of the many advantages of Example U is that we offer busy professionals like you the opportunity to begin your program at various times during the year. So, please take this next opportunity **to move forward with your educational and professional goals.**

I'm here to help. Contact me by phone at 1-XXX-XXX-XXXX, ext. XXXXX or by email at ameliabedelia@examplu.edu, and **I can personally assist you** in completing the application process.

Sincerely,

Amelia Bedelia
 Enrollment Advisor
 Example University
 1-XXX-XXX-XXXX, ext. XXXXX
ameliabedelia@exampleu.edu



Critical Features:

- ✓ Provides an at-a-glance summary of some of the most compelling learning outcomes
- ✓ Infuses learning outcomes with employability language

What is in it for you?

Dear Delilah,

Thank you for your interest in Example U's online M.A. in public relations.

Pursuing this master's degree can provide:

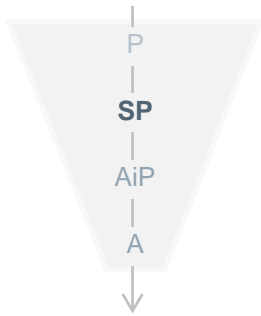
- Managerial skills in communication sought after by [these employers](#)
- Advanced knowledge in social media management, crisis communications, and strategic campaigns
- Ability to evaluate the structure, content and consequences of both traditional and emerging digital media in Public Relations

To learn more about these and the [rest of the program's learning outcomes](#), be in touch and I will happily connect you to a current student, alumnus, or faculty member.

Sincerely,

Amelia Bedelia
 Enrollment Advisor
 Example University
 1-XXX-XXX-XXXX, ext. XXXXX
ameliabedelia@exampleu.edu

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Critical Features:

- ✓ Includes a very soft sell for those prospects that are dissuaded by heavy marketing messages
- ✓ Empathizes with prospects
- ✓ Provides a highly accessible and valuable resource
- ✓ Introduces professors and underscores their professional credentials
- ✓ Summarizes the benefits of taking advantage of the resource
- ✓ Includes a share-with-a-friend encouragement

Join us to learn powerful strategies for managing stress

Dear Delilah,

With the demands of work, school, family, and other commitments, it's not uncommon to experience some level of stress. In fact, many consider it a normal part of everyday life. Left unchecked, however, ongoing stress can quickly give rise to more serious problems – stealing from our health, happiness, and success.

Learn how to recognize, manage, and cope with stress – and bring balance back into your life – at the Example University webinar, “Stress: The Insidious Leveler of Good Unsuspecting People,” held virtually on December 11, at noon Eastern time.

Join us as presenters Dr. Milton Bradley, program director for the B.S. in Communication, M.S. in Leadership, and M.S. in Human Resources programs and Dr. Samuel Samuelson, contributing faculty member for Example U's College of Health Sciences, discuss powerful strategies for managing stress. You will learn to:

- Identify symptoms of stress
- Analyze your stress level and dangers
- Assess causes of stress
- Examine a variety of stress management techniques
- Develop a stress management action plan

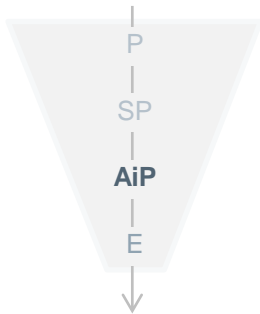
This webinar is free to attend. Register today!

Sincerely,

Amelia Bedelia
Enrollment Advisor
Example University
1-XXX-XXX-XXXX, ext. XXXXX
ameliabedelia@exampleu.edu

P.S. Do you know a friend or colleague who might be interested in earning their degree at Example U? Please pass along this invitation.

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Critical Features:

- ✓ Empathizes with prospect
- ✓ States the application deadline
- ✓ Offers high-touch assistance with the application

Your application is almost complete!

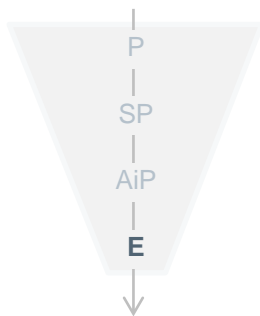
Dear Delilah,

You're almost there! I noticed that you have started to complete your application but is missing a few pieces. If you are running into difficulty and would like some guidance with completing the application, please be in touch. I know how difficult those last few steps can be.

To give you a heads up, applications for the Fall term are due EXAMPLE DATE.

Sincerely,

Amelia Bedelia
Enrollment Advisor
Example University
1-XXX-XXX-XXXX, ext. XXXXX
ameliabedelia@exampleu.edu



Critical Features:

- ✓ Provides on-the-fence admitted students (or applicants) with compelling reasons to take the last step
- ✓ Offers connection to other non-marketing resources

Congratulations on being admitted!

Dear Delilah,

I am happy to extend a warm welcome from Example U's M.S. in Leadership program!

In case you're on the fence and/or deciding between multiple programs, here is some food for thought:

- Alumni from the M.S. in Leadership have gone on to be advanced practice nurses and nursing executives. Read more about alumni outcomes here.
- Our career resources, designed with adult students' need in mind, will help you turn your new educational credential into professional accomplishment.

If you're still in doubt and have some questions, please be in touch. If I can't answer them myself, I'll find the student, alumnus, or faculty member who can.

Sincerely,

Amelia Bedelia
Enrollment Advisor
Example University
1-XXX-XXX-XXXX, ext. XXXXX
ameliabedelia@exampleu.edu