THE CAMP TOUR
A tour is an important step in the sale of your camp to a prospective family or donor. For perspective campers, this is a $25,000 sale ($6,700/year for 3.8 years – or more, plus referrals, etc.) so you should commit to planning and executing a professional tour as you would to any $25,000 sale. For past or prospective donors, the tour may be even more rewarding. You should never “wing it” with tours that are unrehearsed or tour guides who are unprepared. If you don’t have a recruitment specialist giving the tours to prospective families, or a development specialist to tour a donor, or even if you do, train the tour guides and consider the following items as part of the camp tour process:

1. Confirm the tour with your guests by sending a note that you’re looking forward to their visit
   a. Tour schedule posted in office (when, where from) and guides
   b. Determine that they will be prepared to walk the camp – or if they prefer or require golf cart assistance
   c. When they arrive at camp, greet them like you knew they were coming and are thrilled to see them.

2. A limited number of tour guides should be selected and trained in advance
   a. It need not be the camp director, but not a 16 year old either (Should be Sr. staff or above)
   b. The tour guide should be prepared for the tour:
      - If a recruitment tour, who is the family, where are they from, how old is the camper
      - If a donor cultivation tour, prepare to fully engage the visitor
      - If a solicitation tour, what is the solicitation for? Annual, Capital, Legacy or combination? How much is the ask to be for?
   c. Script written out and practiced by the tour guides
      - Identify in advance the three most important points about your camp you want this visitor to take with them when they leave
      - Includes description of the camp facilities
      - Includes discussion about “typical camp day” – especially drop-off or day 1
• Be prepared to answer questions or get answers before they leave
• Consider incentivizing the guides (competition for enrollments)

a. Focus on the area of the camp the camper is most interested in
   • Talk activities and instruction directly to the camper
   • Talk facilities and daily schedule to the parents

b. Guides should speak in the first person, and speak about what “moves” him/her about camp

c. To the extent possible, avoid tours on days you know camp will be empty

d. Given a choice, use a guide from the same town (or locale) as touring family

1. Tour contents:

   a. Don’t let your guests wander the camp by themselves. Be on the lookout for their arrival. Your camp security is on display.

   b. Make sure the tour route is pre-set and practiced
      • Map out a five to eight stop tour of the camp (visitors can only remember a limited number of spots). Prepare the key points to be stated at each stop (daily schedule, food service, medical services, Friday night services, etc.)
      • Make sure to include cabins, infirmary, dining hall, waterfront
      • There should be an alternate tour route for rainy days (provide umbrellas)

   c. One (or more) bunks should be pre-selected for showing to the tour
      • Bunks for an entire week or one day of the week
      • Bunks are particularly “cleaned up”; campers’ towels hanging on the lines or on the porches are OK, garbage or clothes on the floor or ground are not OK

   d. For VIP tours, arrange for key people to be met at each stop

   e. Mid-tour pause for snack / etc. (especially for tours longer than 45 min or in hot weather)

   f. Avoid counselor lounge – families of campers don’t care and it sends a mixed message
a. A bonus is for the tour group to “run into” or seek out campers from same town / school as prospective campers or donors
   • Set up at morning meal – campers told whose coming from what area
   • Have these campers join the tour for 5-10 minutes to help “sell” the family

1. Activities to visit are pre-determined
   a. Kids are involved, not sitting around
   b. Include an indoor as well as an outdoor activity
   c. MUST include the waterfront

2. Prospective camper given camp paraphernalia (get low-cost giveaway to hand out) as well as information about the camp – don’t let them leave empty handed.

3. Make sure families know of any early sign-up cost incentives before they leave (without overtly applying pressure
   a. Discounts if they register before a given date
   b. One Happy Camper first time incentives (including PJ Goes to Camp)

4. Follow-up contact within 48 hours (24 hours preferred)
   a. Tour guides should submit notes about the tour – what was said, areas of interest and areas of concern.
   b. E-mail thank you for coming – written note for solicitation visits: Be sure to answer any questions brought up on the tour or address concerns noted by the tour guide
   c. Phone call – any other questions and ask for feedback about the tour
   d. Ideal call to prospective camper families is from an ambassador parent in their town (offer incentives)
   e. Follow-up again later in summer (before decision is made) with any promotional details