

# Independent Counselors - Choosing the One that's Right for You

As with any professional advisor, you want to determine how an Independent Counselor's services will meet your college and career planning needs. Destination College & Beyond recommends that you conduct an interview, either in-person or by telephone, with any prospective Independent Counselor you may consider hiring. You want to know...

- Academic degrees, certifications or credentials that support the type of planning you seek...
- Other work and life experiences that support the ability to provide the planning services you want...
- Nature and depth of professional experience...
- Length of time providing college and career planning services...
- Active involvement in professionally recognized associations or organizations including participation in trainings, conferences, institutes, seminars, workshops and campus visits that strengthen the ability to provide planning services...
- Demonstrated commitment to maintaining the professional skills and knowledge necessary to properly serve your needs...
- Adherence to recognized professional Code of Ethics...
- Assurance that the services are provided in compliance with laws and regulations regarding students' rights to privacy and confidentiality...
- Awareness that the Independent Counselor cannot guarantee college admission or the awarding of any financial aid including scholarships...
- Assurance that college applications are the responsibility of the student, essays are the student's own work, financial aid forms are completed by the family and all college admissions/application decisions rest with the student and family...
- Availability of referrals and/or written client testimonials...
- Written agreements that outline services, associated fee structures, policies and provisions.

NOTE: The Independent Counselor should not accept any reward, service, or compensation from any college, university, agency, or organization for the placement, referral, or recruitment of students. The Independent Counselor's responsibility and focus is in behalf of students and families.

In the end, can you see yourself working with the Independent Counselor?