

# Shyness and College Admissions

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# Shy College Applicants

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- How to detect shyness
  - » Evaluation concern, inhibition
- Possible interference with college performance
- Strengths and vulnerabilities

# Goals for Selection

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- Discriminate between temporary inhibition and lack of ability.
- Attend to specifics of accomplishments, goal pursuit. Students may be less self-enhancing.
- Encourage students to talk or write about strengths, goals, values.

# How to Predict Achievement?

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- 50% to 60% of students at Stanford see shyness as a problem sometimes.
- Shyness may interfere with participation, making friends, assertion.
- Shy individuals are often strong students academically. Studious and disciplined.
- Underestimate their own performance. Often perform when necessary.

# Competitive Environments and Shyness

- Competitive environments breed shyness. Encouragement and collaboration reduce it.
- Shyness may be situational and temporary. Confused with lack of motivation.
- Often shy people are highly productive when they find their niches.
- Clubs help, as do acting classes, having a mentor, and volunteering.

# Available Options

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- Screen for disabling shyness?  
Recommend getting help before school?
- Anticipate problems. Review strategies and available resources such as Counseling and Psychological Services.
- Discuss benefits of active participation in college life, costs of inhibition.
- Compare aspirations and goals of student with participation.

# Recommendations

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- Collaborate with other staff in helping shy students connect with others during orientation. Provide education and skills training, if necessary.
- “Interact” is a student-led resource for interpersonal interaction.

# Potential Research

- Follow those who appear shy initially to see if performance exceeds expectation.
  - » Assess through self-report and behavioral observation.
- Identify and describe characteristics of shy students who succeed in spite of shyness. Shy “hustlers” persist.