

Concepts Every Potential College Swimmer (and Parent) Should Understand

by Ryan Woodruff

1. **There is an opportunity out there that is right for you.** If you have been swimming for our club, then no matter your level there is a fit for you swimming-wise, and probably academically and financially too. You may have to work hard to find that place, but it exists.
2. **A scholarship offer is not a measure of how much a coach or school values you as a potential member of the team.** It is much more complicated than that.
3. **Coaches who are doing their due diligence will look at your social media.** Before the recruiting process begins, be sure that your social media puts forth the image that represents who you are.
4. **Unless you are a top national recruit, don't expect coaches to come begging you to come to their school.** This process will require some initiative on your part.
5. **Unless you have money to burn, you probably don't need a paid recruiting service.**
6. **Understand your true negotiating power or lack of it.**
7. **Know the rules and understand the dates and deadlines around applications, etc.**
8. **Coaches are interested in you based on your current best times, your academic profile, and your character. Your 'potential' is a weak selling point.**
9. **Never make a decision during or immediately after your first recruiting visit.** Make sure you have at least two options to weigh against each other and avoid making a hasty choice.
10. **If you are turning down a school, tell them politely.** Never burn a bridge or "ghost" someone.
11. **Realize that the coach who recruits you may not be there for your four years.** There have been 66 Division I head coaching changes in the past 3 years (according to @collegeswimmingnews). If you are a sophomore preparing to be recruited, that means a roughly 1 in 4 chance of your head coach leaving before you graduate. There is even more turnover in the assistant coaching ranks. Choose a school, not just a swim team or a particular coach.