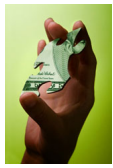


# Financial Aid Consultant

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It's every parents dream to give their children the best education possible. Although most parents manage to self finance primary and secondary education, tertiary education is often out of reach. A financial aid consultant helps families to seek out and apply for financial aid. Consultants help their clients to finance all levels of education, with the majority specializing in tertiary education. If you have a knack for finance and great people skills, this rewarding work at home business could be for you.

## Before The Start-Up, Let's Not Get Ahead Of Ourselves

You won't need any formal qualifications to get started; however related experience at tertiary institutions is very helpful. To offer the best possible service to your clients you'll need to know the ins and outs of university admissions and finance options, if you have no experience in the field you might consider first taking a job in the admissions office of your local college or university. Finally, you'll need great people skills, its essential that you can relate well to both college applications and their parents.

## The Start-Up

To get started you'll need a work space, desk, computer, internet connection (important for online research), printer, fax and copier, business cards, letterheads and an invoice template. Depending on where you choose to meet with your clients you might also need a conference table to hold meetings at.

Clients will rely on you not only to guide them through the various financial aid options, but also to assist them in filing paper work. Keeping your knowledge up to date is an important part of your job as financial aid is a frequently changing industry.

Do research on the local competition before deciding on your price structure. On average consultants charge a flat rate of between \$150 and \$500 (USD) depending on the length and complexity of the job.

## Making It Work

Remember that the success of your business largely rests on the way you make people feel. They could choose to research financial aid themselves but instead have chosen to enlist your services. Dress professionally but keep your tone light hearted. Getting into debt is usually a stressful time for most families, especially since their children's future hangs in the balance. Finally offer some value added information on scholarships of all sorts that might apply to the college applicant you are advising.

## Marketing

Market your services by building a business network in your area, network with professionals both in the education and finance industries. Community organizations related to education and your local chamber of commerce are great places to meet people.

Advertise your services in local newspaper classifieds, direct mailers, and in education publications. Expand your public profile by offering free seminars or talks on financing education. Finally consider getting a simple website developed. A one to four page site is best, as it is easy to update and not too costly. Drive traffic to your website using a Pay Per Click (PPC) service like Google Adwords. If you are going to run your own PPC campaign we recommend Perry Marshall's [The Definitive Guide to Google Adwords](#) to get started.

## **Don't Forget**

Don't forget to account for hidden expenses such as mileage, maintenance on your car, internet fees, association dues and any subscriptions you might have to industry publications. Keeping tabs on even the smallest of expenses will help you to know how profitable your business really is.