

5. Under-valuing an assistant coach

In very high profile athletic programs, it is not uncommon for the assistant coach or coaches to be responsible for recruiting. While the head coach makes the final decisions, he/she often depends on assistants to separate realistic prospects from those who have no chance. Sometimes a head coach does not get involved in talking to prospective recruits until the final stages of the recruiting process. It is a major mistake for players, parents or others to pass over the assistant coach and insist on dealing with the head coach. You should realize that when there are close decisions as to whom to make offers, the assistant coach's input is often the deciding factor.

6. Talking about money too soon

A player should wait until he/she is sure a coach has a sincere interest before bringing up the subject of scholarship money. It is very embarrassing for both sides if a player or parent is asking how much money is going to be available at the same time a coach is trying to diplomatically communicate that there is no opening on the team. Keep in mind that not everyone coming into a program is going to be offered money. In many cases, only the blue chip players are offered significant athletic scholarships.

7. An over-confident demeanor

There is a fine line between communicating one's abilities and outright bragging. Coaches like self-assured, confident athletes but still expect them to be respectful and humble. Coaches do not take kindly to players who give them the impression that they are doing the coach a favor by considering his/her school. A player is always better off if he/she remembers the old saying "Show, don't tell!"

Prospective collegiate athletes should try to arrange for coaches at colleges that interest them to evaluate their performance one or more times. The more highly rated the sports program, the more times a coach will want to evaluate. Parents and club/high school coaches should remain in the background during the evaluation process. The more pressure that parents or others put on the college coach, the more likely the coach will begin to look for fault in the player's performance.

8. Waiting to be contacted

When contacted by a prospective recruit, most coaches will reply with a form letter and a profile sheet. The profile sheet should be returned promptly. A player should continue to send the coaches additions to he/her profile and updates on sport schedules. There are a variety of rules governing when a coach can call a player but there is no rule against a player calling a coach. Players should be reasonable about the calls they make. It won't help their cause to call a coach on a daily basis. If after repeated attempts, a player fails to get a response, he/she should read between the lines...the coach is *not* interested!

9. Limiting your options

Keep in mind that "a bird in hand is worth two in the bush." Players should seriously evaluate the programs of all the coaches who show an interest in them. If a school is definitely not a good match, the player should thank the coach for the interest and tell him/her the truth. On the other hand, if a player discourages coaches who are genuinely interested simply because they aren't his/her first choice, then that player may end up with no place to play in college.