# SIMPLER for Higher Education

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## Definition
- **Social Influence**: Provides signals about appropriate behavior within a group and uses how people perceive themselves in relation to others to encourage action.
- **Implementation Prompt**: Helps people get from intention to action by inviting them to commit to achieving their goals and by breaking an action down into steps.
- **Making Deadlines**: Frames a future action as important and urgent, discouraging the tendency to rank today’s needs over tomorrow’s needs.
- **Personalization**: Encourages behavior by offering personal assistance or by using information known about a person’s situation to offer targeted help.
- **Loss Aversion**: Frames an outcome as a potential loss to be avoided, capitalizing on people’s preference for avoiding losses over acquiring gains.
- **Ease**: Reduces the effort needed to complete an action by setting defaults, making processes more streamlined, and removing hassles.
- **Reminder**: Encourages the completion of an action by providing a prompt, often in the form of a text message, email, or postcard.

## Example
- **Summer Enrollment**
  Testimonials from students who took summer courses were used to challenge norms about the types of students who attend such courses. A communications campaign with these testimonials contributed to a 5.5 percentage point increase in summer enrollment.

- **Summer Enrollment**
  That same communications campaign mapped out steps students needed to take to enroll in summer courses and included a planning tool at the bottom of a letter they received. The tool had a small calendar that read “check off a day next week when you will register for class.”

- **Work-Study Jobs**
  Sending redesigned emails that incorporated principles of behavioral science—including clearly stating deadlines—increased the number of applicants to a campus work-study program by 28 percentage points.

- **College Enrollment**
  An intervention provided peer mentors and sent 10 personalized text message reminders to high school graduates and their parents that could connect them to one-on-one support. It increased college enrollment among students who had less access to college-planning support.

- **Workshops**
  A topic in a workshop series for struggling students framed the costs of classes as a potential loss to students. The workshops and other messages reduced withdrawals by 10 percent.

- **Submitting FAFSA**
  The application process for college financial aid was streamlined by having tax preparers at H&R Block help young people’s families complete and submit the FAFSA. The change made students more likely to apply for aid, receive aid, and attend college.

- **Academic Planning**
  Community college students were sent a series of 11 reminders to attend a group workshop or one-on-one counseling session and make an academic plan. The reminders increased academic plan completion rates by over 20 percentage points.