



Office of Financial Aid

Top 10 Tips to a WINNING Scholarship Application

1. **Be Brag worthy!** The best scholarship essays start with the best subject...you! Find your passion and get involved! Make sure you highlight your strengths, skills, and involvement in your essay and on your resume. Shine as bright as you can!
2. **Show instead of Tell.** Don't just tell the scholarship reader that you are involved, show them! Give them specific examples of times that show off your work ethic and dedication. Need help on wording? Look at the list of action words below to help get your reader's attention.
3. **Answer the question.** After you write your essay or letter, reread the question. Did you fully answer what the application is asking? If not, go back and tweak your answer.
4. **Get a Stellar Recommendation.** Don't just ask a professor to rattle off what is already on your resume. Ask a professor, coach, or mentor for a recommendation if they know you well. You want the scholarship reader to have the inside scoop on who are. Make sure the person giving you a recommendation can provide that!
5. **Be proactive.** Answer any and all "optional" questions. This shows that you are willing to take some extra time on the application and that you're not rushing through it. What does that mean? That you're serious about the money you are asking for.
6. **Be professional.** Scholarship donors are giving you a lot of money. Don't waste their time by submitting an essay that is unprofessional. Would u give 1,000 buck\$ 2 some1 that txt'd like this? No way.
7. **Be professional.** Do you think a scholarship committee is going to give their money to hotmama123@haveaprofessionalemail.com? I don't think so! Also try to Google yourself. Make sure you're not blindsided by those pictures of spring break last year that you didn't know were online.
8. **Be professional.** (Have you got the hint yet?) Don't send your application after it was used as your placemat or coaster for your morning coffee. Stains scream "I don't take this very seriously!" Make sure to submit a clean and easy to read application. Use a neutral font that is easy to read. Pretty script fonts are hard to read. Do you know what happens to essays that are hard to read? They don't get read.
9. **Proofread, proofread, proofread!** Check for spelling errors and that everything makes sense grammatically. Read it out loud to yourself. If you stumble over something, you are more likely to reword it to make it clearer. Have someone else proofread it. Proofread it again. Wondering what to do next? Proofread it again! Nothing will toss your application out quicker than an unpolished essay.
10. **Send the complete package.** Make sure all required materials are sent in one package. Make a checklist for yourself on the back the envelope you are using to submit your application. Did I include the application form? Is the form complete? Do I have my perfectly polished essay? Resume? Transcript? Stellar Recommendation letter? Check and double check to make sure it is all there.