Tips for Winning Scholarship Applications

Before you submit your scholarship application, review these tips:

Tip #1: Apply only if you are eligible
Read all the scholarship requirements and directions carefully. Make sure you are eligible before you complete and submit your application.

Tip #2: Complete the application answering all questions
If a question doesn't apply, note that on the application. Don't just leave an area blank. Supply all additional supporting required documents such as academic transcripts, letters of recommendation, and required essay responses.

Tip #3: Follow directions
Provide everything that's required.

Tip #4: Neatness counts
Prepare a neat, legible, and presentable application. Make a few photocopies of all the forms before you complete the form. Use the copies as working drafts as you develop your application packet.

Tip #5: Write an essay that makes a strong impression
The key to writing a strong essay is to be personal and specific. Include concrete details to make your experience come alive: the who, what, where, and when of your topic. The simplest experience can be monumental, if you present honestly how you were affected.

Tip #6: Make sure your essay is grammatically correct
Don't forget to run spell check and find grammatical errors. Also, read your application essay out loud to make sure it reads well and makes sense. Utilize the campus Writing Center to help your fine tune these details before submitting the application.

Tip #7: Watch all deadlines
To help keep yourself on track, impose your own deadlines that are at least two weeks prior to the official deadline. Use the buffer time to make sure everything is ready on time in case of computer or printer failures. Track deadlines on your calendar and submit the application by the deadline or earlier.

Tip #8: Make sure your application gets where it needs to go
Put your name (or student ID number if applicable) on all pages of the application. Part of your application may get lost so mark pages clearly so they are identified.

Tip #9: Save everything
Before submitting a scholarship application, make a copy of the entire packet. This may come in handy should your application be lost in the mail or to use for another scholarship application.

Tip #10: Give it a final "once over" review so your application is flawless
Proofread the entire application carefully. Ask a friend, teacher, parents, a colleague or staff member at the Writing Center to proofread it as well.

Tip #11: Ask for help if you need it
If you have problems with the application, don't hesitate to call the funding organization or contact the agency for questions.

Tip #12: Sign and date your application!