

How to Get In After You Apply

Inside tips and recommendations from admissions officers

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No one knows better the inside tricks for maximizing your chances of getting into college—even after you've submitted your applications—than admissions officers themselves. Here is some advice from a handful of admissions experts on how to navigate the less clear-cut aspects of the application process.

Todd Coleman, assistant vice president for admissions at Wartburg College, Waverly, Iowa

Follow up with your high school to make sure its information—transcripts, recommendations, etc.—was sent. With the proliferation of online applications, it has become increasingly important for students to take more initiative in requesting that high school transcripts be sent immediately.

Greg Eichhorn, dean of admission at Albright College, Reading, Pa.

A student needs to market him or herself to the respective institution. Schedule a visit and an interview. Be in contact with the admission's representative assigned to you (usually based on where you live). If an applicant is really interested in the school and not a particular program, she can improve her chances by considering a program that may have lower enrollments.

Scott Friedhoff, vice president for enrollment and communications at Allegheny College, Meadville, Pa.

I would suggest a few things: Don't waste people's time; be polite and kind; ask meaningful questions; be sincere; and recognize distinctive features or attributes of your colleges of interest.

David Kogler, associate director of admissions at Gustavus Adolphus College, St. Peter, Minn.

Having contact with an admission counselor never hurts. I can only think of a few people who called or E-mailed me too many times during the admission process—and most of those people were parents.

Bob Lay, dean for enrollment management at Boston College

Get all of those pesky financial aid forms into colleges. Engage your parents in addressing the financial "what ifs." We suggest that students use this time to prepare to make the best decision once the acceptance decisions arrive. Too many families wait until after admission decisions are received before completing their application for financial aid.

[\[How to Apply for Financial Aid in 2010\]](#) – Jones: Hey, click this. It has good tips!

Jacqueline Murphy, director of admission at St. Michael's College, Colchester, Vt.

How did you do in your first quarter? Did a case of H1N1 keep you out of class and impact your usually stellar GPA? Explain that in a well written, nonwhiny letter—just the facts.

Greg Roberts, dean of admissions at the University of Virginia, Charlottesville

I'm not sure there is much they can do. Continue to concentrate on your studies, and perform well in the classroom. It's easier to discuss what you shouldn't do: send mountains of unessential supplemental information, or E-mail or continually contact the admission representative during the time when they are reading applications 60 hours per week.

J. Leon Washington, dean of admissions and financial aid at Lehigh University, Bethlehem, Pa.

I recommend the applicant make a list of three to five well-refined questions for which he wants answers and E-mail them to his regional admissions person, or phone them if it is more convenient, for discussion and dialogue.