

Guidelines for Creating a Competitive Application

The purpose of this document is to deliver useful feedback to students based on common patterns found in HCID applications. The notes here will be based on both the detrimental and beneficial qualities seen in applications, with the hope of providing useful and pertinent feedback that students can use to inform future applications submitted throughout their lives, including those for college admission and jobs.

Common mistakes and how to avoid them:

1. Forgetting the purpose of the application
 - a. Always remember that your answer to a prompt such as an essay question is your opportunity to demonstrate your eligibility for the program/ job. Think of any answer to an open ended question as *space in which you can make a case for yourself*. Do this while answering the question. Everything on your application should be focused on *qualifying you for the program*
 - b. Ex) Many students forget to describe the influence of the “person of influence”. Instead, they tell the story of the person... i.e. telling the story of their grandmother... this is important background information but *should not be the focus of the essay!!!!* The point is to tell us how you have been influenced by them, and in doing so, to make a case for your eligibility and value to the program.
 - c. Re-read the prompt. Then re-read it again. And again. And again. i.e., Prompt says “Tell us about a person of influence and describe that influence”- key phrase is *describe that influence!!!*
2. Not reading/ answering the prompt
 - a. Prompt says “Why are you interested in a career in healthcare?” An answer that states “I have always been interested in a health career” completely and entirely fails to answer the prompt, and shows a lack of awareness, either regarding careful attention to what the prompt was asking, or regarding a general lack of deep thought on the subject.
3. Not proof reading your answer
 - a. Proof read! This shows so much lack of interest and lack of attention to detail. You only have a small window of opportunity on a written application to show your character... use every bit of it! Proof read!
4. Lack of effort/ failure to indicate high level of interest/ not using complete sentences
 - a. Use complete sentences and show interest. Ask yourself “do I come off as someone who *really really, really* wants to do this program?”
5. Unoriginal topic/ failure to “set yourself apart”
 - a. Rack your brain for original topics! Think about what truly sets you apart and makes you *stand out*
 - b. If you are picking a topic that is likely to be “common” make sure you can make it extremely high quality and specific to *you* i.e. writing about an ACL tear... there is no reason why this is a *bad* topic, but it’s good to understand that it is a *common* topic and try to set your story apart