Tips for Writing Successful Scholarship Applications

Writing an excellent scholarship application takes time and effort. If you're feeling overwhelmed, trying using these tips to give you guidance.

✓ **Give yourself enough time.** Applications have deadlines and those deadlines are usually firm, so starting your application a half hour or even a half day before the deadline is a bad idea. Sometimes you encounter technological glitches or unexpectedly need time to gather specific information; by starting your application well before the deadline, you give yourself time to deal with any obstacles that might arise.

✓ **If references are required,** ask them as soon as possible and make sure they know when the deadline is. Ask them for confirmation once they have submitted the reference form. It is your responsibility to ensure the required references have been completed, so be sure to give them plenty of advanced notice and always follow up.

✓ **Answer questions _honestly_ and _confidently_.** Don't exaggerate facts about your life or history, but don't be ashamed of your accomplishments either. Your application is your chance to sell yourself to the scholarship committee, so, with humility, highlight your achievements and show them why you are the best recipient.

✓ **Be concise.** Scholarship committees review hundreds of applications. Respect the word limit set out in the application and use it to your advantage. Write enough so that the committee gets the information they need and then stop writing. A paragraph or two is usually enough to convey what is needed.

✓ **Provide unique answers.** If you are applying for more than one award within an application and you are asked to describe why you are the ideal candidate for each award, your answers should not be identical each time. Each award has unique criteria, so you should answer each question relevant to the scholarship you'd like to receive. This requires some time and effort.

✓ **Proofread, proofread, and proofread again!** Spelling and grammar gives off an impression to the reader and you are trying to give the scholarship committee the best impression of yourself possible, so take the time to proofread your application. Then have someone else proofread it for you.

✓ **Ensure you hit "submit."** You should receive confirmation (usually automatic from the organization's website) that your application was submitted. If you don't receive confirmation, you should check with the organization that they have received it. If they don't receive your application, they won't be able to consider you for the award.