

ADMISSIONS ESSAYS 101

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1. Stay focused on the essay question. Make sure your chosen topic is responsive to the prompt. A nonresponsive or off-topic essay can hurt your application.

2. It's all about you. Remember that your goal is to give the reader a sense of the person behind the application. Keep it personal.

3. Research. Don't be the student who submits an essay about studying computer science to a school that does not have a computer science program. Do your research! There's plenty of free information online.



Google Search I'm Feeling Lucky



4. Enlist help. Sometimes it helps to talk through essay topics with a professional (i.e. your friendly neighborhood Allion Essay consultant). Your college counselor is also a good source.

BRAIN STORM

Review
Sample
Essays

Outline
• Intro
• P1
• P2



Draft

EDDIT



1. Have fun with it!
Let your creativity flow, and don't be afraid to use humor.



2. Avoid clichés. This is your opportunity to stand apart from the crowd. If you find yourself writing things like "X taught me the value of..." or "leadership is an important quality because..." go back to the drawing board and brainstorm some fresh ideas.



3. Grab attention (in a good way). Remember that admissions officers have to read thousands of essays. Your essay needs to stand out. Just remember to use your better judgment when selecting what to include.

Polished Essay

Rushed Essay



1. Self-editing.
Do a line-by-line review of your essay for typos, grammatical errors, word choice issues, etc. This requires discipline! It's easy to do a quick read-through; much harder to dig-in and take the essay apart.

2. Give it to someone else.
It can be helpful to get a peer's opinion, but remember to take recommendations with a grain of salt.

3. Professional help.
Avoid essay editing factories. Your editor should understand what your goals are and where you are coming from. Don't be shy, shoot Alex an email at athaler@allionessay.com.



QUICK FACTS

- "The importance of both admission test scores and grades in all courses has shown an overall increasing pattern but has leveled off in recent years. **The percentage of colleges rating the essay as "considerably important" [the highest rating] has shown the most increase in the [last] six years...**" 2009 State of College Admission, NACAC.
- Among colleges that accept less than 50% of applicants, **56.6% rate the essay as "considerably important," the highest available rating.** 2009 State of College Admission, NACAC.
- Colleges continue to receive an increasing number of applications, resulting in lower admission rates. This trend ensures that the personal statement will continue to be an important factor in admissions.

