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| Don't let the thought of competition for scholarships get you down. There are ways you can make sure your application shines.  **Specific Scholarship**  If the scholarship is for a specific discipline you must use it for the said purpose. If you change majors (Education to Nursing) you may often loose the funding.  **You are an Investment**  You need money for college, and the scholarship application is inevitable. It’s tempting to get discouraged and avoid applying because you think to yourself, “There are already so many applicants. They’re never going to pick me.” Don’t sell yourself short. There’s plenty you can do to help secure the scholarship money you want and need. Check out our quick tips.  **Ensure that You are Qualified for the Scholarship**  This may seem obvious, but it bears mentioning. You may have friends that are applying for this scholarship or that one, but don’t feel like you need to jump on the bandwagon. There are plenty of opportunities for scholarships out there, many you probably haven’t even considered yet. A website like CollegeXpress can help you zero in on scholarships that you not only qualify for, but for which you are the ideal recipient. Whether you’re attending a specific university, plan to study a particular subject, or have an affinity for a unique hobby, there’s more than likely a scholarship out there tailored to your unique qualifications.  **Read Directions Carefully**  Believe it or not, many scholarship applications are immediately discarded because the applicant failed to follow directions. Don’t let this happen to you! Once you’ve located a scholarship you feel confident you can win, read the directions and reread them. Whether the scholarship requires you write an essay, fill out a form, or a combination of both, make sure you completely understand what the institution awarding the scholarship is asking of you and follow those instructions explicitly.  **Develop a Plan**  Before you even begin filling out the scholarship application or writing the required essay, make sure you have a good sense of exactly how you wish to proceed. Make note of any personal strengths and accomplishments you wish to emphasize. If you’re having difficulty with this portion, ask a trusted teacher or friend what they think you should highlight. Laying out everything you wish to cover in outline form will help you to avoid mistakes on the application.  **Let Yourself Shine**  On scholarship applications, you want to be honest, but avoid being too modest. If you feel that you have contributed a great deal to your community, for example, let the organization awarding the scholarship know and pinpoint specific examples that support your opinion. While you want your confidence to shine through, you don’t want to come off as too cocky either. For example, if they ask you about your weaknesses, don’t say that you don’t have any. Instead, pick a weakness you have and turn it into a positive. For example, if you are shy, let them know that you’re making an effort to become more social by participating more in community events.  **Have Someone Review the Application**  Whether it’s a teacher, a parent, or a good friend whose writing skills you trust, always have at least one other person read your application documents before sending them in for consideration. You could read your own application five times and fail to notice tiny errors that may well stand out and count against you when the organization awarding the scholarship reviews your application. Your chosen application reviewer may also suggest information you overlooked that you can add to your application.  **Practice Makes Perfect**  Your application is now ready to be mailed. Is it time to relax yet? Not so fast! Why cool your heels waiting for a response when there are many other scholarships for which you can apply? You’ve already knocked out your first application, which is undoubtedly the most difficult. You’re on a roll now. Keep applying! You can always use more free money for college.  ***Last but not least…..***  ***Always write a thank you note to the funding source.***  https://www.collegexpress.com/articles-and-advice/financial-aid/articles/scholarships-grants-loans/scholarship-applications-how-stand-out-crowd/ |