**10 Tips for Applying for Scholarships**

Don’t let the process of applying for scholarships and grants overwhelm you or keep you from proceeding. Here’s a list of things you should know about applying for scholarships, which should make the process easier:

1. **Make sure you are eligible.**Don’t waste your time or the time of the scholarship giver. When you scan scholarships, first make sure you meet the criteria. Focus on appropriate scholarships by their due dates.
2. **Research past scholarship winners.** By looking online at biographies of previous winners, you can better understand the type of person a scholarship committee is looking for.
3. **Create a scholarship checklist.** Keep on task by scheduling submission deadlines, instructions, and things to do for each scholarship you’re interested in—for example, writing essays or getting letters of recommendation.
4. **Follow instructions carefully.** Applications that do not follow instructions to the letter are discarded, so be sure to provide whatever information and materials the scholarship requests.
5. **Highlight your strengths and weaknesses.** Brag about your accomplishments, such as your GPA or volunteer work. Don’t neglect to talk about your weaknesses or gaps on your application, and use this chance to explain yourself. This honesty can work to your benefit.
6. **Make time for your essay.**Thoroughly review the essay question and take your time articulating an answer. Give yourself time to research your answer, and make sure to give your writing the care it deserves.
7. **Check yourself carefully.** Bad grammar, poor punctuation, and an unorganized essay can hurt your chances of receiving an award. Have someone proofread your essays and personal statements before you submit them.
8. **Secure letters of recommendation.** Get letters from people who know you well and can highlight your strengths. Provide them with the scholarship information, and give them plenty of time to compose their letter.
9. **Be on time.** Keep to your schedule so you’re not waiting until the last minute. By submitting scholarships early, you free up your time to apply for more scholarships.
10. **Make copies of all submissions.** Scholarship givers can lose all or part of your application. Your copies can be your backup. By submitting early, you can protect yourself in case your application is returned or gets lost in the mail.