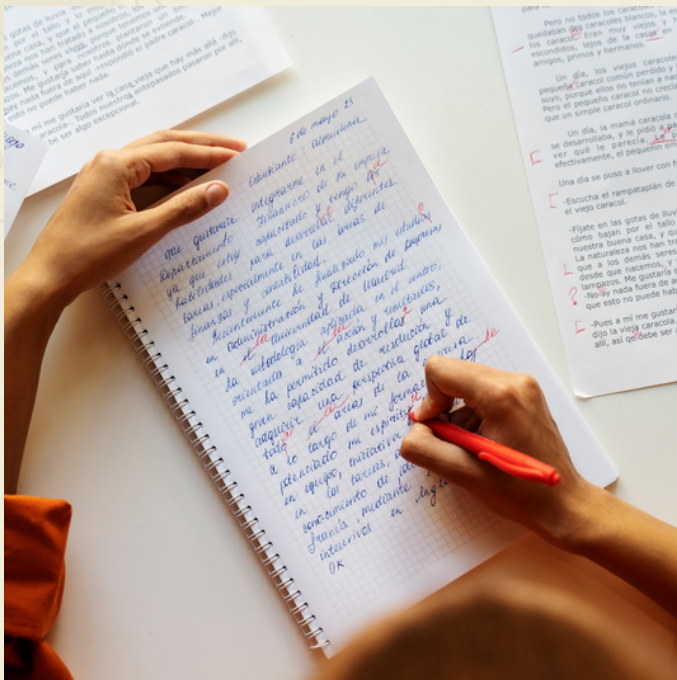


Career Counsellor

Counsellor's Newsletter

Advice for Writing Successful Application Essays



<https://shorturl.at/N7pZQ>

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When you sit down to write your application essays, there is very little left that you can control. You should have already taken, or retaken, the SAT and ACT, your grades from your first three years of high school are set on your transcript, and your recommenders all have their impressions of you that are unlikely to change before the recommendation deadline. The only thing that is left in your control is your writing for the application essay. As with all things related to your college application, you will need to start drafting your application essay far ahead of the due date. In fact, you should move each school's deadline up two weeks so that no unexpected events prevent you from completing and submitting your application.

The reason that you need so much time to work on your essay is primarily because many schools will ask you to write about similar topics, but to do so in different ways.

After you have generated several ideas, reflect on where you find the most intensity or excitement in what you were writing. If nothing jumps out at you, keep brainstorming or talk with others about some possible topics until something grabs you.

Once you know what you want to write about, put a rough draft on paper. Don't be afraid of stray thoughts if they lead you to something more interesting than you had set out to write. Just make sure that you eventually come to have a rough draft that is about one thing.

Look over your draft and check for the following.

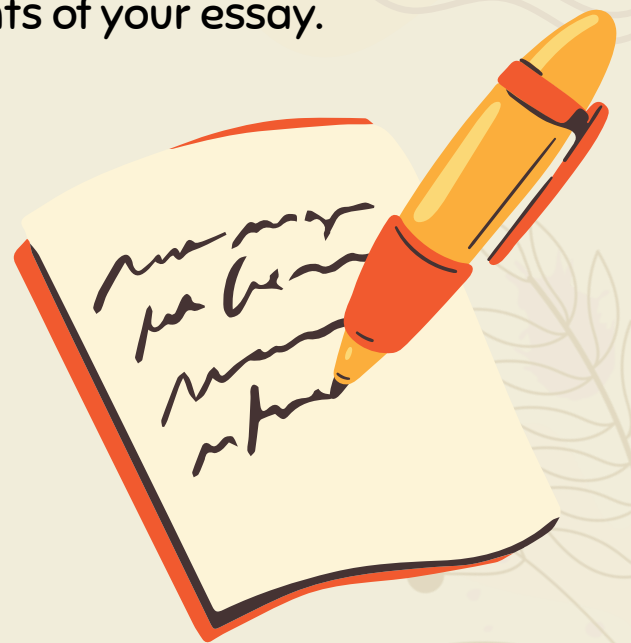
- Your writing should be personal. After reading your essay, does it seem like any one could have written this? Make sure that your essay captures who you are.
- Your writing should show, not tell, through vivid language. Successful essays relate an experience or analyze a pattern from the writer's life. It is not enough to make general claims about what impacted your decision to go to college; for instance, you must elaborate by including evidence that answers "how" and "why" when you make your claims.

It is important to note that admissions officers care as much about your structure, style, and insights as they do about your content. That is not meant to add an extra layer of anxiety to your writing process, but to highlight the fact that you don't necessarily need to have something life-changing to write about in order to write a successful essay. Finally, your writing should be about a sustained topic. You must use vivid descriptions with a purpose. What is it that you learned because of this experience? What message can you decipher from the series of events that you present? What led you to your conclusions?

Finally, your writing should be about a sustained topic. You must use vivid descriptions with a purpose. What is it that you learned because of this experience? What message can you decipher from the series of events that you present? What led you to your conclusions?

Once you have completed your rough draft, put it away for a few days. Afterwards, read the question again and look through your essay. Ask yourself if the essay answers the prompt. Is it personal? Does it use vivid language? Is it focused on one topic? Rewrite whatever needs to be strengthened. This is a great time to have other people look through your draft and get their reaction. Make sure that you ask someone early, and that you trust this person's judgment; they will be putting in a lot of time to help you, so don't disregard anything that is inconvenient or that you don't want to hear.

Again, giving yourself plenty of time to work on this essay is vital. You should have enough time to rewrite or restructure your essay based on the feedback that you have received. As you are drafting and revising, feel free to fix any mistakes that you catch in terms of spelling, grammar, and mechanics, but don't spend too much time editing early on in the writing process. Working on lower-order concerns can give you the impression that the essay is ready to submit prematurely. Instead, use this time to strengthen the main points of your essay.



Career in Public Policy in India: Jobs & Career Opportunities



<https://shorturl.at/H6WpJ>

Public policy is a fascinating field that deals with the creation, implementation, and evaluation of policies that affect the lives of individuals, communities, and nations. As a career option, public policy offers various job opportunities across various sectors, including government, non-governmental organizations, private sector companies, and academic institutions.

What is Public Policy?

Public policy studies the principles, values, and objectives that guide the creation and implementation of policies that affect society. It encompasses a wide range of issues, including economic policy, social policy, environmental policy, health policy, and education policy.

Public policy professionals work to identify and analyze policy problems, develop solutions, and evaluate the effectiveness of policies. They may work in government agencies, non-governmental organizations, private sector companies, or academic institutions.

Types of Roles and Jobs after a Master's in Public Policy

There are several roles and jobs in public policy, depending on the sector and area of specialization. The most common roles include–

Policy Analyst: Policy analysts work in government agencies, non-governmental organizations, or private sector companies. Their primary responsibility is to analyze policy problems, develop solutions, and evaluate the effectiveness of policies.

Policy Advisor: Policy advisors work closely with government officials, business leaders, and other stakeholders to advise on policy matters. They may work in government agencies, non-governmental organizations, or private sector companies.

Public Policy Consultant: Public policy consultants work with clients to analyze and develop policies that meet their needs. They may work independently or as part of a consulting firm.

Government Officer: Government officers work in various capacities in government agencies, including policy analysis, implementation, and evaluation.

Public Policy Career Scope in India

In India, there is a growing demand for skilled public policy professionals. The government, non-governmental organizations, and private sector companies increasingly seek professionals who can analyze and develop policies addressing various social, economic, and environmental challenges.

According to a report by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), the demand for public policy professionals in India is expected to grow by 20% annually over the next five years.

How to Build Your Career in Public Policy and Governance

To build a successful career in public policy and governance, follow these steps:

- **Earning a Master's Degree:** A master's degree in public policy or a related field is essential for building a successful career in public policy. The degree program will provide you with the skills and knowledge required to analyze and develop policies.
- **Gain Practical Experience:** Internships, fellowships, and volunteering opportunities can provide you with practical experience in public policy. These experiences can help you build a network of contacts, gain insights into policy-making processes, and develop your skills.
- **Network:** Building a network of contacts is crucial in public policy. Attend conferences, seminars, and workshops to connect with professionals in the field. Join professional associations and networking groups to expand your network.
- **Stay Up-to-Date:** Keep yourself updated on current policy issues and debates. Read newspapers, journals, and books on public policy. Follow policy experts and thought leaders on social media.
- **Develop Your Skills:** Develop your analytical, communication, and leadership skills. Take courses or attend workshops that teach data analysis, writing, and presentation skills.

Importance and Impact of Public Policy

Public policy plays a vital role in shaping the future of any nation. A master's degree in public policy equips students with the skills and knowledge necessary to understand and analyze complex policy issues. They learn how to design, implement, and evaluate policies that address pressing social, economic, and environmental challenges.

With a deep understanding of policy-making processes and the ability to think critically and strategically, graduates of master's in public policy programs are well-prepared to take on leadership roles in government, non-profits, and private organizations.

Jobs in Public Policy and Salary Expectations

Graduates of the M.A. in Public Policy (MAPP) program at Jindal Global University (JGU) have excellent job prospects in various sectors, including government, non-profits, and private organizations. They can work as policy analysts, consultants, researchers, managers, and advocates. Some of the jobs after master's in public policy in India are:

- **Policy Analyst:** A policy analyst is responsible for researching, evaluating, and developing policies and programs on various issues, such as health, education, environment, or security. A policy analyst can work for government agencies, think tanks, NGOs, or international organizations.
- **Consultant:** A consultant is a professional who provides expert advice and guidance to clients on various policy issues and projects. A consultant can work for consulting firms, private companies, or as a freelancer.
- **Researcher:** A researcher is a professional who conducts academic or applied research on various policy topics and issues. A researcher can work for universities, research institutes, or policy organizations.
- **Manager:** A manager is a professional who oversees and coordinates the planning, implementation, and evaluation of policies and programs. A manager can work for government agencies, NGOs, or private organizations.
- **Advocate:** An advocate is a professional who promotes and defends the interests and rights of various groups and causes related to public policy. An advocate can work for advocacy groups, civil society organizations, or media outlets.

According to a recent survey, the average master's in public policy salary in India is around INR 500,000 per year. However, salaries can vary depending on factors such as location, industry, and level of experience. In conclusion, public policy plays a vital role in shaping the future of any nation, and a master's degree in public policy can prepare students for leadership roles in various sectors.



Impactful Extracurricular Activities to Add to College Applications



<https://shorturl.at/pEtlet>

Wondering how to make your college application stand out? Your high school extracurriculars might be the key to catching an admission officer's attention and securing that acceptance letter.

Why Your Activities Outside the Classroom Matter

With more colleges going test-optional, extracurriculars play a more significant role in admission decisions. According to a 2023 study by the National Association for College Admission Counseling, nearly half of college admission officers (44.3 percent) consider extracurricular activities “moderately to considerably important” in evaluating applicants—especially at selective schools.

Here's how participating in meaningful extracurriculars can give you an edge in the application process:

They Show You Can Handle College Life.

Balancing school, activities, and other commitments proves to colleges that you have time management skills essential for college success.

1. Student Leadership Roles

Taking on leadership roles in school clubs or organizations shows that you can motivate peers, manage projects, and make crucial decisions. These skills will help you in college and beyond.

If you have done this: You have learned how to turn ideas into action, solve conflicts, and take responsibility for your team's success.

2. Community Service and Volunteering

Colleges love to see students who give back. Volunteering shows that you care about the world beyond your school and are willing to take action.

If you have done this: You have gained a deeper understanding of social issues and worked alongside different communities to create change.

3. Starting Your Own Project or Business

Whether you launched a small business, a nonprofit, or a creative project, taking the initiative proves you're a self-starter with problem-solving skills.

If you have done this: You have faced challenges head-on, adapted when things didn't go as planned, and turned an idea into reality.

4. Academic Teams and Competitions

Competing in events like the Science Olympiad, debate teams, or math competitions shows that you love learning and can apply your knowledge in high-pressure situations.

If you have done this: You have pushed yourself beyond your comfort zone and experienced the thrill of solving challenging problems.

5. Performing and Visual Arts

Music, theater, dance, creative writing, and visual arts all require discipline and creativity. These activities show you bring a unique perspective and artistic expression to your college community.

If you have done this: You have learned to take feedback, improve your craft, and express yourself confidently.

6. Sports and Athletics

Playing sports—whether varsity, club, or recreational—demonstrates teamwork, perseverance, and resilience.

If you have done this: You have pushed yourself to new limits, learned to handle both wins and losses, and developed a strong work ethic.

7. Research and Independent Projects

Conducting research or working on personal academic projects demonstrates intellectual curiosity and problem-solving skills.

If you have done this: You have experienced firsthand how messy and rewarding research can be, and you know how to think critically and work through challenges.

8. Tech and Innovation

Programming, robotics, and digital design show you're tech-savvy and ready for the future.

If you have done this: You have learned how to problem-solve creatively, troubleshoot issues, and build something from the ground up.

9. Career-Focused Experience (Internships, Job Shadowing, etc.)

Getting hands-on experience in a field that interests you shows colleges that you're thinking ahead and taking steps toward your future career.

If you have done this: You have already seen a real work environment and connected classroom learning to real-world applications.

Frequently Asked Questions

- **Do I need to participate in all of these activities?**

No. Quality is more important than quantity. Focus on the activities that align with your genuine interests and commit to them deeply rather than trying to cover all categories superficially.

- **How do colleges verify my extracurricular claims?**

While colleges typically don't investigate every activity, they may contact school counselors or activity sponsors with questions. Be truthful about your involvement and accomplishments. Exaggerating or fabricating activities is an integrity violation that can lead to rescinded acceptances if discovered.

- **How should I document activities without formal recognition?**

For self-directed projects or informal activities, document your process and outcomes. Keep a log of hours, take photos of your work, save emails related to the project, and consider asking an adult who observed your work to serve as a reference if needed.

Beyond 'Grit' and 'Growth Mindsets'



<https://shorturl.at/26hlp>

Modern education is full of beautiful illusions. We tell ourselves that if students just believe in their ability to grow, they will improve. That if they only want success badly enough, they will achieve it. If we can instill grit, a growth mindset, or motivation, learning will follow.

These ideas offer emotional clarity in a system that often feels chaotic. They give educators a sense of moral purpose. We're not just teaching: We're shaping character. We are instilling the love of learning. And they promise simple explanations for complex problems: If students fail, perhaps it's because they lacked a trait we forgot to nurture.

But these concepts, however well-intentioned, don't actually teach anything. They describe internal states that cannot be observed, measured, or replicated. Worse, they shift responsibility for learning from instruction to personality.

This essay offers a different approach: What if we stopped asking how students feel about learning and started focusing on what they actually do? What if instead of trying to cultivate traits, we designed environments that reinforced learning behaviors?

Grit, mindset, and motivation sound empowering. But in practice, they too often distract from the one thing educators can actually influence: behavior.

Grit: A Good Story, but a Weak Tool

The appeal of grit is easy to understand. In *Grit: The Power of Passion and Perseverance* (Scribner, 2016), Angela Duckworth presents grit as a powerful contributor to success, offering an empowering message that sustained effort combined with passion matters. Her research showed that grit could predict achievement in demanding settings like military training and academic competitions. For teachers, it offered a narrative of hope: Any student can succeed if they persist over time.

But as enthusiasm grew, skepticism followed. A 2016 meta-analysis by Marcus Credé et al. found that grit's overall predictive power was modest. More tellingly, the "perseverance" subscale was responsible for most of the effect, while the "passion" component, defined as "consistency of interest," had more minimal impact. The takeaway: Grit may reflect behavior patterns already familiar to educators, like persistence on task, and knowing a student's grit score offers little practical guidance for how to support their learning.

From a behaviorist perspective, grit isn't a trait: It's a pattern. What looks like perseverance is really repeated behavior under the right conditions of reinforcement. Students persist when their actions are acknowledged, supported and rewarded. Grit isn't something students bring to the classroom. It's something the environment either builds or breaks.

Growth Mindset: Belief Isn't Behavior

Carol S. Dweck's concept of the "growth mindset" has similarly become a fixture in educational discourse since the publication of *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success* (Random House, 2006). The idea is simple: Students who believe their abilities can improve through effort tend to outperform those who see intelligence as fixed. Posters, praise strategies, and mindset surveys soon followed. In theory, if we help students believe they can grow, they will.

But belief isn't behavior. And the research tells a more complicated story. A 2018 meta-analysis by Victoria F. Sisk et al. found that growth mindset interventions have minimal effects on academic performance, especially in real-world classroom settings. The idea may be psychologically appealing, but it lacks a consistent, measurable impact on student outcomes.

Behaviorists would point out the obvious: Improvement doesn't come from belief alone. It comes from revision. From trying again. From adjusting after feedback. These are observable behaviors, not internal convictions. Whether a student believes they can grow matters far less than whether they actually engage in the process of growth. You can't easily measure a student's mindset, but you can document an edit, a resubmission, or a strategy change.

When students revise their work in response to feedback, they are learning. When they try a new approach after failing, they are learning. The teacher's job is not to instill belief: It's to design conditions where these behaviors happen. In other words, what matters is not what students think about effort, but whether effort becomes routine.

'Motivation': A Word That Explains Nothing

When students disengage, educators often reach for a familiar explanation: "They're just not motivated." It sounds like a diagnosis, one that points to an internal deficit. But what does it actually tell us? If a student doesn't complete an assignment, does that mean they lacked motivation? Or did they lack clarity, confidence, time, or support?

The term “motivation” gives the illusion of explanation without offering any actionable insight. As B. F. Skinner argued in Science and Human Behavior (1953), motivation is not a cause of behavior; it is a way of describing behavior under certain environmental conditions. To say someone is motivated is merely to observe that they are likely to act in particular ways when specific reinforcers are in place. The real instructional question, then, is not whether students want to learn but which circumstances make learning behavior more likely to occur.

In the classroom, this means shifting our attention away from internal states and toward observable structures. Are tasks clearly defined? Is feedback timely and specific? Are students rewarded for revising their work, completing multistep assignments, or trying alternative strategies, and not just for producing the right answer? These are environmental variables, and they are all within the teacher’s control.

Instead of asking how to motivate students, we should ask how to prompt action and reinforce it. What behaviors do we want to see more of? How can we design tasks and feedback loops to support those behaviors? The myth of motivation keeps us looking inside the student’s head. Behaviorism reminds us to look at what’s happening in the environment and change that instead.

The Danger of Seeing Traits as Truths

Grit, growth mindset, and motivation feel persuasive because they mirror our own experiences. Most educators can recall moments when persistence paid off, belief fueled improvement or drive propelled achievement. So, it’s tempting to assume these traits explain student success or failure.

But this personal identification can distort how we interpret student behavior. If I believe I succeed because I’m “gritty,” then when a student struggles, I might assume they just don’t have what it takes. If I value a growth mindset, I may start labeling students as fixed or closed off. Without meaning to, I begin assigning character judgments rather than analyzing learning conditions.

This is where trait language becomes dangerous. It turns behavior into personality. It shifts attention away from instruction, feedback, and structure—things teachers can control—and places responsibility on internal, invisible forces. Worse, it opens the door to bias. We start seeing deficits in students instead of problems in our teaching design.

A behaviorist framework flips that lens. It treats every student's behavior, good or bad, as a response to environmental cues, reinforcements, and routines. If a student gives up quickly, that's not a failure of character. It's a cue to examine clarity, support, or reward structures.

Teachers influence outcomes not by cultivating traits but by shaping conditions. When we see traits as truths, we stop looking for change. Behaviorism asks us to do the opposite: assume every behavior can change and then design accordingly.

A Better Way Forward: Teaching Behavior

Instead of trying to change how students feel about learning, educators can focus on designing tasks, feedback loops, and classroom routines that prompt specific, repeatable actions.

Want students to revise their work? Build revision into the structure of the course. Want them to persist through challenges? Normalize early failure and provide feedback that rewards effort, not just accuracy. Persistence doesn't come from personality; it comes from practice. Persistence behaviors emerge when the environment supports trying again.

The key is to identify the behaviors we want to see and design instructions that reinforce them. That's the educator's power. It's not in diagnosing invisible traits, but in shaping visible routines.

Think about how we interact with artificial intelligence. If it gives an unsatisfactory answer, we don't accuse it of laziness or lacking grit. We change the prompt. We adjust the input. We try again. That iterative process reflects a core behaviorist truth: When something doesn't work, change the environment, not the entity.

Students are no different. If they're disengaged, that's not a moral failure; it's an instructional signal. Behavior is data. And when teachers respond to behavior instead of theorizing about traits, learning becomes something we can actually build.

What Students Need

Students don't need to be labeled. They need structure, support, and chances to succeed through repeated action. When we stop trying to cultivate belief and start shaping behavior, we move from speculation to instruction, from vague hopes to measurable outcomes.

The job of an educator is not to light an inner fire. Build an environment where students attempt alternative strategies, resubmit work, or ask clarifying questions after making mistakes. It's not belief that drives learning; it's what students do with the feedback they receive.



Podcast Suggestion For The Month



Podcast Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wDXmthuCOdk>

Daniel Adeyanju, a founder of Kura Labs and former software engineer, shares his own "4 P's"—a carefully curated set of factors that will aid in every burgeoning professional's path to career success. In his current role, Daniel connects young people in underserved communities to careers in the tech world, guiding them and providing them with opportunities to pursue a career in innovation. Daniel's 4 P's, as mentioned, are as follows: people, projects, problem-solving, and packaging.

Mastering the ins and outs of each of these areas is the key to pursuing an innovative journey of success in one's field of interest. In this talk, Daniel explores his own career hurdles and what he learned from them, as well as what makes him passionate about his job today—namely, helping others who are in the position he once found himself in.

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