

Admissions Officer Perspective – Application Essays

What is an admission officer thinking when reading your essay?

First, they are reading a lot of applications in a short period of time. A highly selective admissions office receives tens of thousands of applications. This has an obvious up-shot for you: you have a limited amount of time to impress an admissions officer. You have to make every word count, because it is easy to blend in with everybody else, and most people will not be accepted.

Second, most of the applicants to a top school have what it takes to cut it academically. So, meeting the baseline academic standards of a school is not enough to ensure admission. An admission officer is also looking to find people who will help form a vibrant community at the school, be it in the form of a unique background or a contagious enthusiasm. Your goal when the admissions officer finishes your essay should be for the admissions officer to say, "I want this student on my campus."

Here are some other things an admission officer will try to glean from your essay:

- Assess your writing skill.
- Learn about your personality and character.
- Fill in the blanks from the rest of your application. There's information about your background, your hometown, and your life story that can't be covered in a conventional application.

