

Approach Scholarships Like a Job Interview

Present yourself as the right candidate for the scholarship on your applications. Highlight your good qualities and emphasize how well you meet the qualifications of the scholarship. Always read application directions carefully and double check your application for mistakes before submitting it.

Apply! Apply! Apply!

The more you apply the better your chances of success. Carve out time in your schedule to search and apply for scholarships weekly. Don't disregard a scholarship because you may not meet all the qualifications. Don't dismiss a scholarship just because it's for a small amount; after all, every dollar counts. You won't get every scholarship you apply for, but the more you apply the more you increase your chances of receiving a scholarship.

Write an Essay in Advance

Since many scholarship applications require a personal essay, write and save a personal essay to use in advance. Best strategy: Draft 3-5 sentences for each of the following topics: your personal history; your academic and career; your financial need. You can expand or edit your saved essay to suit a specific scholarship. Be sure to have a friend, parent, or teacher proofread your essay for mistakes.

Look for Opportunities in All Kinds Of Places

Don't just rely on TCC's institutional scholarships. Look for scholarships through search engines such as Petersons.com or Fastweb.com. You can search by your major, your future career, and your special talents and hobbies. Many local organizations and churches sponsor scholarships. Additionally, private business will offer scholarships to employees or spouses and dependents of employees. Always educate yourself on the organization who is offering the scholarship so you can eliminate scams or disreputable organizations.

Protect Your Data

Remember to practice good security habits when sharing your personal data. Is the application method secure? Who will view your data? Are they asking for a lot of sensitive data like social security number or your cell phone number? What will they do with your data? Answer these questions before sharing your data.

Never Pay to Apply for Scholarships or the FAFSA

Unfortunately, there are dishonest people who want to take advantage of students and their families by pretending to offer legitimate aid opportunities. Always educate yourself on what kind of organization is offering the scholarship. And never, ever pay someone to apply for a scholarship or complete your FAFSA. The FAFSA is free, and reputable scholarships will never ask for your money.
