

# HACK THE COLLEGE APP



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# WHO AM I?

I run Ivy Guide Tutoring, an elite college consultancy and homework tutoring business in Los Angeles and the San Fernando Valley. But many of my clients are over seas.

- Troup Wood

After graduating from Dartmouth, *cum laude* with honors, I volunteered to interview Dartmouth applicants.

Since then, I launched a college-prep consultancy that has taken off. I was featured in Variety magazine, and China's largest education company asked me to lecture 500 of their clients in 10 cities throughout China.

I noticed that 90% of students and families don't understand what universities are looking for, despite having worked with school counselors.

What's worse, many consultants unintentionally mislead students because they lack first-hand experience at an elite university.

So I hope I can clear up some of the confusion!

I'm in this career because I want to be the mentor that I never got to have. I know how competitive and challenging the application process can be, but I'm here to tell you... You don't have to stress! Let me make it easier.

As a coach, I work with private clients, but for those who cannot hire a private coach, I want to give away as much free information as possible. My 1-on-1 service involves the same information, just expanded and tailored to a client's specific application and their target school. After all, every student is unique.

Enjoy this free PDF and email me with any questions! I'll try to reply within 24 hours.

# WHAT UNIVERSITIES LOOK FOR

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## PASSION

Is this student so obsessed with an activity that they are already on a clear path to success? Have they won a major competition, started a club with their activity, published something, sold an app, etc.?

We want to SEE this passion at work over an extended period of time. It is not enough to simply SAY that you're passionate.

It is also no longer enough to be "well rounded." I recommend standing above the crowd in a way that makes you memorable, impressive, and undeniable.

Think about the extracurriculars on your activity list, and what they say about you!

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## FIT

Why does this student need this university instead of another? And why does this university need this student?

Usually, universities ask "why us?" in a separate essay, and you should research the school, the social and academic life there, before answering.

## LOVE FOR LEARNING

Will this student take charge of their own education? We can see that in whether or not the student has already demonstrated a love for learning. Have they gone the extra mile to follow their academic pursuits? Received top marks and excellent test scores?

One part of the application that comes into play here is the letter of recommendation... Is it from a teacher who knows the student and can speak to the student's EXTRAORDINARY drive and commitment?

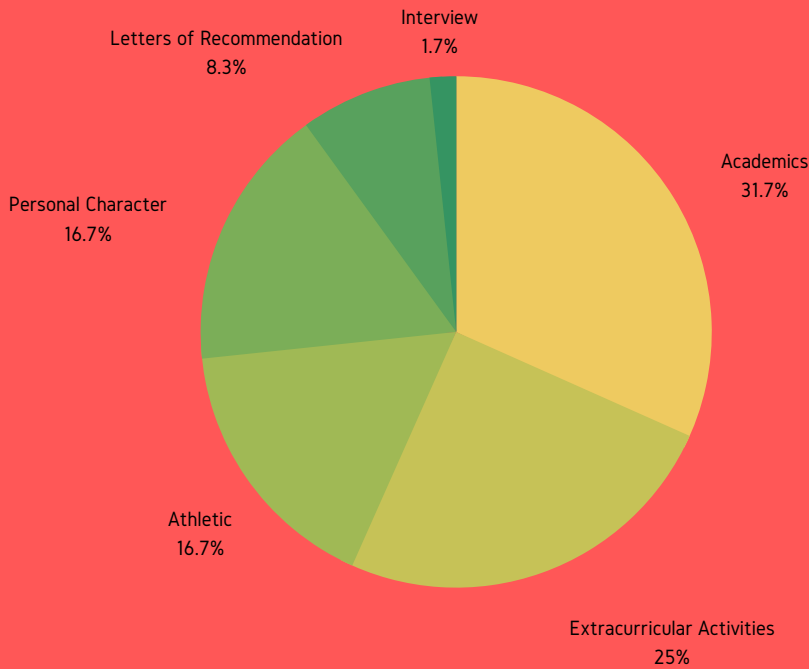
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## CHARACTER

Does this student have character? Are they responsible, resilient, trustworthy, etc.? Have they actually demonstrated this character in a way we can see?

Most importantly, is this student a leader? Leadership doesn't always mean being in charge of others... It can simply mean not being a follower.

For instance, Mark Zuckerberg showed leadership by selling an app he created during high school, instead of joining the coding team like everyone else. Of course it doesn't have to be quite that extraordinary.



## THE HARVARD LEAK

A recent lawsuit caused internal documents from the Harvard Admissions Office to be released. Nobody had seen these before, and it is a massive opportunity to see what admissions officers care about at Harvard and other top schools.

You can see that "Academics" are critical. But at a top school, every applicant will have excellent test scores and grades, so ensure you are taking the hardest classes available to set yourself apart.

Also realize that "Extracurricular Activities" is where you likely need to set yourself apart.

## FURTHER EXPLANATION

In the graph, we can see what matters most to admissions officers, based on the leaked documents.

"Athletics" mainly applies if you will be on a school team.

The "Personal" score is about the student's character. Think of college admissions like planning a party... Based on this student's resume, essay, letters of rec, and interview, would they be someone we want at our party?



## THE TAKE-AWAY

At any top school, you pull away from the crowd by distinguishing yourself through your passion.... The activity through which you have already demonstrated success and leadership.

If you are "well rounded" and busy with too many activities, drop the ones which limit your ability to stand out. Focus on the singular story about who you are... Your brand.

At larger, or less competitive schools, it is more acceptable to be well rounded.

But wherever you're applying, academic ability is usually a prerequisite for admission.

Don't hesitate to ask me for advice! Many of my clients struggle with balancing the many aspects of the application, but it does not need to be a complicated process.

# College Essay Basics

## Get Real

Don't share anything bad about yourself, but do show a side of yourself not many get to see. Dig deep down and find your authentic truth. It should be a little scary.

01



## Heart of the matter

We need to care. Keep asking "so what?" about your topic until you no longer can. Until you've given us a singular reason this topic is important to you on a deeply personal level.

02

## What matters to you?

What matters more than anything? It might be the passion activity on your resume. But you can also talk about your world view or a moment, person, or object that shaped your life.

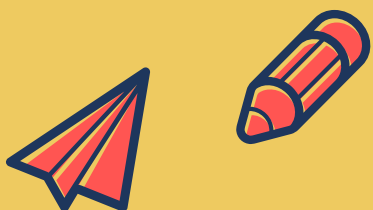
03



## Style

Re-read your favorite author. They're good for a reason. They have a voice. If you're funny, be bold and funny. Use figurative language, metaphor... Rhyme if you want to. Just please proof read!

04



## Avoid Pitfalls

Avoid cliché like the plague because it's unoriginal. And remember they already have your resume, so no need to brag. This essay is more like a short story.

05



<- click the hat for more!

## LET'S FIGURE OUT THE ESSENTIALS:

### ➔ Your Resume/ Activities List:



Your resume need not include everything you've ever done. It's better to give a clear picture of who you are and what you're passionate about.

I work with clients to select summer activities that demonstrate leadership and success. For instance, if the Yale high school program doesn't fit with a student's brand, I urge them not to go. It might detract from their application.

So much care goes into choosing activities and writing your activities list. Email me for my free recommendations!



### ➔ The Essay



You now know the basics, but personalizing it to YOU can only be done 1-on-1. In a few sessions, I will walk you through the brainstorming process,

all the way through a polished draft.

It's not fair that admissions officers ask you to artfully articulate a clear sense of yourself in a few hundred words... It's nearly an impossible task! But I will simplify the process and help you find the story you never knew you had to tell.

### ➔ Book A Presentation



Want to help out your friends?

Are you a college counselor or parent?

I have special group rates for workshops and lectures.

I travel to schools, libraries, conferences, and more!

# LET ME SHOW YOU HOW TO PERSONALIZE ALL THIS INFO. LET'S TAILOR YOUR APPLICATION TO YOUR TARGET UNIVERSITY.

I truly hope this PDF makes an impact on your application. But there's always more work to do, and you don't have to do it alone. There isn't even a need to stress!

1

**THERE'S MORE  
FREE STUFF!**

There was no room to tell you my #1 piece of advice for extracurriculars & letters of rec.

I have a magic worksheet that will show you what to write your essay about.

So check out my blog!

It's FREE and could make the difference between getting in and almost getting in.

IvyGuideTutoring.com/BLOG

2

**LETS CHAT!**

Want a free 15 min consult?

Get in touch, and lets talk about where you're at with your application and what you need help with. It's never too early to game-plan.

Contact:  
IvyGuideTutoring@Gmail.com  
(213) 262-9838

Social:  
@IvyGuideTutoring

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**WANT TO WORK  
WITH ME?**

Sometimes I'm so busy I have a waitlist, and sometimes I'm ready to expand like crazy - I might even be running a 20% OFF deal!

I reply quickly, and my schedule is flexible, so if you'd like my help for a few sessions, don't hesitate to get in touch.

Go to [IvyGuideTutoring.com](https://IvyGuideTutoring.com)  
to watch my video and learn more!

**FAQ:****WHERE DO YOU WORK?**

West Los Angeles, the SF Valley, and online.

**WHAT ARE YOUR HOURLY RATES?**

- 🎓 \$95 for college prep tutoring
- 📝 \$80 for English, humanities, or writing homework
- 💻 Online is \$10 OFF.

**SHOULD I BUY THOUGH A 3RD  
PARTY?**

No. Just screenshot the rate you saw online, and I'll honor it.

**CAN YOU HELP ME ON MY ENGLISH  
TEST? OR MY HISTORY ASSIGNMENT?**

Yes! Also, I'm an award winning documentary filmmaker and screenwriter, and love helping students on creative projects.





WEST LA & ONLINE

Click below:

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