[9 Keys to a Strong Transfer Application](https://www.ptk.org/Default.aspx?TabId=4153&PostId=462)

*From Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society’s newsletter, “The Reach”*

How can you strengthen your transfer application to help increase the chances of getting admitted to your top-choice university? An article in “The Reach” offered nine tips:

**1. Read through the application and become familiar with the requirements before starting the application.**If you are not able to “page” through the online application without completing each section, schools will often list what is required for their application online.

Follow the directions and pay attention to things like word counts, the number of recommendation letters, and the type of submissions that are required or allowed. If you need clarification, reach out to the admissions office.

*Resist submitting an extra-long essay, more than the required recommendations, or additional materials (videos, files, etc.) if they are not requested.*

**2. Writing is important.**Components such as an essay or writing sample are influential and DO matter. Proofread and have others who know you proofread. Does the essay capture the essence of who you are or what you want to communicate?

*Spell check does not catch everything. A word may be spelled correctly, but it might not be the correct word.*

**3. Look for institutions that are a best fit academically, financially, socially, and geographically.**Maybe you had your heart set on a school whose cost (even with financial aid) makes it inaccessible. Another option is to look for an in-state school or a school that offers a significant discount on tuition or a scholarship.

In addition to federal aid, schools may discount their tuition and offer you grants, which will reduce the price. Do not let the sticker price prevent you from applying, as you do not know what the financial aid package will look like.

*Look for honors programs if you are interested in smaller classes at your state institution.*

**4. Prepare your recommenders.** Give them your resume and a 250-word essay about your plans at that transfer institution and a deadline date. Waiting for letters of recommendation is most often responsible for holding up the review of an application.

**5. If the institution offers an optional Interview, then do it.**Interviewers are not meant to be intimidating or scary. They want to have a conversation with you, and this is an opportunity for you to quite literally bring your application to life.

**6. If you’re an adult learner, recognize that the number of high school students is declining.** Adult students are increasingly important applicants.

**7. If you don’t get admitted, ask the transfer admission counselor if they would be willing to offer feedback on why you weren’t admitted.**Find out if you can revise and reapply. Or, ask if they have any helpful advice to offer as you move forward with your education.

**8. “We want to see people who passionately live their lives,” Kathy Urban said.**This comes through in your essay and interview. Be who you are.

**9. Do not feel under-qualified to apply or not good enough to get accepted just because you’re not involved in multiple campus clubs and organizations.** Often there is a misconception that you must be the president of everything at your current school to get admitted to your next one.

As admissions counselors review applications, they understand that students who are already in college have other obligations that compete for or limit their time to devote to on-campus involvement.

*It is more than okay if you are a parent or caretaker, involved in your church or community organizations, have a hobby, or are employed. Talk about the leadership or new skills you’ve developed through those responsibilities. How have those experiences impacted your world view?*