To a large degree, the particular graduate program you are applying to will di

ctate the content of a successful application essay. However, certain qualitie

s of these essays apply equally to all fields. Admissions committee members ar

e looking for interesting, insightful, revealing, and non-generic essays that

suggest you have successfully gone through a process of careful reflection and

self-examination. Your essay should offer a very thorough, probing, and analy

tical look at yourself and your objectives.

1、Insight Into Your Character ( 洞察你的个性特征)

When we say "non-generic" above, we mean a personal statement that only you co

uld have written, one that does not closely resemble what other applicants are

likely writing. You achieve this type of statement by being personal and anal

ytical. Don't waste space on superficial generalizations about your life. Inst

ead, give the reader specific, personal details so that he or she will be able

to understand your character and motivation. Then analyze those details in a

way that drives home clear, illuminating points.

2、Sincerity （真实）

Don't focus too heavily on what you think admissions officers want to see, at

the expense of conveying your own message in your unique way. Be yourself rath

er than pretending to be the "ideal" applicant. Inundated with countless clich

é-ridden essays, admissions committees respond very favorably to honesty. Don

't be afraid to reveal yourself. Admissions officers are interested in finding

out about who you are, and they appreciate candor.

Sincerity is important to stress because it's hard for most of us to achieve,

despite the fact that it seems so simple. The pressures and anxieties of the s

ituation have locked us into a mindset that prevents us from writing honestly.

Further, because we are not used to writing about ourselves and being so clos

e to the subject, we cannot assess the sincerity of our own writing. Thousands

of students every year will read this same advice, whether in a guidebook or

even in the application instructions themselves, but they simply will not be a

ble to put it into practice. If you can be one of the few who truly understand

what it means to be sincere, then you will already have separated yourself fr

om the pack in a crucial way.

You might question how a reader who doesn't know you can judge your statement'

s sincerity. The basis for judgment usually lies in the context your reader ha

s developed from reading hundreds or thousands of other essays. Assessing your

essay against others is one essential area in which we can offer a more criti

cal eye than your friends, relatives, or teachers who have not accumulated the

expertise specific to the personal statement. Moreover, our perspective in re

ading your essay is just as objective as your admissions reader's perspective

will be.

3、Background and Motivation （综合背景和学习动机）

Detail your interest in and exposure to your particular discipline in a though

tful way. You are aspiring to become a professional in your field; therefore,

you should express an interest in contributing something novel to it. Make cle

ar that you have a realistic perception of what this field entails. Refer to e

xperiences (work, research, etc.), classes, conversations with people in the f

ield, books you've read, seminars you've attended, or any other sources of spe

cific information about the career you want and why you're suited for it. Reme

mber not to make this a laundry list in which you rattle off impressive names

or theories. Any specific people or ideas you mention should be thoughtfully a

ddressed and seamlessly interwoven into the essay as a whole.

4、（目标）

When you were applying to colleges, no one expected you to be certain about yo

ur future. At the graduate level, however, you need to demonstrate a more matu

re sense of what you want to do, and how the program you're applying to fits i

n with that intended path. Although admissions officers are well aware that pe

ople's goals will change, they at least want to see some sense of direction so

they can evaluate your self-awareness and commitment.

"I seek a sense of commitment, a sense of discipline, and a sense specifically

of what the student wants to do. I don't think it's advisable for anyone to w

rite that he or she just loves English literature and wants to read and write.

People have to know what field they want or are most likely to work in, or wh

at specific kinds of projects they want to pursue in a field."

-Graduate English Department, UCLA

"I think the main thing is to see whether the student is aware of and has thou

ght about the field to which he or she is applying."

-Graduate Engineering Program, California Institute of Technology

5、Attributes of the Program （专业特征）

Explain why the particular school's unique features attract you. Again, gradua

te study is much more focused than undergraduate work; it's not a time for unb

ounded exploration. For your own sake, you need to determine whether a specifi

c program meets your needs, and sharing what you discover with the schools can

show them why you're a good fit. Do the research necessary to find out what s

ets your choice apart from other universities or programs.

Do not, however, waste space on empty praise. For example, don't cite the "wor

ld-renowned faculty" and "diverse student body" as your main reasons, because

these are trite, obviously prepackaged points that you could say about any sch

ool. Instead, refer to specific courses or unique aspects of the curriculum, a

nd show an interest in specific clubs or organizations.

"You really have to let the admissions committee know what it is about this pr

ogram in particular that interests you."

-The Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs, Princeton Univ

ersity

"It helps for the student to have done some research on the university being a

pplied to. It is easy to differentiate an applicant who really wants to come h

ere because of our special resources from someone whose knowledge of the progr

am comes simply by way of the brochure we send to all interested applicants."

-Graduate English Department, UCLA

6、Writing Ability （写作能力）

Again, the importance of writing ability varies according to different program

s. A great flair for language will not get you admitted into a biochemistry pr

ogram, but it's still essential to demonstrate strong written communication sk

ills. On the other hand, you should also keep in mind that a well-written essa

y makes its points clearly and forcefully, so your content benefits as well.

Good writing means more than the ability to construct grammatical sentences. Y

ou also must create a coherent structure and ensure proper flow as the piece p

rogresses. Because the process of developing ideas and putting them down on pa

per is so intimate and personal, all writers end up needing editors to assess

the effectiveness of their product. You should consult people whose writing yo

u respect for advice or even more hands-on help.