

# Golden Rules For Applying

*Exclusive tricks and principles for writing  
successful applications*





Hey, if you want to end a trend of rejection and dramatically increase your applications' chances of success, you are in the right place! Carefully read through these 11 golden rules for writing any application and start applying them immediately. Step by step you will become a rejection-proof master of application writing of any kind, be it internships, conferences, scholarships, or something else!



# 1 *Be creative and unique, not boring!*

Okay, imagine you have to read 800 applications and 700 of them are people saying the same things, like:

- "I want to be a young leader and change the world."
- "I want to meet new people and expand my knowledge and horizons (a.k.a. travel)."
- "I am from a poorer country and I need a chance to succeed."

All of these applications will end up in the recycling bin, alongside the generic ones that are not tailored to the opportunity at all. Even though the points listed above are valid reasons for wanting to apply for an opportunity, they are not personal enough.

Your application should be as unique as each one of us is unique. Every one of your answers should be based on your original ideas and thoughts—NOT based on what you think they want to hear or, even worse, what you think is acceptable to write about. If you focus on either of those things, you will undoubtedly wind up writing just another "young leader's application."

Think of creative and unique ways to answer the requirements. This brings us to the next golden rule...



## 2

*Read advertisements carefully and think about how you can best respond to the requirements!*

Sit down and carefully read through what opportunity organizers expect from their applicants. This may sound obvious, but you would be surprised by the number of people who do not fully read the postings for the opportunities that they apply for.

One student once asked us why we do not provide an APPLY NOW button to allow the student to just click it and quickly send identical applications to hundreds of opportunities. Here is why we do not do that: organizers want candidates who have devoted time and energy to their applications, thus proving their dedication, attention, and willingness to work. Taking the time to fill out an application also shows that you care about your work and can meet expectations.

Once you identify 3 to 4 of the most important requirements set by the organizer, try to answer them by mentioning concrete achievements and experience that demonstrate that you are a match for the requirements.

In addition to responding to the requirements with your experience and knowledge, think of additional benefits that you can add to the organization, or to the world as a whole. If you have amazing contacts or you can contribute a cool presentation or training session, mention this in your application. If you have a specific skill that could add value to the organization, describe this as well.

If you do not have much relevant experience, do not give up! Use what you have and—believe us—your honesty and passion will be recognized.





## 3 *Deliver benefits.*

Keep in mind that no one is willing to select you or spend money on you simply because you are a “young leader willing to meet new people and learn new things.” This is too generic and—in a sense—it means that you simply want to be a tourist.

Organizers must be getting a return on investment by selecting you! The best way to learn what return they are expecting is to concentrate on the second golden rule. We suggest that you research the organization, find out what their goals and initiatives are, investigate how you can contribute to those things, and include this information in your proposal/application.



## 4 *Never give up.*

This should probably be number one.

When you start sending out your applications, do not expect everyone to be super happy to see it. Forget about suddenly getting your airplane ticket in the mail, or the organizer appearing at your front door to congratulate you on being selected.

The truth is, you will receive many rejections. Yes...many.

This is part of your opportunity search process.

The good news is that you will learn A LOT. If you refuse to give up and you take every rejection as an invaluable lesson, you will come to understand one of the most amazing truths ever:

REJECTION is NOT REJECTION, it is REDIRECTION to something that is greater, more exciting, and a much better fit for your inborn talents.

So, embrace rejections and get used to receiving as many of them as possible. It is better to do this when you are a student than when you are looking for a job and do not have much time (or money!) to fully enjoy the greatness of rejections.

Also, check out this awesome blog story from our HR expert, Claire, on the [How to Take Rejection and Grow Stronger Because Of It](#).



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*Be charming. Write something original and beautiful for the application recipient.*

Everyone likes compliments, but be careful! If you write something too general (for example: "I appreciate the kindness of your people") you may be tagged as being phony.

Research the organization and the opportunity organizer, find out about what they are especially proud of, and use that in your proposal,

BUT...

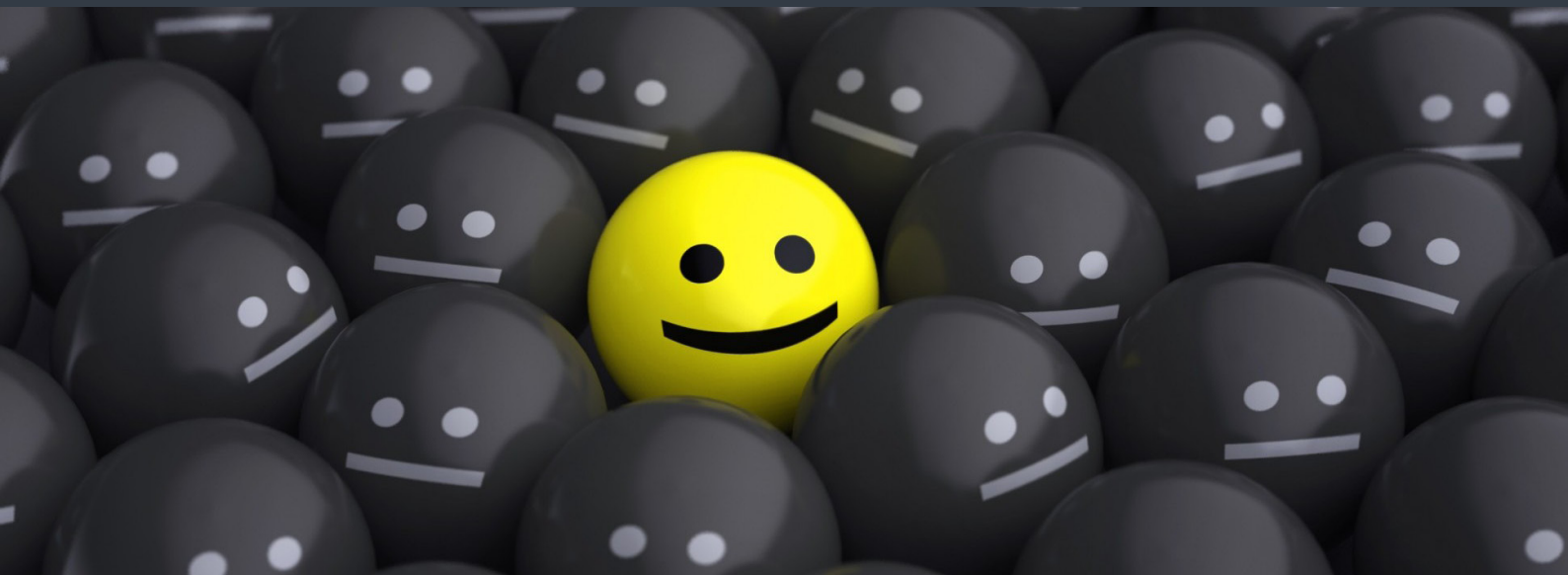


## 6 *Be honest, NOT fake!*

First of all, do not exaggerate or go over the top with your compliments!

Second, never, ever lie with regards to your knowledge and previous experience. Not only can you easily be caught, but you can damage your reputation forever. It is much better to concentrate on your current experience and fulfilling all of the requirements set by the organizer, together with providing concrete benefits.





## 7 *Be positive and optimistic.*

No one wants negative people in their organization. It is as simple as that!

Avoid complaining about your current situation, environment, country, university, etc. If there is something that you do not like, use that as an opportunity to express your proactivity and passion for changing it, thereby turning it into an advantage.



## 8 *Be concrete and innovative with your ideas!*

People do not care that you claim to have an innovative mind or that you like challenges and meeting new people. Anyone can say so those things. The key is to SHOW the application reader that you have these qualities.

Prove it with concrete experiences and real life results! If you can, include concrete actions or milestones that you have achieved and their impacts on the organizations and people that you have worked with. However, ensure that you are answering the questions that the organizer is asking you to answer, and make sure that you are meeting word and application length limits.

Also, in terms of future plans, try to be as direct as possible. In most cases, organizers want to see how their opportunity will help your future, and how you will help their organization. Try to connect your past achievements with your future plans and demonstrate how these connect with the program you are applying for. For example, let us say that you are applying for a marketing internship with a large corporation. In your application, talk briefly about your marketing achievements in the past, including conferences you have attended, marketing events you have organized, or marketing campaigns you have created. Use numbers to demonstrate the results and impact of these activities (i.e. the number of attendees, the percent increase in sales). Share a few lessons that you learnt and then connect those lessons with the requirements of the internship opportunity.

The "[Writing a killer cover letter](#)" resource has additional details about how you can apply the third and eighth rules to enhance your application in critical ways.



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## *Mind your English, including typos and grammar mistakes. (or any other language that you use to write your application)*

This may seem obvious, but you would be surprised by how many applications are sent that are written with poor language, and are full of typos and grammar mistakes. It is certain that these applicants end up in the recycling bin.

Use your application as an opportunity to show how organized, precise, and punctual you are. Do not hesitate to ask other people to check your application. For example, native English speakers on websites like [fiverr.com](https://www.fiverr.com) will check your application for small bucks.

Bonus tip: if you are sending a resume with your application, there are additional rules to ensure that your resume stands out from the other candidates. Check out these resources:

On [resume content](#)

On [resume design](#)





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*Always ask for tips from the previous successful applicants and alumni. There is always a way to find them!*

This is the clincher! Those people who have already succeeded at what you are attempting to do are the best source of advice.

Try to use social media, your personal contacts, and the organization's website—there will be a way to locate those people.

Once you have identified them, do not hesitate to contact them. Be concrete, kind, and specific. Some emails that we have received read, "Hi, I want that scholarship... help." As the recipient of such a request, it is very difficult to want to respond to this.

Think about concrete questions that you can ask and, at the end, try to offer some kind of benefit for the person you are requesting help from. At the very least, show your gratitude by sending them a handwritten thank you note.





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## *Find additional ways to succeed with*

Yes, there is always a “step further” that you can take in order to increase your application’s chances of success. For example, do you have a professor, previous internship coordinator, mentor, or network contact who is in any way related to the organization or country you are applying to? If so, ask them to prepare a recommendation for you.

Opportunities to give you a leg-up are endless. Beyond the formal application (where you will shine with the 11 rules that we have described), there is the whole world of unadvertised opportunities. In order to find them, check out these resources:

[How to find unadvertised internships](#)

[How to become a networking star](#)

Now that you have learned all of these great rules, it is time to put everything in practice!

[Start browsing](#) the thousands of opportunities that are available around the world, and apply everything that you have learnt.

Do not forget the old German proverb: Practice makes perfect!



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