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Getting Into Law School

There are currently more law students in school than there are practicing attorneys. Every year, hundreds of thousands of people apply to law school, and only a small percentage of them get in. What is the secret to getting in? There are no secrets or sure-fire methods. It takes months of preparation, organization, and hard work.

One way to increase your chances of getting accepted to law school is to understand what selection criteria law school admissions committees rely upon to gauge candidates' expected performance. Although there are many factors law schools consider, there are certain factors that outweigh the rest. These **high impact criteria** include prior academic performance (GPA), the Law School Admission Test (LSAT), and the college you attended. Although no single qualification will independently guarantee acceptance or rejection, admissions committees across the nation place great emphasis on these factors to predict academic success in law school.

The next set of factors are **middle impact criteria**. These include letters of recommendation, personal statement, and work experience. A tight-knit, well written personal statement can help to give admissions committees more insight into your writing skills, your reasons for applying, and also provides you the opportunity to set yourself apart from other candidates. Also, many law schools like their students to have worked for a number of years prior to entering law school. As a result, admissions committees will look to see if an applicant has "real world" professional experience.

The final set of factors are **low impact criteria**. Law schools want their students to be well-rounded and capable of handling the rigors and pressures that come with law school enrollment. As a result, many admissions committees will take into account your collegiate extracurricular activities, your character and personality, obstacles that you have overcome, and past accomplishments and leadership skills.

It is important to remember that all law school admissions committees have their own system for evaluating and accepting candidates. Remember to keep your options open while applying. Even during the early stages of the admission process, you should continually re-evaluate prospects and prepare alternative plans.

Researching and Preparing for Law School - A List of Helpful Links

stu.findlaw.com/schools/fulllist.html: Contains links to over 200 law school homepages

www.abanet.org/legaled/prelaw/prep.html: Discussion of skills, knowledge and values you will need to develop and prepare for law school and a successful legal career

stu.findlaw.com/prelaw/finance.html: Financing law school

www.nalp.org/prelaw/index.htm: Choosing a law school, rankings, exploring career options and salaries

www.lsac.org: Information and registration on the LSAT and LSDAS

www.lsatexampracticetests.com: Overview of LSAT questions with tips on answering them