

**TOP TEN IMPORTANT BITS OF ADVICE FOR THE
GRADUATE SCHOOL APPLICATION PROCESS**
DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY, SAN JOSE STATE UNIVERSITY

1. Apply early, weeks before the deadline. Some schools will start reviewing applications as they come in, even before the deadline. This also gives you some extra time in case you are missing anything.
2. Start a folder for each school that you apply to. This can be helpful to track correspondence and keep materials orderly. Later on in the process you may want to keep them by the phone to have ready when schools call.
3. Write a winning Statement of Purpose:
 - A. Make sure you read the departmental philosophy and all provided brochures. Schools will review you based on goodness of fit. Make sure your goals and desires do not conflict with the particular department's philosophy.
 - B. It is good to mention the name of a faculty member that you would like to work with. This person is usually the person that will make contact with you and that you will correspond with throughout the process.
 - C. For academically oriented schools, you should not list private practice as a career goal.
4. Include a sample of your writing, preferable a research paper, along with your application packet.
5. Visit as many schools as possible. Sometimes schools look great on paper, but when you visit your feelings may change. I ended up choosing a school that I had originally ranked as my last choice.
6. When visiting schools, talk to graduate students as well as faculty. They will usually give you the ins and outs of the program.
7. When your top school offers you acceptance, you may not want to accept right away. You may get a higher financial package offered to you if you still appear to be "undecided." However, don't hold on to too many acceptances at one time. By saying "no" to a school you may actually increase your chances of acceptance into your desired school.
8. Make sure to write a Thank You note to professors who wrote you letters of recommendation, and also a final letter to let them know what school you decided to attend.
9. Before accepting an offer, talk extensively with the person you plan to work with. In some cases, this is a person you will work with for 5 years, so the last thing you want is a personality conflict.
10. All correspondence with the schools, beginning with your initial request for information, should be neat, typed and on time. How you present material is a reflection of you, and all correspondence will probably go into your application file.

Good luck with your application process!