The Application

Do you have any advice on how to approach the application process?

First, think about the objective of your application: you’re working to be admitted to a law school, so you need to show your file readers that you can build a compelling argument. The different elements of your application need to work together to build a coherent image of who you as a person are and where you see yourself headed in the future. To pull this off, you’ll need to employ at least two vital skills required of all successful lawyers: careful planning and convincing advocacy.

It is advantageous at this point in the process to create a JD account on LSAC.org. Creating an account allows prospective students additional services such as purchasing test preparation materials, registering for the LSAT, receiving LSAT scores early, and even applying to law schools online.

What goes into the successful completion of an application?

Remember that successful applications show that you’re ready to excel in a particular law schools program. It’s also your first, and likely, only chance at making a good first impression. In part, your qualifications as an applicant are judged by how carefully and thoughtfully you put together the whole of your application, so it’s highly recommended that you put considerable time and effort into every step of the process. While it might sound simple, complete applications are the name of the game. The LSAT must be satisfactorily completed, personal statements written, two to three letters of recommendation must be gathered, a résumé needs to be updated/created, an average of eight to ten applications need to be filled out, academic transcripts must be sent to the LSDAS (for the LSAC’s Credential Assembly Service), and any necessary addenda must be sent out. For example, you may need to show grade improvements or explain a low LSAT score. Further, if a school invites you to add anything that you feel is relevant to your application, be sure to respond to such requests.

How do you recommend keeping track of everything that needs to be done?

After you’ve narrowed down your search to a handful of law schools, it’s best to put together a master to-do-list. Make careful note of all the deadlines for each school and establish a plan for completing each step in a timely fashion. Many applicants find creating a flow chart outlining each required step in the process to be helpful in organizing all the different application forms.

Can I simply duplicate the same application material and organization for all the schools I’m applying to?

No. Remember that admission file readers can easily sift out the application materials which are copied and pasted from one school to another. Generic or vague material will not help. Rather, each of your applications needs to be tailored to stress each particular law
school’s primary focus. This process will help show the committee that you bring something special to the first year class and are serious about the application process.

**When’s the best time to apply?**

Since most law schools have rolling admissions where students are accepted on a first-come first-serve basis, **it’s ideal to apply in November** to those schools you know you would like to attend. The earlier you finish the application process the sooner you can receive acceptance letters or possible wait-list notifications. And though being wait-listed is no one’s first choice, finding out you are wait-listed in December is much better than finding out in April when there is limited time to send in addenda to further demonstrate why you’re the right choice for a certain school. The chance for admission boils down to a simple calculation: the longer you wait to apply, the more seats a law school fills with students just as qualified as you. Therefore, begin your preparations early and pace yourself so as to continue fulfilling your undergraduate responsibilities while completing your applications at the same time. This will help avoid the temptation to take shortcuts or submit applications in a hastily completed manner.

**What if I have mistakes in my application?**

Errors in spelling, punctuation, grammar and content are significant marks against your chances for admission. This is not a way you want to distinguish yourself from other applicants. Whatever you do though, **don’t lie** on your application. Even if you can avoid being detected for padding your application now, your academic record as a whole will eventually be evaluated by state bar examiners. If they determine that you have lied on your application you may not be allowed to practice law.