

Waitlist Suggestions

Introduction:

Students typically apply to and are accepted at more than one school. They must decline all acceptances but one. Thus, LSs must accept a much higher number of students than they actually have places for. As students who have been offered admission turn them down, the probability that an applicant will actually enroll may become increasingly important to them.

Therefore, your job is to convey the sincere impression that if accepted, you would positively, definitely enroll—or, if the school is not your first choice, express a continuing interest in the school in the strongest terms possible. This is especially true if your # 1 school is ranked LOWER than the school(s) to which you have been admitted (they may assume that they are merely a safety school for you). If you have any compelling reasons why you'd like to attend, tell them, emphasizing any *academic* program that is a good fit for you. See what they promote on their website and in their literature for ideas.

Summary of things to do:

1. Write a “letter of continuing interest” [as provided above]. Start by thanking them for being put on the waitlist (it is actually a positive sign)! Keep it brief and upbeat—just the facts. Do not beg! Remember, they assume that it would be great for you to attend their school—their concern is, what will *you* do for them.
2. Be thoroughly professional. Keep your file up-to-date. Send in your latest transcript, contact information, change of address, etc. Show them you are organized and on the ball.
3. Send in new supplemental information, transcripts, activities, letter(s) of recommendation, awards, etc.-- any NEW information about which they wanted to know in the original application.
4. Ask to speak to someone in the admissions office [but don't ask for an “interview” *per se*: these are rarely granted]. Note: some schools will not allow you to meet with people on the admissions committee; but many will. It is a potential risk if the meeting goes poorly, but a big plus if it goes well.
5. Visit the school. Ask for a tour and/or to sit in on classes. You will distinguish yourself from those on the list who do not visit. Write thank you notes to follow-up. Mention any visits and the individuals seen by you in your continuing interest letter.
6. Contact any alumni you may know and ask if they can help. You can also call the admissions office and ask about contact information for IUB graduates who attend their school. They may be able to give you useful information.
7. Call the admissions office OCCASIONALLY to express your continued interest--but do NOT overdue it, and be very polite!! We are told that once every two weeks is acceptable. You don't want to be a “pest”! Most schools rank applicants on their wait list. It *may* be possible to find out where you are on the list; if so, also ask how far down the list they usually go.
8. We hope it doesn't come to this, but if it is very late in the summer [2-3 weeks before classes start, or later!] they may be quite desperate for bodies. Most will not acknowledge this, but many law schools maintain a “super waitlist” comprised solely of applicants who are certain to enroll if accepted. If your application is still on hold at this point, and you'd be willing to drop everything and enroll at the very last minute, be sure to tell them this explicitly. This is especially important if you reside outside of the school's city, because at this late date many schools assume that only local applicants would be available.