

Key information used for admission to graduate school, in particular the Ph.D. program.

- CV/Resume: It documents your accomplishments, i.e. papers and projects
- Recommendation letters. They document your abilities when it comes to working independently and your ability to contribute to a body of work.
- Statement of purpose (see below)
- Have they heard of you? (see below)

Statement of purpose.

- It should show good knowledge of the field you are planning to study.
- It should make evident that you read the relevant papers in that field.
- It should show that you know what is going on in the field.
- It is not a dissertation proposal.
- You do not have to show a long-term vision of the field.

Have they heard of you?

- Aggressively pursue summer research opportunities. They potentially get you the following:
  1. Co-authorship on a paper.
  2. Letter of recommendation by someone who has observed you performing research.
  3. If the person supervising the research opportunity is well known in the field, a good letter from them is worth a lot.
- Attend conferences, symposia and workshops. Many opportunities arise from meeting people. You do not have to present a paper to attend it. Woody Allen once said that "80% of success in life is simply showing up."
- Email people whose papers you studied with interesting questions, questions that show that you understand their work.

Miscellaneous advice.

- Read a paper a week.
- Implement stuff.
- Review papers.