

The Emergency Section

Much of *Hopeless to Harvard* is focused on long-term planning - what are the things you should do in middle school and throughout high school that will **maximize your chances of long-term success**.

Since you read my website - you know that I wasn't someone who had that time. I needed immediate, fast answers. The ability to **do things quickly that would make a big difference**. The ability to take what I'd done and make it sound good on the application.

I needed to stand out in a short period of time.

So, after every major section (eg, Academics and Standardized Tests), I add a page or two for last-minute applications.

This advice can feel a little like **pushing the edge** - some of the things I suggest may make you uncomfortable.

But hey, you got yourself into this situation. And if you really want to attend Harvard, sometimes you have to push the envelope.

I simply give you advice. It's up to you whether you follow it.

A few general tips:

1. Leverage the power of **what you're about to do** - eg, planning on taking many AP tests, in the middle of planning a national high school conference on green energy issues, etc. Admissions committees **won't weigh this as heavily** as past accomplishments but **will take it into consideration**
2. Spend that last summer very, very wisely and very, very busily
3. You must take a strong course load in whatever semesters are left
4. Pay very close attention to how you present accomplishments - **your resume/brag-sheet are critical** in this regard
5. Pay for professional help **when it makes a difference** - particularly if you have art/music portfolio work, a website, etc

If you remember none of the above, **REMEMBER THIS:**

The only way you can get accepted to Harvard with average accomplishments is to make them sound not-average and make your identity distinct. Work hard with what time you have left, and pour your soul into the application, your resume/brag-sheet, and your essays. Above all, have a CLEAR SPIKE THAT COMES THROUGH OVER AND OVER AND OVER.