

Tips for Creating a Great First Stick Application!

When you are looking for a job, everyone knows the importance of creating a great resume. A simple Google search will reveal all the secrets to catching the eye of those charged with passing along or deleting resumes and the do's and don'ts that are critical to writing a great resume.

As you prepare your First Stick application, we would like to offer tips on how to create a successful application. Much like the hiring managers who review resumes, we look for certain things as part of our selection process for the First Stick Program.

The selection criterion:

- Demonstrated financial need
- Team's prebuilt foundation for success
- Overall quality and leadership of the program
- Letters of recommendation.

What do we look for? First and foremost we look for organizations that are likely to succeed if awarded First Stick status. A big part of our job at US Lacrosse is being good stewards of our resources and responsibly deploying those resources to organizations that have laid the proper foundation for success.

Assuming that step 1 to starting a lacrosse program is getting an equipment grant is the most common misconception; it is NOT! An equipment grant is a critical component but without laying the proper foundation of appropriate building blocks, that equipment may go unused.

So what exactly are those building blocks (prebuilt foundation for success)?

- Have you garnered local or community support?
- Have you considered partnering with the local YMCA, Boys & Girls Club or Parks & Recreation?
- Have you have fields lined up to play on?
- Have you identified and engaged potential coaches?
- Have you put together a Board of Directors?
- Have you connected with your local US Lacrosse Chapter?
- Have you identified and engaged potential sponsors?
- Have you created a budget?
- Have you made plans to get liability insurance in place?
- Have you generated interest and recruited potential players?
- Have you put together a fundraising plan?

When reviewing applications, we look for answers to those questions on your application!

If you have taken all the appropriate steps above, you are ready to fill out your First Stick application. But you need a plan and you need to do a little homework.

First of all, and this is very important: who is going to write your letters of recommendation?

Although it is not a requirement, we strongly encourage you to provide at least one of the letters from your local US Lacrosse Chapter. Those local chapters are the eyes and ears of the national organization back in Baltimore. They understand the local lacrosse scene. They understand the needs of the area, the strengths and weaknesses and the available resources. Hence why a letter of support from them is highly encouraged!

Next, you have a bunch of questions to answer. Spend time on your answers. Have friends review your drafts. Ask them (and yourselves): are you adequately conveying your plans, metrics, priorities, completed building blocks and support? Have you answered all the questions fully (brief or one word answers are a red flag!)? Have you provided all requested information? Have you included appropriate contact information? Have you let us know what age group and gender you hope to serve?

Have you conveyed your passion for kids and the game of lacrosse?

Too often applicants forget to include crucial pieces of data like your name, your CORRECT email address or the name of the applicant organization! Or forget to electronically sign the application!

Take the time to review your application carefully. Be aware of filing deadlines (July 1) and how to submit your application (by email only).

We wish you the best of luck and look forward to helping you grow the game of lacrosse in your area!

The First Stick Team

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