

...You will need to know how to write and speak convincingly when asked “How did your passion for this field of study develop?”



Perhaps if you had not run away from that class delegate position you may have developed orator skills. The little things matter, what you do today or fail to do has long lasting impact. If you want someone to pay millions to support your ambitions for your future, you have to become the sort of person that would appeal to them. You can't become anything in just a day. So start now!

Be original. There is no one else like you. You have gone through unique experiences, have developed your own voices and have favoured words in your vocabulary. When you attempt to copy a past winners' motivational letter, or use multi-syllabic words which you can barely define properly you sound fake and risk being called out for plagiarism. Supporting statement templates online are not to be copied!!!! Use them to *inspire* you not to dictate you.

Be self-driven. As in most things which involve your own progress you are most likely going to have to do a majority of the work on your own. Even if you have help, you are going to have to find that help, and maintain the relationship with the helper on your own. Do not expect or wait for someone to follow you up reminding you that “deadline is coming up”. Do not expect help, seek for it. If you are used to being told what to do and how, this is how you will fail. You have to think for yourself, take the initiative to go the extra mile and distinguish yourself.

Finally, **be informed!** A lot of people ask, who connected you? Who told you of this opportunity? To be honest those questions sounds a bit ignorant in this age of technology. The opportunities are literally flying all over the web. If you care to look you will find. The problem might be that rather than subscribing to news on scholarships, you have subscribed to something like a Nollywood Gist website or Music lovers Facebook page. So you are immediately informed when the latest celeb gossip or music video is released but are left unaware of the opportunities which abound for you to apply to. To conclude, it is clear the magic to winning a scholarship is simply using your head and working hard.

Listed here are reliable websites to which you can subscribe for regular information on scholarships for



Africans in general. Subscribe to them all and get updates to your email on opportunities you can apply to.

- <http://opportunitydesk.org/>
- <http://www.afterschoolafrica.com/>
- <http://www.scholars4dev.com/>
- <http://www.opportunitiesforafricans.com/>
- <http://www.youthop.com/>

Most of them have Facebook pages which you can “Like” and Twitter handles you can “follow”.

While you are at it, like **Better Breed Cameroon** on Facebook and follow us on Twitter well. We select the opportunities which Cameroonians in particular are eligible for and share for you to see on your timeline.

Better Breed Cameroon

Breeding the Change we need

*S o y o u w a n t a
S c h o l a r s h i p ?*



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Considering Further Education?

Whether we like to admit it or not, due to the inadequacies of our system and the high cost of quality education, a lot of us will need to leave the country for further studies, and will need to earn scholarships to be able to do so. Perhaps you know someone, a friend or family member who has won a scholarship? Did you wonder or suspect that they “knew somebody” which facilitated the scholarship award? Well this pamphlet hopes to debunk such suspicions and expose the magic of winning a scholarship.

While everyone cannot win a scholarship, there are more than enough scholarships and bursaries for those who really need and deserve them. So you do not need to fall for those “fall bush fast” schemes. Just follow the magic formula outlined here.

First off, **know what you need**. Like they say: if you don't know where you are going, you won't know when you arrive there. The majority of people rejected for scholarships failed to genuinely illustrate their need. For instance, they may be applying for a degree program already existing in Cameroon. While we would all agree that (sadly) degrees from out of the country are more respected than those from home, one has to note that they would need to sufficiently explain to a scholarship commission why they would need to travel abroad to study what is made affordable at home.

In general, you are required to firmly establish your need for a scholarship beyond doubt. Establishing that requires you to be certain of: what you want to study, why you are interested in studying it, where you want to study it and how studying it could possibly impact

you. The answers to this question will provide content for your motivational letter or supporting statement. Without knowing what you need, you would find it most difficult to prove genuine need when interviewed. You cannot be genuinely in need of something you barely about. When an interviewer asks you what you plan to do with the degree you applied for a scholarship to study and you hesitate or stutter, struggling to think up an answer you betray yourself.

Next, **change your mind-set**. You don't need to get a scholarship, you ought to DESERVE a scholarship. Stop thinking of it as a gift which someone decides to give you or like a lottery which you win if you have the lucky numbers. Scholarships are mostly granted on merit, so make an honest assessment of yourself and ask yourself what makes you merit it? How well have you done in school, how active have you been in and out of school, how can you prove you have the potential to do greater if given the scholarship? Each scholarship has its own criteria. To deserve it you need to fulfil the majority of the criteria which makes you eligible and more. You need to satisfy the scholarship committee by proving that you not only need the financial support, but equally have potential greater than you are currently doing with that financial support. To give this assurance, you have to have done something already, or be in the process of doing something. They are seeking potential to sustain, to deserve it you need to prove you are meeting them half way.

Likewise it is important to **know what you are applying for**. Scholarships are not one size fits all. This relates to criteria mentioned above. The fact that your friend got a particular scholarship doesn't mean the same one is for you. Research the scholarship, look up past winners and note that different scholarships target or prefer certain groups. There are scholarships which specifically target women, workers looking to move to the next level of their careers, potential leaders,

minority groups, young people or are limited to a particular field of study etc. Look for a scholarship which favours you, you may not have the best grades, but rather have substantial practical experience, find a scholarship considers experience more than academic performance.

Start NOW. Deserving a scholarship does not begin when you find out about it, it begins way before that.



The magic of winning the scholarship of your dreams is being ready for it before the opportunity arises. What are you doing now, or what have you been doing that qualifies you?

Potential scholars are expected to prove they performed well in school, distinguished themselves with extracurricular activities, held leadership roles in and out of school. Every little deed counts when you have to build a resume or write a supporting statement demonstrating that you merit the scholarship. So if you want a scholarship in future? Start volunteering today, start participating in extracurricular activities, develop a skill or hobby, fraternize with others in your field, attend more networking events, and of course READ widely!

Why? Because you will be asked in an interview for that scholarship “Who is your role model in this field?” or “What have been the latest innovations in this field of study you like” You will need to have people refer you, both from academics and from a professional experience. And if you have been unemployed and never volunteered, you won't be able to get a professional reference.