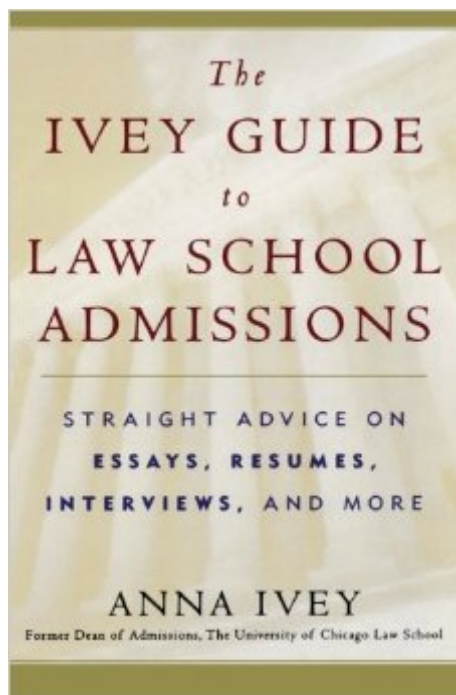


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# The Ivey Guide To Law School Admissions: Straight Advice On Essays, Resumes, Interviews, And More



## Synopsis

As dean of admissions at the University of Chicago Law School, Anna Ivey decided the fate of thousands of law school applicants. In this book-the first of its kind by a former law school admissions officer-she draws on her expertise to cover topics from the application and the essay to the interview and the recommendations, touching on hot-button issues like how much the LSAT, ethnicity, and age really matter. Offering an insider's advice on how to produce the very best application, this guide gives straight answers to questions such as: "What kind of essay should I write to set me apart from the rest of the pack?" "Should I explain my low LSAT score, my D in chemistry, my attention deficit disorder, my time in rehab?" "Is law school worth the debt I'll face when I graduate?" Full of invaluable examples and anecdotes about real admissions decisions, *The Ivey Guide to Law School Admissions* is certain to become the new bible for would-be law students everywhere.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

As a longshot applicant, I have already been accepted to or waitlisted by various top law schools (two of the top three law schools, as I write this, are still considering me, despite being told not to bother applying to those schools). But I couldn't help but be intrigued when I saw that a book by a former admissions officer at the University of Chicago would be coming out with big "secrets." Having already been through the process and having been someone who relied heavily on Richard Montauk's "How To Get Into the Top Law Schools," I would say that I didn't miss too much essential

information from not having this book available as I applied. If someone told me there was only one book they could buy on law school admissions and asked for my opinion, I would probably still advise they go with Montauk's book. However, I would otherwise recommend that they pick up a copy of Montauk's book, Anna Ivey's book and, if they were African American, copies of Evangeline Mitchell's books. For the most part, Ivey seems to reveal similar information as Montauk's book but without as much detail and support (which is kind of a minus for me, but I believe she is holding back all in-depth details and information for those who will pay for her services). She is very straightforward and brief about her points, but you certainly get the message. She does speak a bit more candidly on affirmative action and can't help but give more insider tips that are extremely helpful than anyone else could, including Montauk. Someone who makes a serious error in their personal statement, wants to know whether or not they should apply early action/decision and how that affects anything, how reapplying or a criminal record affects anything, or needs to play schools against each other for better financial aid would get the best tips and info from Ivey. She also is very detailed in terms of listing every kind of addendum you could possibly need to write and how to go about it or, even, when to forget writing one. At the end of the book, she has examples of good personal statements and bad ones, good addendums and bad ones, good recommendations and bad ones, and before and after resumes. In the book itself, she has chapters on all these topics, including interviews and how to handle them. She is also very candid about the importance of rankings and numbers, but she will also tell you that numbers are not the end-all be-all and what kind of applicants for which that is particularly true (basically, if you have high numbers, it's your spot in the class to lose...it's not entirely hopeless if your numbers are low, but you have to pull out wildcards and/or good addendums/personal statements). I definitely think this book SUPPLEMENTS Montauk's book but doesn't replace it in getting everything you need. And I also think her chapter on "The Wow Factor" is somewhat lacking, mainly in that she doesn't seem to give many suggestions or examples on/of activities (besides crazy things like being an Olympic gold winner) or anything else you can do before it's time to apply that she considers impressive or which she feels might make an applicant stand out (besides numbers). This wouldn't NECESSARILY be a problem if it weren't for the title of that chapter--to me, when you see "The Wow Factor," you're thinking she's going to talk a bit about who's impressive to admissions officers or how to be impressive to them, but she doesn't really do that--she just suggests a good marketing job is mainly what you need when you're sending out applications. Hence, the title is misleading (in my opinion)--she basically spends the chapter giving a general overview of admissions, as if you're at an LSAC Law School Forum asking her various basic or specific-to-you questions and she's rattling off answers. To sum

up, the book didn't quite meet the hype, for me, but it's still one of the best on admissions to law school. Very easy to read--a quick read. Not quite as detailed and informative as Montauk's book (again, that might be a plus for you--it was a minus for me), but it's certainly worth checking out to get that little bit of info you could only get from someone who has actually served as an admissions officer and to actually try to get a little more into their heads. Most of the questions Montauk's book had left unanswered/kind of vague for me, this book answered them--I truly recommend both books, but you could still do a great job of getting into schools with just Montauk's book (I'm not sure I would EXACTLY say Ivey's book alone would have gotten me to the point I'm at now like I can say about Montauk's).

I've been the prelaw advisor at a medium-sized religious college for more than twenty-five years, and my advice about law school application runs largely along the lines outlined in Anna Ivey's nicely written book. In the future, if a student begins to write me off as a curmudgeon, I'll be able to cite chapter and verse from this author, who's a good quarter-century younger and has a far better claim to speak with authority about such matters than I. So, undergraduates, read and heed. Nevertheless, I have a few quibbles. One inference of the Ivey Guide is that a great many admission decisions are made on the basis of personal essays, interviews, and recommendations. Actually, as Ms. Ivey would probably agree, most decisions are based flatly and unimaginatively on GPA, LSAT, and minority status (if applicable). My feeling is that the other materials often serve largely as conscience salve for the typical admissions officer (of which Ms. Ivey was certainly not). In my experience, essays, recommendations, and the like prove most significant for those at the top and bottom of the food chain: to students applying at the twenty top-ten law schools (the probable target market for this book) and students who will gladly take anything above the California unaccredited. I also hold reservations about the sample essays and sample recommendations given in the appendix. The good ones are better than the bad ones for sure, but I found myself disliking all the authors. To me the best of the essays sound like they were written by slick showoffs. (At least the authors either have great writing skills or good ghostwriters.) As for faculty recommendations, I've had numerous students admitted to the best law schools without ever having written anything longer than this review. I wonder if there are now admissions officers out there with a permanent wince because of the longer rambling essays and recommendations that are likely to appear because of the advice given in this book.

Having worked at 3 law firms, I have received an enormous amount of "advice" on law school

admissions. Every attorney I've ever spoken to has graciously added their two cents on "what gets one into law school." While they are all great attorneys in their own right, and their advice is appreciated, I can't help but think that they don't know what they are talking about. Sure, they got into law school...but how do they know exactly what got them in? How do they know what the admissions officers liked about their application? For these reasons, I knew I would have to buy some sort of guide law school admissions. Anna Ivey's book is exactly what I was looking for. It is extremely well written, thorough, and helpful. Most importantly, Anna used to be a dean of admissions at Univ. of Chicago Law - so she definitely has some authority on the topic of law school admissions. I've bought 3 books on law school admissions and Anna's book is easily the most complete book. I've recommended it to all my friends already.

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