

The following are notes I took concerning officer program applications. I can't remember exactly the source, although I believe it was the Commandant. I seem to remember it was from a review of officer program applications from promotion year just completed. At any rate, they're useful tips related to your whole application, narrative memo, and interview.

With respect to your application, as a whole, "Clearly defining who you are creates a powerful emotional connection with those who evaluate you. It makes your application memorable and your cause persuasive."

That being the case,

- ensure that the whole application communicates one message;
- that message should convey something truly important about who you are and what you care about, so you should focus on a couple of key areas;
- the message you convey can relate to a specific activity you're passionate about, interests, life experiences, career goals, etc.;
- primary & secondary themes in your application enhance your believability by communicating and reinforcing one consistent message;
- applicants who are the most credible communicate the strongest themes;
- treat each part of the application (narrative, interview report, letters of recommendation/CO endorsement) as part of a unified whole rather than as if they were separate entities unrelated to each other.

With respect to your narrative memo (they also apply to the interview),

- remember that board members are looking for applicants who aren't just paying lip service to lofty ideals (i.e., CG core values);
- look at it as a painter's canvas, your task being to paint a vivid self-portrait;
- help readers get to know you;
- help readers understand your core interests, skills, values;
- don't use it just to submit a list of activities, awards, accomplishments;
- communicate your underlying motivation behind facts;
- remember that board members realize applicants are trying to say what they think board wants to hear.