



Writing the Personal Statement

The personal statement is your opportunity to present yourself to a selection committee. Some personal statement requirements are very general and comprehensive whereas some are constricted, and the selection committee is anticipating your response to specific topics, concerns, or questions.

The 3 Fs

Whether the given guidelines are general or restrictive, keep in mind the 3 Fs—Fit, Focus, Future—to market it yourself in the best way possible.

Fit – Communicate that you are the best fit for the role. Research the program or position you are applying for. For a position in an academic program, you can show how instructors can help further your professional interests. For a job, you can show how your skills align with the needs of the position and company.

Focus – Demonstrate a clear sense of direction and purpose on a main area of interest. The reader should be able to identify you quickly with a specific area of interest and dedication. This shows that you are mature, passionate, and determined to reach your goals.

Future – Convey that you can conceive a future direction for yourself. Take time to lay out your preconceived path and conception of a larger project. It doesn't matter if you end up doing said project or following that exact path—the point is that you are a driven individual that has thought out your goals and how this program/ job can help you achieve them.

General Advice Regarding Your Personal Statement

Be specific:

- If you state that you would make an excellent doctor, you support that claim with specific reasons. Your desire to become a lawyer, engineer, or whatever should be logical, the result of specific experience that is described in your personal statement.

Tell what you know:

- The middle section of your essay might detail your interest and experience in your particular field, as well as some of your knowledge of the field. Be as specific as you can in relating what you know about the field and use the language professionals use in conveying this information. Refer to experiences (work, research, etc.), classes, conversations with people in the field, or any other source of specific information about the career you want and why you are suited for it.

Don't include some subjects:

- There are certain things best left out of personal statements. For example, references to experiences or accomplishments in high school or earlier are generally not a good idea. Avoid potentially controversial subjects (for example, controversial religious or political issues). While you may think you're hilarious, now is not the time to test your comedic writing skills as it may send the wrong tone to your readers.

Write well and correctly:

- Be meticulous. Type and proofread your personal statement very carefully. Many admissions officers say that good written communication and command of Standard Written English are important to them as they evaluate these statements. Express yourself clearly and concisely, and be sure to adhere to stated length requirements/limits.

Revise, Revise, Revise:

- Revise your statement repeatedly. Have others look over your writing. Make sure your main points are clear, distinct, and memorable; remember, this is your first impression!!!