

How to Write a Personal Statement

Introducing.... YOU

The Personal Statement serves as a reflection of your personality and intellect. This is your opportunity to “sell” yourself.

Two types of Personal Statements:

1. General, comprehensive Personal Statement – wide open as to what you write.
 2. Personal Statements in response to specific questions.
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Questions to ask yourself:

- Why are you special?
- Why are you interested in the scholarship? Provide compelling reasons.
- What details in your life, people or events that have influenced you in your goals will set you apart?
- What leadership or management skills have you learned through working/school?
- What are your career goals?
- Gaps? Discrepancies in your academic record that need explaining?
- Overcome any unusual obstacles or hardships?
- What personal characteristics do you possess that would enhance your prospects for success? Can you demonstrate or document these characteristics? (Integrity, compassion, persistence...etc)
- What skills do you possess? Leadership, communicative, analytical, etc.
- Why makes you a strong and deserving recipient of this scholarship?

Tell a story:

- Concentrate on your opening paragraph.
- Tell who you are.
- Review your personal history.
- Be selective.
- Try to decide what you would say in person if you only had 5 minutes to speak to the committee.

Chief mistakes:

- WRITING TOO SOON: You should THINK about what you want to say for several weeks before putting pen to paper.
- Always make sure you address the specific questions posed in the application.
- Not analyzing yourself & your objectives beforehand. Composing “generic” piece.
- Not using spell check.
- Not having many editors.
- Narrating your own resume without reflection or evaluation.
- Writing “what the ‘committee’ wants to hear.”
- Self-glorification.
- Dishonesty.

- If you aren't sure, say so. Vagueness is not a virtue.
- Too gimmicky, too creative. Be conservative.
- **SENDING IT IN TOO SOON:** Don't send in first drafts!