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.

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!