

PERSONAL STATEMENTS

PERSONAL STATEMENTS ARE OFTEN PART OF GRADUATE SCHOOL APPLICATIONS AND POSSIBLY EMPLOYMENT APPLICATIONS AS WELL. THIS MAY BE YOUR ONE CHANCE TO MAKE YOURSELF STAND OUT, SO DO IT WELL.

1 Know your audience: Research the program or position you are applying to, and tailor your statement for each application. Make sure you are answering all of the questions they ask.

2 Be professional, engaging, and clear. Demonstrate that you have great potential. Figure out what makes you stand out. Be honest, as you are representing yourself.

3 Tell a story: Show the readers who you are. Write about a time you overcame an obstacle or struggle. Use specific details. Catch their attention with an engaging opening paragraph.

4 Avoid talking negatively about other institutions or employers. Avoid controversial political or social issues, as you risk alienating the reader. Avoid going over the page/word limit.

5 Give yourself time to reflect on your life experiences, write multiple drafts, get feedback from mentors and peers, and revise. Proofread carefully!

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER WHEN PLANNING YOUR STATEMENT:

- HOW DID YOU BECOME INTERESTED IN THIS FIELD OF STUDY OR POSITION? WHAT EXPERIENCES LED YOU TO IT?
- RESEARCH THE PROGRAM OR EMPLOYER OF INTEREST. WHAT ARE THEIR VALUES? HOW DO YOUR VALUES ALIGN WITH THEIRS? EXPLAIN.
- WHAT SKILLS AND QUALIFICATIONS DO YOU HAVE THAT WILL MAKE YOU STAND OUT?
- HOW DOES YOUR BACKGROUND SHAPE YOUR EXPERIENCES, VALUES, AND PROFESSIONAL GOALS?
- IS THERE SOMEONE IN YOUR LIFE THAT YOU ADMIRE? HOW HAVE THEY INFLUENCED WHO YOU ARE AND WHO YOU HOPE TO BECOME?
- WHAT SPECIFIC QUESTIONS ARE THEY ASKING?