



Tips for Writing a Personal Statement

A personal statement is your opportunity to distinguish yourself to the school. There are always students out there who have the same, or better, GPA than you and similar work or volunteer experience. That is why your personal statement is crucial in helping the school form an impression of you. So think of it like an interview!

Most schools have a **specific question** they ask and want you to answer in your personal statement. Make sure that while you are writing your essay you keep the question in mind and answer it.

Aside from answering the specific question, there are a few other things that a good personal statement tries to include. They are:

- Your academic history and goals
- Your career goals
- Any challenges you have faced and overcome
- Your experience with diversity
- Why you want to go to that particular school and why you would be an asset to them

When answering the question and elaborating on the above mentioned points, a good thing to remember is **"SHOW, not TELL."** For example, if you want to let the school know that you have experience with different cultures, do not simply **TELL** them that you are a diverse person. Instead **SHOW** them by giving them a specific situation where you experienced diversity.

For example, instead of saying, "I have had lots of experience with different cultures." Say "Last quarter, I worked on a class project with a very diverse group of students. The group included people from Vietnam, Russia, and China. Although there were some challenges, we completed the project successfully and I learned a lot about various cultures."

The fun part of personal statements is doing your homework! Look at the school's website and read the description of the program you are interested in. Find a class you are interested in taking or a professor you would like to work with. Then, include that in your essay! This shows the school that you are already engaged and have done your research. Make sure to tell them why they are the best match for you.

Strategies to get you started:

- Brainstorm specific examples of situations where you have taken a leadership role or have accomplished something related to your future goals
- Think of a personal statement as an interview; how would you sell yourself to them?
- Focus on the positives!
- Tie everything you mention into your reasons for attending the college

Be unique! Try to write something that no one else would write.