

Personal Statements

Personal statements allow writers to share details about themselves and why they would make a **worthwhile candidate** for a university admission, a job acceptance, or a scholarship opportunity.

Pre-writing: Information Gathering

- Research the opportunity you are applying for. Mentioning specific details will show that you are well-informed and a worthwhile candidate!
 - For example, if I am applying to a graduate program, I might mention classes I am interested in, professors I want to work with, clubs I want to join, etc.

Getting Started

Study the prompt for the statement and analyze **keywords**. Consider how you could **tailor your experiences** to demonstrate your suitability. Consider:

- What have I done to prepare for this opportunity?
- How do my experiences align with my goals and responsibilities of this opportunity?
- How would I fit into this university/job/position? How would this position aid me professionally?
- Overall, personal statements ask you to consider the question: “Why you?”



Why me?

What Can I Talk About?



Work Experience



Networking



Study Experience



Career Aspirations



Achievements



Life Experience



Research Experience



Why this Opportunity/Place



Relevant Skills

Pro Tips!



Use your **resources**!
The WRC is here to help!



Use the **marathon mentality**!
Not all preparations can be done overnight; leave time for rounds of revision!

Handout made by
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Personal Statements (continued)

Parts of a Statement

Adapted from Stephen Lassonde's
Helping Your Students Write Personal Statements



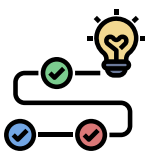
Character (“Who”): Share an anecdote that introduces you as the character of the narrative you are sharing. Your anecdote should demonstrate growth, motivation, or allude to an intellectual mission.



Rising Action (“The Journey”): Explanation of commitment or bridge the gap between your anecdote and the statement’s prompt. How does this story demonstrate achievements, aspirations, or paint a picture of who you are?



Conflict/Climax (“Intellectual Mission”): Answer the larger question of “why you” and “why this school, job, etc.” Explain how this opportunity would help you achieve goals for the near future.



Resolution/Conclusion (“Why”): Provide an understanding of how this opportunity will help you by pointing to long-term implications and professional goals.

Strategies: How Can I Approach This?

Show, Don't Tell!

- Readers want to envision what you do in a certain space instead of being told what happened.
- Use specific details, examples, and stories to illustrate your point.
- For example:
 - Telling: “I am a good problem-solver.”
 - Showing: “Once I recognized that our website was not working, I altered the coding and troubleshooted with my colleagues. Since then, we have helped over 50 students with our service.”

Answering the “So What”

- The “so what” answers the question: “why does this matter?”
- This section of the paper should provide some illuminating details.
- The “so what” goes beyond simple description and shares the greater impact of an anecdote or important connections.
- For example, if you mention a story where you had to overcome something, talk further about the consequences. Did overcoming this fear teach you to be open-minded or resilient? Did it show you something about yourself you did not know?