

Tips with Tutors / How to write a Personal Statement

What is a Personal Statement and where to start?

Writing a personal statement can be daunting but necessary when applying to scholarships, internships, graduate school, or seeking employment. Each prompt varies, depending on where and for what you are applying for, but each one gives you the opportunity to express yourself. Take this as a chance to share your story, in other words, why are you right for the position or opportunity. There is no one right answer to writing a personal statement but there are steps to make it more competitive.

Become familiar with the organization, school, or program you are applying to. This will provide guidance on what experiences to include and what skills to highlight. Be cautious of listing accomplishments only. It is important to share positive traits of yourself but the resume will cover your accomplishments, meaning, there is no need to waste space stating the same information. Use the personal statement to complement the other parts of the application instead of being redundant. Remember to be specific and answer all aspects of the prompt.

Ask yourself, what do you want to convey to the committee, school, or employer? Including weaknesses is not forbidden, but be sure to explain how you overcame those obstacles and showcase your strengths and ambitions. A good first step is to ask yourself these questions and create a list of potential topics.

Are you having a hard time? Do not worry, there are multiple resources out there to help. The abundance of resources may be overwhelming so consider visiting the writing center. The tutors are more than happy to help you brainstorm and clarify any questions that remain unanswered. Everyone has a story to share, but communicating it through writing may be a challenge. This is a process, so do not be discouraged! Use this checklist to help generate some ideas and make sure to have someone proofread your final draft before submitting it.

Resources

[UW Academic Support Programs Applications & personal statements](#)

[Writing a strong personal statement \(Videos created by the Career & Internship Center\)](#)

Questions to ask yourself

- Why are you applying for this major, school, positions, etc.?
- Did you answer all the questions or parts of the application?
- Were you specific? Was the included experience relevant?
- Were you personal? Does the committee reviewing your personal statement know you and your goals?
- Overall, is the information provided understandable?
- Did you fix any grammatical errors and formatting issues?
- Did you get a second opinion or get someone to review it before submitting?



☆ Be confident and share what you have done and learned!
☆ We are here to help so come visit the writing center!

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