Personal Statement

The personal statement is your first chance to make an impression on the committee that reads the applications. You always want to present yourself as the most impressive and qualified candidate; therefore, your focus will be on your talents and accomplishments.

Ask yourself these questions before you start writing:

- What is unique or impressive about your life story?
- What difficult circumstances have you had to overcome?
- What details of your life can express your personality and goals to the admissions committee so they can understand you better?
- How did you become interested in this field and what have you done to pursue your passion? What insights have you gained from studying this topic?
- Has your work or volunteer responsibilities helped you acquire any leadership or managerial skills?
- What personal characteristics do you have that will improve your prospects of success in the field?

Writing the paper:

- Always personalize. Even if you are applying to many schools, you must make an effort to cater each personal statement to the school that you are applying.
  - Show that you have done research on the school and tell them why you want to go to this particular school to pursue your education.
- Tell a story. You are using a personal statement to show what kind of a person you are through a concrete experience, so it shouldn’t feel choppy. You shouldn’t just be answering questions; your personal statement should flow.
- Be specific about what you want to do with your degree. What drives you to choose this career?
- Concentrate on your opening paragraph. This is the section that will either hook or lose the interest of the reader.
- Write in a professional tone.
- Proofread. Have at least one other person read your paper to make sure you are expressing yourself clearly and don’t have any typos.
- Avoid clichés. You always want to be specific about yourself and your experiences. Don’t tell them what you think they want to hear.