

Personal Statement Tips & Suggestions

The personal statement is one of the most important pieces of the scholarship/leadership application process. It allows the Awards selection committee to know you as an individual. Your personal statement is proof that you possess the communication and analytical skills necessary to be a successful student. You want the selection committee to become invested in you and your future.

Interests and Attributes Checklist

The following checklist is a "prompter", not an exhaustive laundry list of organizations, majors, interests, etc. This is the "stir the juices" list. Use it to begin to draw a portrait of yourself for the selection committee.

Hobbies/special interests	Volunteer work not mentioned elsewhere	Extracurricular clubs, groups
Special courses of study	Career interests	Leadership positions

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Awards/recognition	Planned fields of study	Jobs you have held
Sports	Other	Other

This list will allow you to match yourself against possible scholarships. It will be a worksheet that will help you to fill out online forms. It will also provide the basis for additional searches in specific categories.

WHO ARE YOU??

This is the question the Awards selection committee will be asking themselves as they review your application. Your job is to introduce yourself as someone who is deserving of the scholarship they will award. So, just exactly who are you? If you're not sure, you will have a hard time explaining yourself to the committee.

Describe your educational path starting with your decision to attend university. Describe what your degree or program will prepare you for.

Explain your long-range goals for your education, for your career, and for your life once you complete your studies. Where will you go? WHY are these goals important to you?

Include specific information about yourself, your family, your job, your community service or volunteer commitments, and your financial commitments.

The questions on the following page ask you to think about yourself in relation to the rest of the world and to understand how you relate, and particularly, what's special about you.

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- ✓ How would you describe yourself? Think of ten descriptive words that most nearly communicate your personal qualities. Then choose the three or four which are your strongest and most positive to develop and use in your personal statement.
- ✓ How would your friends describe you?
- ✓ How would your parents describe you?
- ✓ How would your teachers describe you?
- ✓ What are the three most important events that have taken place in your life? Why are they important?
- ✓ What personal accomplishment makes you the most proud?
- ✓ What are your three greatest strengths?
- ✓ What three areas of your life need the most improvement?
- ✓ What is your philosophy of life?
- ✓ Why do you want to go to university?
- ✓ How do you hope to be different when you graduate university?
- ✓ Describe yourself and what you want to be doing ten years from now?
- ✓ What has been your most interesting class in school? Why was it interesting to you?
- ✓ Pick two or three extracurricular activities you participate in. Why do you participate?
- ✓ What are the three biggest obstacles you have overcome in your life?
- ✓ What person or persons have been influential in your life? Why?
- ✓ Everyone is special; what makes you special?

FINE TUNING

REVISE, REVISE, REVISE. You are only allowed so many words; use them wisely. Editing takes time. Consider reordering your supporting details, delete irrelevant sections, and make clear the broader implications of your experiences. Scrutinize every word as you near the final draft.

GET HELP. You don't have to write your personal statement all by yourself. You can get help from friends and family members. You can get help from advisors and mentors.

Modify your statement for each scholarship application. Mention the scholarship by name, if appropriate.

Your ability to submit a neat, timely, complete application reflects on you. It is the face you present to the Awards selection committee. Take pride in yourself by submitting the best application you can.

GOOD LUCK!