

# WORKSHEET: WRITING YOUR PERSONAL STATEMENT

## FIRST THINGS FIRST

Some programs may provide you a prompt or topic on which you need to write. Make sure you have that information as well as any other requirements such as word or character limits.

## GETTING STARTED!

Answer the following questions to generate ideas about what main points or themes to include:

1. Why are you pursuing this field of study?
2. What *unique* characteristics or skills do you have that will allow you to be successful in graduate school and your career?
3. Have you faced any unusual obstacles or hardships?
4. What are your short and long term goals?
5. What work, volunteer, or extracurricular experiences have influenced your career goals?
6. Who are the people who have influenced your career choice?
7. Why are you interested in this particular graduate program or school?

## INTRODUCTION

Storytelling:

- Start in the middle of the action
- Place the reader in the setting and make them feel the emotion
- Write with vivid, attention-grabbing detail
- Show your passion!

\*Include a sentence connecting your story to your current goals

## SAMPLE

**Introductory Sentence:**

*"As a 10 year old, sitting in the room with my aunt, I can vividly recall..."*

**Connector Sentence:**

*"Since that first moment, I could tell this was a turning point in my life and what ignited my passion for this field."*

## OUTLINE YOUR THOUGHTS | GATHER YOUR IDEAS

## **BODY**

What experiences have sustained your ambition over time?

What will make you successful in graduate school?

- Knowledge learned from coursework/experiences
- Skills developed through hands-on involvement
- Abilities that make you stand out

Why does this particular school/program interest you?

Aim for quality not quantity and depth over breadth. Focus on a few significant examples/themes.

## **OUTLINE YOUR THOUGHTS | GATHER YOUR IDEAS**

## **CONCLUSION**

How will this program help you reach your goals? Think about short-term and long-term goals

Your conclusion should tie your essay together and connect back to the opening paragraph

Reaffirm your passion for the field you want to specialize in

## **OUTLINE YOUR THOUGHTS | GATHER YOUR IDEAS**

## **TIPS**

- Provide specific, concrete examples. Avoid generic statements and clichés. This will help you stand out among other applicants.
- Maintain a positive tone. Reflect on your goals and experiences with honesty and sincerity.
- Leave yourself enough time to review and edit your essay. Check it again in a couple of days. Ask others to read for constructive feedback.
- Proofread. Your essay should be free of spelling, grammatical, and punctual errors.
- Make sure to tailor your essay based on your research of the school and/or program.

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