



Scholarship Personal Statement Guide

Writing a personal statement can be a challenging task, but it doesn't have to be! This guide will help you organize your thoughts and put you in the right frame of mind as you write your personal statement.

A. GATHERING INFORMATION FOR YOUR PERSONAL STATEMENT

Before you begin to write your personal statement, it is important that you collect the information you need to write it. Below are a series of questions that will help you collect details that fit under the general categories required by many scholarship applications. Answer these questions as completely as possible. Remember, it is always better to have more information to work with than less.

BACKGROUND

1. Where were you born?
2. What schools did you attend?
3. Do you live in a bilingual home?
4. Who or what was your motivation to continue your education?

PERSONAL AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENTS

1. Name an accomplishment you are proud of in your personal life.
2. Mother Teresa once said, "We can't do great things, just small things with great love." Name a small thing you've done with great love.
3. What awards (personal and/or academic) have you received?
4. What degrees have you earned?

ACADEMIC PLANS AND CAREER GOALS

1. What is your major?
2. What degrees would you like to earn?
3. What do you want to do when you graduate?

PAST, CURRENT, AND FUTURE EFFORTS TOWARDS MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN YOUR COMMUNITY

1. How have you served your community in the past?
2. Are you currently involved in community service?
3. How will you serve your community in the future?



FINANCIAL NEED

1. Do you have to work to pay for school?
2. How will this scholarship help you financially?
3. What have you sacrificed financially in order to attend college?

B. SELLING YOURSELF TO THE SCHOLARSHIP SELECTION COMMITTEE

This is a very important part of the process! Here you will sort through all the information you have collected to write your personal statement. Please keep the following things in mind:

- ✓ Create an outline with the information you have selected. This outline will help you plan your essay.
- ✓ A personal statement is like a 30-second commercial during the Super Bowl. You have to grab the readers' attention with your story so they decide they want to invest in you.
- ✓ Be sure to cover all aspects of the scholarship qualifying criteria, if it be financial need, merit based, leadership, etc.
- ✓ Highlight your strengths. If you have great background information and financial need, but not very much past volunteer experience, then write the personal statement focusing on background information and financial need and placing less emphasis on other areas. When you write the volunteer section, emphasize what you will do rather than what you haven't done.

C. EDITING YOUR ESSAY

We encourage you to stop by the Writing Enrichment Lab if you have any questions regarding your personal statement. Staff and tutors are available Monday –Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Please report to the writing labs front desk, located in North Hall 116, where our staff will make sure someone is available to help you with your personal statement. If you are a freshman, ask your Freshman Seminar Course instructor for assistance.