**Personal Statement How To**

A personal statement is just that-personal. It is about you. The topic is you. It is usually written in essay format. Admissions committees for colleges sometimes require a personal statement. It should be indicative of the type of person you are or would like to be. Ideally it should also show the college how your attendance there will benefit both of you and the school. In other words, what do each of you have to offer the other so that both will learn and benefit?

An admissions committee wants to know how well you will adapt to their environment, what personal experiences you have had that might be of benefit to their particular style of academic life, whether you do well at setting and attaining goals, and whether you have any leadership skills. Your personal statement may also show the committee something about your writing abilities, thus helping them place you in the correct freshman English classes. Start out by writing a brief summary of your life. Here are some suggestions you might focus on. For any of these examples, tell how you handle a situation, what your experiences were, and what you learned from the situation.

If you are a military brat, show what you learned about adapting to the changes that occur every time you move to a new place. How did you adapt? How did you make new friends? How did you become involved in new clubs or projects?

Show what qualities of character you have worked at developing, such as creativity, integrity, loyalty. Have you ever been involved in an incident that affected you deeply, possibly changing the way you see yourself or the rest of the world? Tell about that.

Explain how others have influenced you for the good, or the not so good and what you learned from your experiences.

Have you overcome any social adversities or health challenges in your life? Have they changed your outlook on life? Have they guided you toward a choice of career or profession?

Have you done any community service projects? Do you help other students at your school by doing something such as peer tutoring? If you are active in a church, tell how and explain what benefits you derive from your efforts. Do you hold any leadership positions in school or at church? Describe them.

Are you from a large family? Tell how family life influenced one or more of your decisions about college or a career.

These suggestions are simply food for though. Do not feel obligated to write about your entire life. Tell about a few important highlights. If you use sources other than your own thoughts, be sure to document your sources correctly.

This type of paper is short. Remember your page or space limitations. Your statement does not need to be long. More than one page, but no more than 2. If you are given any format criteria for the statement, be sure to follow those directions. They may be looking for your ability to follow directions, to read all the instructions and adhere to them.

Do NOT include parent names, detailed personal information such as your name (they have this on your application), where you were born, how old you are, what specific schools you have attended, or any negativity. They want to know how WELL you will do and how WELL you handle situations. It is alright to mention negative things but do not explain that you hate school and that is why your grades aren’t the best. Explain, instead, why school may have been difficult for you and what you were doing to overcome that.

Jot down some ideas prior to writing. Brainstorm! Proofread (remember, colleges might be using this to evaluate your writing skills). Write in paragraph form and have a well written introduction, body and conclusion. DO NOT WRITE: “THIS PAPER WILL BE ABOUT…MY PERSONAL STATEMENT IS…I WILL BE TELLING YOU ABOUT…OR IN CONCLUSION”!!! Have your advisory teacher proofread this prior to putting it in your portfolio.

If you have college applications that ask for a specific essay to be written, you may choose to answer those essay questions instead of writing a personal statement. Just be sure to let your teacher know before-and so that accommodations can be made. Always give a copy of the essay question to your teacher so that they are aware of what needs to be addressed.

I am here to help make the transition from high school to college/work as easy as I can. Please, rely on your teachers for help in writing these essays!