PERSONAL STATEMENT

Personal Statement
The process of applying for graduate and professional programs often requires a personal statement or application letter. This type of writing requires you to highlight various components including, but not limited to, strengths, unique attributes, goals, and life details. The statement should be concise yet comprehensive.

Each programs' requirements for a personal statement or letter of application may differ, but the purpose of the document is to represent your life experiences and qualifications in the best way and to demonstrate your writing ability. Your essay or application letter is one of the first introductions to the program staff. Allow plenty of time to write the document *and* time for multiple people to revise and proofread your essay or letter.

Things to Consider
√ What is unique or impressive about you?
√ What skills (i.e. analytical, leadership) and personal characteristics (i.e. compassion, determination) do you posses that make you a stronger candidate and successful in the field
√ What experiences or details will set you apart form other applicants?
√ Why are you pursuing this field and what attracted you to the field/program?
√ What have you learned about the field through classes, volunteer hours, work, or other experiences?
√ How have your extra curricular activities, leadership positions, or work, enhanced/contributed to your growth?
√ What are you career goals and aspirations?
√ Are there discrepancies in your academic record that should be explained (mediocre exam score)?
√ Have you persevered through any obstacles or hardships (economic, familiar, or physical)?

General Guidance
√ Answer the questions and follow the application requirements
-Customize your statements appropriately for each application
-Follow the format details (i.e. length), if provided

√ Keep it brief
-Be concise and detailed, focus each paragraph on a single idea

Format
The requirements for personal statements will vary by program, but a general statement can follow this format.

√ Introduction
Many personal statements begin with a catchy opening, gaining the reader's attention. From there you can connect the example to the actual program/position for which you are applying. Mention the specific name of the program or company, as well as the title of the position or degree you are seeking, in the first paragraph.

√ Detailed Supporting Paragraphs
Subsequent paragraphs should address any specific questions from the application. Each paragraph should be focused and should have a topic sentence that informs the reader of the paragraph's emphasis. The examples from your experience must be relevant and should support your argument about your qualifications.

√ Conclusion
Tie together the various experiences that you highlighted in the essay, and reiterate your interest for the specific program. You might also mention how this program or degree connects with your long-term goals.