



## Dos and Don'ts of Writing a Personal Statement

### Do's:

- Make sure you answer the key questions – Who are you? What can you bring to the role? And what is your career goal?
- Analyze the question(s) asked on a specific application.
- Research the school and/or program to which you are applying. Find what inspires you.
- Take a personal inventory. Write out a 2-3 sentence response to each question.
- Revise your essay for form and content.
- Ask someone else - preferably a faculty member in your area - to read your essay and make suggestions for further revision.
- Revise again.
- Proofread carefully.
- Be concise. Stay well within length requirements.
- Be creative.
- Use simple words and direct phrasing.

### Don'ts:

- Write what you think the admissions committee wants to hear.
- Use empty, vague, over-used words like "meaningful," "beautiful," "challenging," "invaluable," or "rewarding."
- Overwrite a minor point about yourself.
- Overshare.
- Repeat information directly from the application form itself unless you use it to illustrate a point or want to develop it further.
- Emphasize the negative.
- Get too personal about religion or politics.
- Be generalized in your statements about your goals.
- Use quotations.
- Use irrelevant personal facts.
- Try to be funny.
- Plagiarize, lie or exaggerate.
- Be too generic.