

Top 10 Characteristics of a Winning Personal Statement



#1 - Keep the Document as Short as you Can	Keep your Personal Statement to no more than 1,000 words unless otherwise directed. Admissions committees have lots to read—long documents are less likely to impress than you think they will.
#2 - Use Concise Language	Ensure your thoughts are focused and concise. Remove pointless words (i.e., that) and phrases. If one word works, don't use two or ten!
#3 - Use Common Language	Avoid excessive use of technical language. While you want to speak the language of your field, this is not an academic research article.
#4 - Be Confident in Yourself	Do not use tentative language (i.e., "I think I have the skills necessary...") You either do have the skills or you do not. At the same time, do not exaggerate your skills or experience either—that can come across as unteachable.
#5 - Include Connections with Students/Faculty	This is more than name-dropping. Start developing connections (networking) with people at your desired institutions now so there is familiarity when you apply.
#6 - Keep the Pace Moving	Short paragraphs are better than long paragraphs. Summarize your studies and achievements versus providing full details.
#7 - Use Section Headers	We might be the only people to suggest this and to be honest, we have not seen many examples of this in practice. However, as someone who reads lots of students' assignments and papers, section headers help focus the reader and keep the content moving.
#8 - Include Four Main Sections	Introduction. What have you studied? How have you applied your knowledge in work/projects? Why should you study at this institution and what are your future plans with the education they give you? (<i>Perhaps you could have section headers around these four sections?</i>)

#9 - Tell Them Why This Institution is for You	Be specific here and do NOT use a generic rationale for every application. Institutions are not just looking to see if you are likely to excel. (Most applicants are going to excel.) They also want to know if they can properly mentor you and your goals.
#10 - Get Professional Help!	Surveys find more than 50% of Asian students use consultants to help craft their Personal Statement. Get help to ensure your Personal Statement is top quality!

My team and I at PES have three specific ways we can help you craft your Personal Statement this semester:

Option #1: Basic Proofreading—Starting with a written document, we will ensure it has proper English grammar as well as great style, flow, and word choice.

Option #2: Basic Proofreading PLUS Extensive Paragraph-by-Paragraph Commentary—Starting with a written document, we will provide Basic Proofreading as well as a lengthy commentary after each paragraph suggesting changes, reorganization, and rewording to improve the quality of the document.

Option #3: Basic Proofreading, Extensive Paragraph-by-Paragraph Commentary PLUS Writing Consultation—Starting with a blank document, we will coach you (*via video chat or email*) by asking the right questions to uncover the information necessary for your document. Using your own words, we will help you organize the content into a first draft. Finally, we will provide our Extensive Paragraph-by-Paragraph Commentary PLUS Basic Proofreading to polish the final draft.

For more information or to request a service, reach out to editor@paperediting.org or visit our website: www.paperediting.org