

In this writing lab activity sheet, you can find tools to help support you as you revise your personal statement. **Activity 1** guides you through freewriting prompts that help you investigate your career goals, which will help you narrow down answers to the essay prompt. **Activity 2** guides you through various ways in which you can let your personality and experiences shine, since a big goal of a personal statement is to get to know you. **Activity 3** asks you to mark up sentences where you address certain questions, broken down into a numerical and bulleted list. This activity will help you identify any missing information and get a birds eye view of your overall spread of content.

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# Activity 1 - Prompt Drafting

Graduate school can be one of the most grueling experiences. To help you make sure you are fully prepared for this process at an institution, these questions ask you to set aside 10 minutes to brainstorm responses to the following guiding prompts. These prompts may not be used directly in your essay, but are aimed to help you think deeply about your career goals.

1. What career background do you come from? What previous jobs have you had? What jobs have your parents had?
2. What is your dream job? What kind of a position would you like to have after you graduate from the program you are applying to?
3. What is the most challenging experience you have had with a supervisor? With a customer, client, or coworker?
4. What would be the worst job to have? What do you hate doing in a professional setting?

# Activity 2 - Making a Personal Statement *Personal*

Remember that a personal statement is supposed to be a narrative–a story about who you are. While the PS should include important information from your resume or CV, indicating your qualifications and experiences, you should also take the time to emphasize who you are as a person; doing so is difficult, but doing so will help you stand out from the stack of applicants.

The chart below asks you to list experiences from your resume and begin to brainstorm a specific narrative about how that experience helped you grow as a professional. In the second column, list out what you learned and what you struggled with. In the last column, try writing a couple sentences about this experience, as if you were writing a short story; talk about what you felt, what you were anxious about, what you were proud of, and compare when you started to the end of your experience.

| **Previous Experience** | **Growths & Struggles** | **When I had this experience, I…** |
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# Activity 3 - Content Checklist

Once you have a draft, use this content checklist to make sure you’re going over necessary information that reviewers want to see from your application. Going one by one, take time to underline, circle, highlight, or otherwise mark up the sentences where you address each item in your draft; it may be useful (and fun!) to color code these, corresponding to each number.

When you’ve completed your checklist, feel free to check in with one of our tutors to talk about any lingering questions, concerns, or to learn how to make a follow-up appointment with us.

1. In your introduction, which sentences:
   1. show who you are?
   2. explain your academic and professional background?
   3. state explicitly why you are applying to the program?
2. Which sentences express why the program should accept you?
3. Which sentences explain why the program is a great match for your professional and career goals?
4. In the conclusion, which sentences:
   1. explain what you will learn during your time in the program?
   2. emphasize what you have to offer as a potential future student?