Personal Statement

The personal statement, your opportunity to sell yourself in the application process, generally falls into one of two categories:

- The general, comprehensive personal statement: this allows you maximum freedom in terms of what you write and is the type of statement often prepared for standard medical or law school application forms.
- The response to very specific questions: Often, business and graduate school applications ask specific questions, and your statement should respond specifically to the question being asked. Some business school applications favor multiple essays, typically asking for responses to three or more questions.

Yes, please!	Please avoid...
• Research the university, program, or company. Express yourself clearly and concisely. • Adhere to stated word limits. • Find an angle or a "hook" and to use as a framework for the rest of the statement. • Use correct grammar. • Support claims with specific reasons why you're suitable for the job. • Your desire for a profession should emerge logically from your experiences. Your application should emerge as the logical conclusion to your story. • The middle section of your essay might detail your interest, experience, and knowledge in your particular field • Use professional language to convey this information.	• Cliches • Mentioning potentially controversial subjects • References to experiences or accomplishments in high school or earlier

Questions to consider:

- What relevant experiences can you refer to? work, research, classes, seminars...
- What makes you special or unique?
- When did you become interested in this field?
- What insights and lessons have you gained?
- How have you learned about this field? class, readings, seminars, work, conversations...
- What are your career goals?
- Are there any gaps or discrepancies in your academic record?
- Have you overcome any unusual obstacles or hardships?
- What personal characteristics make you a strong candidate and how do you demonstrate them?
- What skills do you possess? leadership, communication...

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ELB 201

Information gathered from CSUSM Writing Center resources.