



# Writing a Personal Statement



Some aspects of writing a CV are easier than others. For example, jotting down your career history or qualifications, whilst perhaps being a lengthy task, won't be a big challenge. However, many people find writing a personal statement much more challenging.

Of course, there are many different types of personal statement, ranging from university applications through to job applications, with each requiring a different approach and warranting different inclusions. However, all of them share one common function: to make the reader want to read on and represent why you're worth their consideration.

Below are some top tips for putting together a personal statement:

### What is a personal statement?

Usually, a personal statement makes up the opening statement of your CV. It is a brief personal summary given to prospective employers to help you stand out from the competition.

### Why do you need a personal statement?

Your personal statement is your chance to sell yourself to the employer, and help you put across the specific skills that make you perfect for the position.

To put it simply, it is one of the most important parts of your CV, and a well written personal statement can mean the difference between being invited to interview, and your application being rejected.

### How long should a personal statement be?

Your statement should be direct and to the point. Ideally, you are looking for about 150 words (4-5 lines). If you exceed this, you run the risk of rambling and losing the attention of the reader.

**Remember:** Your personal statement is an opening summary. It is not a cover letter. Keep it concise, relevant and to the point.

### What should it say?

Effective personal statements often try to answer the following questions:

- who you are
- what you can offer
- what you're aiming for in your career

You can lay out your statement in different ways – depending on your writing style. When drafting, bullet points are often useful to ensure you have ticked all the boxes.



**Tip:** Use the job description to assist you identify the specific skills the employer is looking for. For example, if it highlights that the perfect candidate should have volunteer management skills, ensure that you reflect that you have these skills in your statement

### What tense should it be written in?

Your personal statement can be written in any person or tense.

**Remember:** ensure you maintain consistency throughout.

### How long should I spend writing my personal statement?

A personal statement should be tailored to the role you are applying for, which means a new one should be written with each CV you send off/job you apply for.

Many people think this is overly time consuming, however, the longer you spend on your application, ensuring you tick all the boxes asked for, the more the recruiter will take notice.

**Tip:** Generic introductions will not commend you to anyone, and are a waste of valuable space.

### Example

#### *Personal Statement*

A recent psychology graduate with a 2:1 honours degree from the University of X, looking to secure a Graduate Research position or similar to utilise my current analytical skills and knowledge and also help me to further develop these skills in a practical and fast-paced environment.

My eventual career goal is to assume responsibility for a research lab to actively contribute to the overall success of any organisation I work for.



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