

How to write a personal statement

A personal statement is a personal summary submitted to apply for a job to outline why you should be shortlisted for interview. It sums up the specific skills and experience that make you perfect for the position, you'll be able to prove your suitability and convince the recruiting manager/shortlisting panel to read on.

How long should a personal statement be?

Ideally, your personal statement should be no more than one page or two at the most. Any more than this and you run the risk of rambling.

It's a summary, not a cover letter. So, keep it concise, pertinent and to the point. You can do a google search for some examples to get you started.

What do you put in a personal statement?

Successful personal statements answer the following questions.

- Who are you?
- What can you offer?
- What are your career goals?

To do so, you should consider the following.

- Explain why you want the job and why you are a good fit for the role.
- Demonstrate your skills – reflect not only on your skills gained through work consider including skills gained through your social life and extracurricular activities.
- Tell us about your influences – give a bit of yourself, tell the SSSC what inspires you and don't forget to outline your personal values.
- Demonstrate relevant experience – outline your relevant experience matching as accurately as possible to the job role that you are applying for.
- Include your accomplishments – relevant examples can provide the context, scope and complexity of tasks that you have been responsible for in the past.

To make sure you've ticked all the boxes, use the job profile and person specification to help you identify the specific skills and experience depending on the job role you are applying for.

Here are some helpful dos and donts:

Do

Get straight to the point – A good personal statement isn't just informative, it's also succinct and concise. So try keeping it to one page, two at most for maximum impact.

Make sure you answer the key questions – Who are you? What can you bring to the role? And what is your career goal?

Add value – Always aim to be specific. Quantifying achievements such as 'Increased revenue' with a number (e.g. 'by x amount') is much more impactful than merely hinting at your success.

Use the job profile – A key part of writing your personal statement is being able to put across the skills that make you the perfect fit for the role.

Don't

Be too generic – It might take a little more time to tailor your statement to the role you are applying for but it will be more effective as a result.

Focus on yourself – It can be tempting to focus on your own attributes and where you want to go in your career. But the best personal statements cover what skills you can bring and what you can offer that no other candidate can.

Confuse it with your cover letter – Your personal statement is meant as a short overview. Small representations of your success (e.g. a Financial Analyst with eight years' experience) may be necessary – but keep them brief.

Think of it as a list – 'I am experienced. I am qualified. I am a good communicator...' Refrain from listing everything you have ever done or every attribute you have.

Forget to read it out loud – Get your friends and family to read it too. And most importantly, read it out loud and make sure it flows (and there aren't any spelling and grammar mistakes).

We respect your privacy and will only use your personal information fairly and lawfully. To find out how we handle your personal information please read the Privacy Notice on our website.

Best of luck,

The Recruitment Team