

PERSONAL STATEMENT TEMPLATE

FOR PUBLIC SERVANTS

What is a personal statement and what is its purpose?

A personal statement allows you to demonstrate your suitability for a role by providing evidence against the essential criteria as outlined in the job description. If used alongside a CV, it should expand on the CV rather than repeat it and add your personal qualities. You should provide details of your relevant skills and experience and demonstrate how you have acquired these skills and what experience you have which can be transferred to the job.

Use this template to guide you next time you write a personal statement. Follow the steps and review the prompts, checking off each one as you go.

Before you start writing, make sure you understand what you're being asked to demonstrate in the personal statement.

- Make sure you read all the information about the written application process thoroughly so you know what is expected from the personal statement.
- Pay close attention to word count, structure and formatting, as this is likely to vary from application to application.
- Return to the job description and make a note of the key competencies and skills required; keep this list close by when writing the statement and return to it whilst writing to ensure you are demonstrating them.

Break the task of writing the personal statement down into small, manageable steps.

- Your personal statement should have an introduction, body and conclusion - but you do not have to write them in that order. For example, starting with the body first and then coming back to the introduction can help you create a stronger opening because you already know what the rest of your statement discusses.

Make the introduction personal.

- Reflect on why you are interested and motivated to apply for this role. Drawing attention to this will make your statement unique to you from the very beginning.
- Highlight the most relevant aspects of your personality and experiences that make you suitable for the role. Showing who you are can help encourage the recipient to continue reading.
- Write in your own voice and use key words rather than buzzwords which are not relevant.

Expand on relevant skills, interests and experiences in the body of the statement.

- Before writing the body of your statement, return to the checklist of competencies you made at the beginning. You should focus on your achievements and experiences which best demonstrate the competencies and behaviours outlined in the job description.
- In this section you can include:
 - ▶ Your achievements and experience: This includes any relevant qualifications, certifications, awards, years of industry experience and positions you have held.
 - ▶ Your relevant skills and talents: Describe the talents and skills you have learned on your career path which will help you in the job.
- Make sure to ground the above in tangible examples rather than simply listing them. Make sure these examples are recent ones that you were personally involved in and invested time and effort in.
- Including specific data and actionable statistics from your experience will make a personal statement stand out. Metrics of success also serve to quantify your achievements.
 - ▶ A good description of an achievement should:
 - ✓ Be specific to the core competence and behaviours required
 - ✓ Explain what you did and why and how you overcame any particular difficulties
 - ✓ Highlight any lessons learned
 - ✓ State the outcomes, benefits and impact achieved
 - ✓ Give an approximate time-scale and date

At the end of the body take the time to reflect on your professional goals.

- Write about how the job you are applying for fits into your dreams for the future.
- Consider selecting a specific goal that the job can help you achieve.

Write a strong conclusion.

- Craft a conclusion that leaves a strong, lasting impression on the reader. Use this space to clearly re-state why you applied and what you hope to achieve in the role.
- Be sure to connect your achievements, experiences and skills directly to your future contributions to the organisation.

Review your writing style and ensure you have done the following:

- Keep it simple:** Short sentences and simple language will ensure your personal statement is clear and effective.
- Have a positive tone:** Use language that demonstrates your enthusiasm for the opportunity.
- Have a clear structure:** You can use headers or bullet points to give more clarity to your points.
- Use active voice:** Active voice means using strong verbs that engage a reader and directly identify your accomplishments, which can make your personal statement more effective. For example instead of In 2017, the department restructuring was led by me try I led the department restructuring in 2017.
- Be unique:** Your personal statement should be unique to you, so discuss what makes you different from other candidates.

Before you submit your statement, proofread, edit and repeat. As you do this check the following:

- Spelling and grammar
- Relevancy
- Specificity
- Active voice
- Clear phrasing
- Simple, easy-to-understand language

Example:

I was inspired to apply for this position because [include a personal anecdote which connects you to the role or type of work]. I have always been interested in [mention a particular part of the job - for example the stakeholders you'd be working with or its essential function]. My past experience in [briefly highlight your most relevant previous experiences] have given me a firm foundation in the skills required in this role. Moreover, I am [list a few relevant personality traits], which makes me a good fit.

During my time as [insert position] I was responsible for/ managed/ partook [mention functions of the role and the part you played in them which may be similar to the role you're applying for] and gained experience in [highlight one of the main areas of experience they have highlighted in the job description]. As a result I was able to [share information of any results or outcomes]. This experience will enable me to do [give an example of how you will be able to excel in the new role given this previous experience].

Over the course of my career I have been able to develop my skills in [mention any skills you have which are transferable to the role]. For example, I have practised [insert skill] by [highlight a project or task which required these skills]. Using these skills I achieved/ contributed to [insert a tangible benefit your organisation has a result of your skills]. This shows my ability to [highlight how these skills will aid you in the new position, mentioning specific tasks or functions].

I have also broadened my experience and skill set outside of my professional function by undertaking [give examples of any training you may have attended and the associated qualifications gained].

One example of where I have demonstrated [mention one or several of the core competencies or behaviours required] was when [explain an achievement including what you did, when, why and how you overcame any difficulties]. This taught me that [highlight any lessons learned]. As a result I was able to achieve [state the outcome, benefits and impact].

I am excited about the career development that this position offers. I am particularly keen to [give an example of a future career goal which the job can help you achieve]. I hope that by working in this role I will be able to [demonstrate how this job will help you achieve your goal].

In conclusion, by applying for this role I hope to further put to use my skills and experience in [connect back to your most relevant skills and experiences]. As a part of [insert organisation/ department name] I look forward to the opportunity to [give an example of how you might contribute to organisation/department in the future].