



EQUIPPING YOUNG PEACEMAKERS

Presenting Yourself: Personal Statements & Cover Letters
with Becca Farnum

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Applications

- Why are these so hard?!?

Applications

- **Why are these so hard?!?**
- **What's the primary purpose of a personal statement or cover letter?**

Applications

- **Why are these so hard?!?**
- **What's the primary purpose of a personal statement or cover letter?**

to make someone curious for more

Applications

It all comes down to storytelling

so let's practice 😊



head

What do you know about
some issue?

heart

What do you care about?
Why?



hands

What skills do you
have/need, to make a
difference?

personal statement *(statement of purpose)*

- **generally for grad school or grant applications**
- **often open-ended, though they may give a prompt**
- **~500-750 words is common, but check requirements**

personal statement

the story of you

- **why you care about the subject**
- **what you bring to the issue**
- **how the program will help you**

personal statement

the story of you

- why you care about the subject
→ **tell a story of finding this passion**
- what you bring to the issue
- how the program will help you

personal statement

the story of you

- why you care about the subject
 - tell a story of finding this passion
- what you bring to the issue
 - **share your unique skillset & background**
- how the program will help you

personal statement

the story of you

- why you care about the subject
 - tell a story of finding this passion
- what you bring to the issue
 - share your unique skillset & background
- how the program will help you
 - **visualize specifics about being there**

personal statement: structure

- Paragraph 1: Story Drop
 - set the scene with a dramatic narrative
 - make them want to read more about how this ties to them
- Middle Paragraphs: Background
 - demonstrating that you have the academic and interpersonal capabilities they are asking for
 - specific anecdotes about experiences that showcase what you know, care about, and want to learn more about
- Final Paragraph: Connecting to them
 - name specific people/projects you want to work with and courses/programs you are interested in
 - talk about how you'll contribute to their community

cover letters

(may also be email)

- **generally for job applications**
- **often respond to a specific job advertisement**
- **~350 words**
stick to 1 page, unless otherwise told

cover letter

connecting your capacities to what they need done

- **read the job description carefully**
- **consider that description like a rubric**
- **identify what they want and are asking for**

cover letter

connecting your capacities to what they need done

- read the job description carefully
 - **identify skills, duties, and values**
- consider that description like a rubric
- identify what they want and are asking for

cover letter

connecting your capacities to what they need done

- read the job description carefully
 - identify skills, duties, and values
- consider that description like a rubric
 - **respond directly to it, point by point**
- identify what they want and are asking for

cover letter

connecting your capacities to what they need done

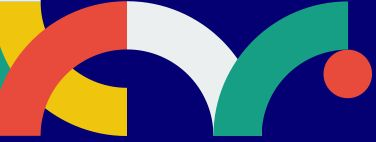
- read the job description carefully
 - identify skills, duties, and values
- consider that description like a rubric
 - respond directly to it, point by point
- identify what they want and are asking for
 - **be clear how you can give it to them**

cover letter: structure

- Paragraph 1: Values Matching
 - why you want this job; what you're passionate about
 - ...and how this ties to their goals!
- Paragraphs 2-4(ish): Skills Matching
 - demonstrating that you have the capabilities they are asking for
 - specific anecdotes/experiences that showcase what you can do
- Final Paragraph: Looking Ahead
 - reiteration of goals matching and how you look forward to working with them
 - what you're hoping they'll do and next steps (consider contact info, interview, etc.)



questions?



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