

PERSONAL STATEMENT/SCHOLARSHIP ESSAY

Your personal statement should be something that makes you stand out from the crowd. What is it that you do best and how are you a leader in your community, school, activities etc.

- Describe your anticipated course of study and current career interests, including how you plan to continue to be active in volunteer and community organizations
- Describe your student activities and the leadership role you play in them. Include what you find most rewarding or valuable about your participation in these activities
- Explain what your plans are for continuing education and a leadership role in your community throughout your life.

OR

Write a **one-page letter** (ONLY ONE PAGE): (if you choose this option, your letter can be used for your application for the Toledo Community Scholarship that opens in February/March)

Your letter should include your academic or vocational goals, your high school activities, and any other information that you feel is pertinent. Please address the letter to TCS Committee. The committee prefers at least a 12-point font, but there is not a specific font requirement.

PERSONAL STATEMENTS

(for your own use when filling out college/scholarship applications)

1. What degree are you pursuing?
2. What is your major field of study?
3. Why did you choose this major? What contribution will you make to this field of study?
4. Describe your career goals.
5. What makes you a good candidate for success in your chosen field?
6. By what date do you hope/plan to complete your degree?
7. What awards/honors/distinctions have you received?
8. Describe your community volunteer experiences.
9. Describe the community/church activities in which you have participated.
10. List your school offices/activities/clubs.
11. In what ways will this scholarship assist you in continuing your education and meeting your goals?
12. Tell the committee something special/unique about yourself.

DO's and DON'Ts

DON'T: Open your essay with a quote. This is a well-worn strategy that is mostly used ineffectively. Instead of using someone else's words, use your own.

DON'T: Use perfunctory sentences such as, "In this essay, I will..."

DO: Tell a story, discuss your personal history and why those experiences have led you to apply for these scholarships.

DO: Use actual, detailed examples from your own life to backup your claims and arguments as to why you should receive the scholarship. Focus on your strengths and turn any problems or weaknesses into a success story.

DON'T: Use words from a thesaurus that are new to you. You may end up using the word incorrectly and that will make your writing awkward. Keep it simple and straightforward. The point of the essay is to tell YOUR story, not to demonstrate how many words you know.

DON'T: Rehash what is already stated on your resume. Choose additional, unique stories to sell yourself to the scholarship committee.

Do: Write an outline. If you've already started writing or have a first draft, make an outline based on what you've written so far. This will help you see whether your paragraphs flow and connect with one another.

DO: Be clear and concise. Make sure each paragraph discusses only one central thought or argument.

DON'T: Write a generic essay for every application. Adapt your personal statement for each individual scholarship application.

DON'T: Simply state that you need the money. Even if you have severe financial need, it won't help to simply ask for the money and it may come off as tacky.

DO: Proofread several times before finally submitting your essay.

DO: Run spell check and grammar check on your computer but also do your own personal check. Spell check isn't perfect and you shouldn't rely on technology to make your essay perfect.