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# How to Write Your Personal Statement

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# First Think About Yourself

- Special, unique, distinctive, and/or impressive about you
  - Details of your life that help the committee better understand you or help set you apart from other applicants
    - Overcome any unusual obstacles or hardships
    - Personal characteristics, for example, integrity, compassion, persistence
    - Skills, for example, leadership, communicative, analytical
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# Find an Angle and Talk About Real Experiences

- Be specific
  - Make it interesting
  - Show or demonstrate through concrete experience
  - Write in a style that is fresh, lively, and different
  - Make yourself memorable
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# Concentrate on Your Opening Paragraph

- Lead or opening paragraph generally the most important
  - Here you grab the reader's attention...or lose it
  - Becomes the framework for the rest of the statement
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# Develop the Ideas and Stay Focused

- Detail your interests and experiences
  - Refer to experiences: work, classes, conversations with people, books you've read, volunteer work you've done, and so on
  - Don't stray away from your topic
  - Don't go into long narratives or stories
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# Avoid Certain Subjects

- Controversial
  - Religion and Politics
  - Overly personal experiences and extreme hardships/family problems
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# Write Well and Correctly

- Type and proofread your statement very carefully
  - Express yourself clearly and concisely
  - Stay close to the word limits
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# Avoid Cliches

- Stay away from often-repeated or tired statements = **“I always keep my eyes on the road.”** or **“I want to be a doctor because I am good at science and want to help people.”**
  - **“My grandfather was an extremely significant part of my life. Without him, I would not have many of the advantages I have today.”** (These two sentences, though expressive and correct, have essentially said nothing.)
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# Use Attention Grabbers

- **“During World War II, my grandfather flew fighter planes with the Tuskegee Airmen.”**
  - That's an attention-grabber that hooks the reader in
  - Thinking of a catchy opener is easier than you think.
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# Real Statement Topic From the York Scholarship Page

(typewritten pages) as described, this statement should include the following:

1. Reasons you selected University
  2. Benefits you've received from any community service experience you have had.
  4. Contributions you feel you can make or are making as student
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