

Florida Keys Community College
Dr. Kerry Charron

"Choose a job that you love, and you will never work a day in your life." -Confucius

This writing exercise will prepare you for composing a spectacular personal statement that you can use for applying to colleges, scholarships, or internships.

Topic: Imagine that you are completing an application for an opportunity of a lifetime, and that a well-written personal statement will help you win your dream job/internship/degree program/scholarship/etc. Write a **personal statement that explains and shows how your best personality traits make you a competitive candidate for the desired opportunity**. Here are some things that you need to do in this essay:

- Envision that you are applying for a specific job, internship, scholarship or **opportunity that is important to you**. If possible, find a specific, real-life scholarship or internship question that you would like to address.
- Describe one or two of your best personality traits.
- Provide succinct anecdotal information that illustrates your strengths (for example, **a brief narrative that reflects a formative life experience**).
- Include an attention-grabbing introduction and a conclusion that leaves your reader with a lasting positive, impression.
- Give your essay a lively title that reflects the **originality** and **importance** of your essay.
- Think about inspirational quotes or your personal mantras that may provide insight into your character.

Here are some **examples of typical personal statement prompts** to help you develop your own question to answer:

- What trait do you think is most important for a nurse to possess, and why? (from the FKCC nursing program application)
- Describe several personal qualities and how would they contribute to your success in this program.
- Tell us about some personal qualities that you will bring to this organization.
- What is unique, distinctive, or impressive about you or your life story?

Here is a **helpful page from the Purdue University OWL website for writing personal statements**:

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/642/01/>

Here's some **additional advice** about writing a personal statement:

- If you are going into a specific field, look up some typical personal statement questions and use one of them as your essay topic. For example, here is the FKCC nursing application essay question: What trait do you think is most important for a nurse to possess, and why? If your thesis statement is arguing that attentiveness is the most important trait for a nurse, you can tell a brief story about a time you detected a person having a stroke before others did. Maybe you noticed some key signs in time to get that person emergency care. You can then elaborate on how and why this quality is critical in a health care setting.

- Think about your qualities that remain consistent regardless of the setting. For example, you may be very organized in your approach to studying for an exam, helping out at home, and maintaining a productive work environment. Your description of your approaches would help a committee realize you have a particular consistent quality (like outstanding organizational skills) that would benefit their organization.
- Don't discount or underestimate your work and life experiences! Some of the best personal statements involve a childhood story that indicates a person's earliest interest in a career or hobby. For example, essays by marine biology majors can feature a profound childhood experience with a dolphin or sea creature, and essays by accounting majors can describe how they learned to balance the accounting ledgers while working in their parents' businesses.