Writing Personal Statements

Step 1: **Read** any information the program provides (they often offer writing tips). Identify your audience and purpose. Identify keywords and phrases, especially in the **Narrative (or Personal Statement) Guidelines**.

**Audience:**

**Purpose:**

**Keywords/phrases:**

Step 2: **First brainstorm.** What does the committee want from you? What must you demonstrate in your application and essay? What is the essay length? How do you know this? (Hint: see Step 1)

Step 3: **Second brainstorm.** Why **you** want this opportunity? Why are **you** interested in this specific program? How can you illustrate this for the admission committee?
Step 4: Make yourself stand out. What are your accomplishments? What are you passionate about? What are your long-term goals? What makes you and your experience unique (why should the program want you)? What personal anecdotes help to demonstrate your passion, uniqueness, and ability to achieve your goals?

Step 5: Outline and draft. Determine what material you must include. Determine what material you want to include. Identify a beginning, middle, and end. Stay within the word requirement.

Opening line or phrase ideas:

Step 6: Revise. Did you

☐ Respond to the prompts/answer every question?
☐ Write a “perk up” first line?
☐ Write a “wow” last line?
☐ Put a positive spin on any negatives?
☐ Show your passion in your writing?
☐ Provide specific examples?
☐ Demonstrate why you’re a good fit for the program and vice versa (if applicable)?
☐ Cut any unnecessary, vague, or dull words or passages?
☐ Include your name and page number on all of your materials?
☐ Proofread with the help of friends, family, professors, the CDC and/or the CAS?