The purpose of the Personal Statement is to give the Scholarship Committee an opportunity to learn more about you, your educational goals, and how the scholarship will help you to be successful.

1. Carefully read the instructions. Note the writing prompts and word limit.
2. Start with an outline. Respond to each prompt
3. Use detailed descriptions. Don’t assume that the readers are familiar with the local area, your program of study, or Hawkeye Community College.

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| --- | --- |
| **Instead of:** | **Include details:** |
| I graduated from West High | I graduated from West High School in Waterloo. |
| I’m in MAPS. | I am part of the Minds, Actions, People, Societies (MAPS) student organization at Hawkeye Community College. |

1. Write a first draft

(Adapted from Laguardia Community College, Tips for Writing a Scholarship Personal Statement)

* 1. **Paragraph I:** Grab your reader’s attention. Provide an overview of what you are going to talk about in the essay. Include a brief description of your family background, goals, aspirations, and experiences. State any special circumstances showing your dedication, resilience or affecting your need for financial assistance.
  2. **Paragraph II:** Explain what you have done so far that makes you a good candidate for the scholarship. What are you involved in? (community involvement, campus clubs and organizations, volunteer work, leadership experience, work experience, etc). Have you received any awards or special recognitions? Include any personal challenges that you have overcome.
  3. **Paragraph III:** Connect your academic and professional goals with the opportunities that receiving the scholarship will provide. Describe your life and educational experiences that have motivated you or demonstrate your ability to overcome obstacles and challenges in pursuing your education. What are your future plans? Be specific about your plans for pursuing your goals. What are your academic goals? What is the highest degree that you plan to achieve? How do you plan to use your education to reach your career goals? Explain the importance of your major/program for your community (or society in general).
  4. **Paragraph IV**. Conclude your essay with a wrap up of what you talked about in paragraphs II & III. This is your last chance to impress and persuade the reader. What impact would the scholarship have on your education and your future? Recap why you are a good candidate for the scholarship.

1. Seek feedback
   1. Writing Tutors in the STC
   2. Submit to Smarthinking