PERSONAL STATEMENT ADVICE AND SUGGESTIONS

Do’s for the Personal Statement
• Write a compelling opening sentence.
• Make the first sentence of each paragraph engaging.
• Have a consistent story line that focuses on your unique aspects.
• Be positive. Be up-beat.
• Write simply.
• Rely on nouns and active verbs -- not adjectives and adverbs and passive verbs -- to carry the story.
• Make it interesting.
• Have lightness, color and possibly something amusing or humorous.
• Be honest.
• Take risks.
• Make it easy to read -- both in terms of writing and appearance.
• Have perfect spelling, punctuation and grammar.
• Adhere strictly to the 1000 word limit… and this includes little words like “a”, “to”, “and”.
• Edit, edit, edit.
• Rewrite, rewrite, rewrite.

Don’ts for the Personal Statement
• Use words or concepts which you do not fully understand.
• Employ qualifiers or imprecise words such as: very, quite, rather, little, many, really, somewhat, a bit, far, some, often, interesting.
• Insert famous quotations -- it’s like name-dropping. If you feel you must have a quotation, select an obscure one.
• Be cute, flippant, profane, nor glib.
• Utilize abbreviations, jargon nor slang.
• Overstate accomplishments.
• Use leadership examples from high school.
• Write flowery language nor provide cluttered imagery.
• Include gimmicks, puns, slang, fractured English, nor made-up words.
• If you must write about them, use the following cautiously: how much your family or religion means to you; how smart, capable or compassionate you are; how much you got our of a short trip abroad; how much you learned from a government internship.