

Personal Statement TEMPLATE

Here's your
roadmap to
writing a
GOOD personal
statement!

Unpopular Opinion: Most law schools have personal statement prompts that are intentionally (or negligently) vague or misleading. Regardless of what they tell you to write about via their prompts, here's a hill I'm willing to die on: The **sole** purpose of your personal statement is to answer **two key questions**: (1) What has served as a catalyst for your desire to want to go to law school / become a lawyer; (2) What is your vision for yourself post-law school? Thus, follow this template to help ensure that you do that in a way that is both well-crafted and compelling!

Opening / Step 1: Start off by sharing a story about an experience you've had related to what served as a catalyst for or reconfirmed your interest in the law. Ideally, a first-hand account would be great. Regardless, you want to take the reader back to a moment in time that sparked your interest in this area of law. Take the reader back to that moment of time in which this line of work clearly became something that you realized that you were passionate about. What were you seeing, hearing, witnessing, thinking, etc.? Also, what are your reflections on that? For example, what gaps or problems did you recognize exist?

Next / Step 2: Either continue to expound on your interest in law based on the opening story or pivot to another unrelated story that is connected to your interest in becoming an attorney. You're going to want to follow the same formula listed above if you choose to write about a second topic – take the reader back to that moment of time. What were you seeing, hearing, witnessing, thinking, etc.? Also, what are your reflections on that? For example, what gaps or problems did you recognize exist?

Then at the end / Step 3: Close out with a paragraph about your vision for yourself as an attorney. What kind of law do you want to practice? What kinds of clients do you want to serve? **Important note: DO NOT NAME A LAW SCHOOL OR SAY ANYTHING SCHOOL SPECIFIC IN YOUR PERSONAL STATEMENT ENDING OR ELSEWHERE. Your personal statement needs to be generic enough to submit to every single law school without any modifications. One exception to this rule exists however that is explained below.**

Quick comment about length: you're going to want your essay to be either two pages long or as close to that as possible. Regardless of how long a school says your personal statement *can be*, aim to not to go over that 2-page limit.

One important exception to this rule exists however in instances where a school explicitly states in their personal statement prompt that they want you to explain why you want to go to that specific law school. This is the only time when you should break the rule above about not naming a specific school in your essay.

Also, this is one time when it is okay to have a 3-page essay (assuming the school allows such). In this instances, simply tack a third page / "why x school" essay onto the end of the generic personal statement that you've created for all other schools.