CRAFT YOUR FUTURE:
Skills-building workshops

Personal Statements
Guided Workbook

Whitman College
Career and Community Engagement Center
## GOAL SETTING

1. Begin by identifying your **goal** and your **why**. Be as specific as possible.

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<th>What opportunity are you applying to?</th>
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<table>
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<th>Why are you applying for this opportunity?</th>
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2. Step into the mindset of a reviewer. Before putting together the pieces of your narrative, you first need to gain an understanding of your audience – the people on the other side who will be reading and assessing your personal statement.

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<th>Who is your audience?</th>
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Brainstorm the traits and skills the reviewer(s) will look for in competitive applicants

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3. In chronological order, identify the important and relevant experiences that have compelled you to pursue your goal.

Experience #1

Experience #2

Experience #3

Experience #4
4. List the skills gained and revelations achieved

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<th>Experience #1:</th>
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<th>Experience #4:</th>
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<td><strong>Skills gained:</strong></td>
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5. Describe one of the experiences you identified in the previous section to a partner (hereafter called “the Listener”). The Listener will identify what role you played, what you did, and your main takeaways from the experience.

**Notes:**

Compare what you listed in the previous section under “Skills gained” and “Revelations achieved” with what the Listener identified to assess whether you were able to communicate effectively. What did you communicate well? What information was miscommunicated or not communicated at all?
6. Summarize how you are prepared to take this next step and state how this next step is critical to your trajectory moving forward.

| How have your experiences prepared you to succeed at this next opportunity? |

| Why is this next opportunity important to your path forward? |
Graduate school and fellowship programs will often provide a prompt for a personal statement or a description of what they seek in candidates. Read these descriptions thoroughly to gain an understanding of what specifically the program is looking for in competitive applicants.

Connect with us in the CCEC for specific guidance on how to tailor your personal statement for each specific program (grad school vs. fellowships and grants). Schedule an appointment on Handshake to get help with:

- Writing and refining a Resume, Cover Letter, or CV
- Finding, creating, or applying to internships
- Creating a plan for your future
- Finding an on-campus, off-campus, or post-Whitman job
- Pursuing graduate school
- Seeking and preparing applications for fellowships or grants
- Meeting alumni and networking
- Preparing for interviews
- Getting involved in the Walla Walla community
- Personal branding

Schedule an appointment with me via email (hernand2@whitman.edu) to get help with pursuing fellowships.

Schedule an appointment with the Center for Writing or Speaking (COWS) for peer feedback on writing.
Skills by Category

**Verbal Communication**
- Perform and entertain before groups
- Speak well in public appearances
- Confront and express opinions without offending
- Interview people to obtain information
- Handle complaints in person and over the phone
- Present ideas effectively in speeches or lecture
- Persuade/influence others to a certain point of view
- Sell ideas, products or services
- Debate ideas with others
- Participate in group discussions and teams

**Nonverbal Communication**
- Listen carefully and attentively
- Convey a positive self image
- Use body language that makes others comfortable
- Develop rapport easily with groups of people
- Establish culture to support learning
- Express feelings through body language
- Promote concepts through a variety of media
- Believe in self worth
- Respond to non-verbal cues
- Model behavior or concepts for others

**Written Communication**
- Write technical language, reports, manuals
- Write poetry, fiction plays
- Write grant proposals
- Prepare and write logically written reports
- Write copy for sales and advertising
- Edit and proofread written material
- Prepare revisions of written material
- Utilize all forms of technology for writing
- Write case studies and treatment plans
- Demonstrate expertise in grammar and style

**Analyze**
- Study data or behavior for meaning and solutions
- Analyze quantitative, physical and/or scientific data
- Write analysis of study and research
- Compare and evaluate information
- Systematize information and results
- Apply curiosity
- Investigate clues
- Formulate insightful and relevant questions
- Use technology for statistical analysis

**Research**
- Identify appropriate information sources
- Search written, oral and technological information
- Interview primary sources
- Hypothesize and test for results
- Compile numerical and statistical data
- Classify and sort information into categories
- Gather information from a number of sources
- Patiently search for hard-to-find information
- Utilize electronic search methods

**Plan and Organize**
- Identify and organize tasks or information
- Coordinate people, activities and details
- Develop a plan and set objectives
- Set up and keep time schedules
- Anticipate problems and respond with solutions
- Develop realistic goals and action to attain them
- Arrange correct sequence of information and actions
- Create guidelines for implementing an action
- Create efficient systems
- Follow through, ensure completion of a task

**Counsel and Serve**
- Counsel, advise, consult, guide others
- Care for and serve people; rehabilitate, heal
- Demonstrate empathy, sensitivity and patience
- Help people make their own decisions
- Help others improve health and welfare
- Listen empathically and with objectivity
- Coach, guide, encourage individuals to achieve goals
- Mediate peace between conflicting parties
- Knowledge of self-help theories and programs
- Facilitate self-awareness in others

**Train/Consult**
- Teach, advise, coach, empower
- Conduct needs assessments
- Use a variety of media for presentation
- Develop educational curriculum and materials
- Create and administer evaluation plan
- Facilitate a group
- Explain difficult ideas, complex topics
- Assess learning styles and respond accordingly
- Consult and recommend solutions
- Write well organized and documented reports
Interpersonal Relations
Convey a sense of humor
Anticipate people’s needs and reactions
Express feelings appropriately
Process human interactions, understand others
Encourage, empower, advocate for people
Create positive, hospitable environment
Adjust plans for the unexpected
Facilitate conflict management
Communicate well with diverse groups
Listen carefully to communication

Leadership
Envision the future and lead change
Establish and enforce policy
Set goals and determine courses of action
Motivate/inspire others to achieve common goals
Create innovative solutions to complex problems
Communicate well with all levels of the organization
Develop and mentor talent
Negotiate terms and conditions
Take risks, make hard decisions, be decisive
Encourage the use of technology at all levels

Management
Manage personnel, projects and time
Foster a sense of ownership
Delegate responsibility and review performance
Increase productivity and efficiency to achieve goals
Develop and facilitate working groups
Provide training for development of staff
Adjust plans/procedures for the unexpected
Facilitate conflict management
Communicate well with diverse groups
Utilize technology to facilitate management

Financial
Calculate, perform mathematical computations
Work with precision with numerical data
Keep accurate and complete financial records
Perform accounting functions and procedures
Compile data and apply statistical analysis
Create computer generated charts for presentation
Use computer software for records and analysis
Forecast, estimate expenses and income
Appraise and analyze costs
Create and justify organization’s budget to others

Administrative
Communicate well with key people in organization
Identify and purchase necessary resource materials
Utilize computer software and equipment
Organize, improve, adapt office systems
Track progress of projects and troubleshoot
Achieve goals within budget and time schedule
Assign tasks and sets standards for support staff
Hire and supervise temporary personnel as needed
Demonstrate flexibility during crisis
Oversee communication, email and telephones

Create and Innovate
Visualize concepts and results
Intuit strategies and solutions
Execute color, shape and form
Brainstorm and make use of group synergy
Communicate with metaphors
Invent products through experimentation
Express ideas through art form
Remember faces, accurate spatial memory
Create images through, sketches, sculpture, etc.
Utilize computer software for artistic creations

Construct and Operate
Assemble and install technical equipment
Build a structure, follow proper sequence
Understand blueprints and architectural specs
Repair machines
Analyze and correct plumbing or electrical problems
Use tools and machines
Master athletic skills
Landscape and farm
Drive and operate vehicles
Use scientific or medical equipment