PERSONAL STATEMENT

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Vice Dean of Faculty Affairs and Professional Development

Personal Statement
Tell them who you are!

- You know yourself better than anyone else
- The reviewers will not always understand the significance of an entry in the CV
  - Don't repeat what is in CV or papers: explain in simple terms what makes you tick, makes you different
- For any entry in the CV where its impact or your role is not obvious, you are expected to annotate impact and/or your role. In addition, provide a more detailed explanation in your personal statement for most relevant/important items. Refer to item in CV

Personal Statement - II

- Convey your view of your academic career and where you are heading
- Set your materials in the perspective of your discipline, so an outside evaluator understands the big picture of your academic life and the relationships among the various components
- Can also be used for self-evaluation and for helping others to mentor you
Personal Statement - III

- Possible points to consider:
  - What am I doing?
  - Why am I doing it?
  - What do I want to accomplish?
  - What is my vision?
  - How am I doing it (methods/strategies)?
  - How well am I doing it?
  - Where am I going in this aspect of my career?
  - Where am I going overall?

Personal Statement - IV

- Include:
  - Explanation of any gaps/deficiencies in your CV
  - Unusual aspects of your career
  - Explain novel categories in your CV
    - Ex: faculty member who wrote position statements for state Dept of HHS
  - Importance/relevance of obtaining certain types of grants (Ex: K award expected in certain fields, but RO-1 application not allowed while K is active)

Personal Statement - V

- Include:
  - Explanation of your role in BIG grants or papers where you are not PI/1st or Sr. author
  - Explain the most important journals in your field. Discuss the IF, especially if low (Ex: JPS)
  - Quirks of your profession or professional societies:
    - Exhibits more important than podium presentations, how difficult it is to get on program, international audience even though organization is “American Society of...”
Personal Statement - VI

- DO NOT include:
  - Re-hash of your CV – they can read it themselves
  - Technical dissertation about the molecule you discovered
  - Excuse me!!! Very different from explanations!
Personal Statement VII

Let's look at a sample personal statement . . .

Sample Preamble

"In these times, I believe that researchers will be judged not just by what they accomplish individually, but by who and what they enable and help build collaboratively. This model of collaborative clinical research will be essential for research success particularly in multi-disciplinary fields such as clinical neuroimaging. I believe research will increasingly be conducted in the "research cloud" and researchers who bring critical integrative and collaborative skills to this "cloud" will enjoy enduring academic longevity and success. My own training has embodied this inter-disciplinary framework as I have extended undergraduate degrees in Computer Science and Psychology, into graduate training in Cognitive Science, ultimately directing my training to addressing questions in clinical neuroscience. This narrative therefore will emphasize the inter-connected themes of personal and collaborative research and academic mentorship, themes I have embraced in my career in science and academia. I will try and outline my research program, highlight the significant publications, grants and awards that have resulted from this, and emphasize how I have translated my own research training into a successful mentorship program that has led to many of my students already being acknowledged with awards and recognition of their own, even at early stages in their careers."

Vishnev Divakar, Ph.D.

Sample Mentorship Section

Unquestionably, one of my most valued achievements at Wayne State has been my contribution to didactic and research education. An essential aspect of "training" involves teaching and instilling students with enthusiasm for understanding and tackling new research problems, engaging critically relevant questions, and implementing these in analyses. My teaching narrative provides an extensive overview of my teaching and mentorship philosophy. Here I will only briefly outline the committee to the tangible successes and recognition that my students have earned both within and outside of WSU. In the last 18 months alone, my research students have presented first-authored presentations at national and international conferences. Two are published first-author works with me (subsequently entering post-graduate programs of their first choice in Neurosciences and Medicine). In the near future, these young and emerging scholars will use the skills gained at Wayne State to make their own mark in science and medicine."

Vishnev Divakar, Ph.D.