

Revising Your Writing for Graduate School Applications

General Tips

- Say more with fewer words.
- Break your thoughts up into two sentences instead of one long one.
- Count how often you start a sentence with “I.”
- Change your sentence structure throughout your writing.
- Write in your own voice, not someone else’s.
- Create smooth transitions from one paragraph to another.

Save Your Drafts

Try not to write over previous drafts. Instead, keep save each draft of your statement separately so you can go back to previous ideas if needed.

Some Reviewing Strategies

1. Reading Aloud

Reading your statement draft aloud to yourself can help you “listen” to what you’ve written. Does what you wrote reflect what you are trying to say?

Ask someone reviewing your draft to read it aloud as they do so you can also “listen” to what you’ve written.

2. The Take-Away

Ask yourself what you want your readers’ take away to be from each paragraph, even sentence. Do you feel you have achieved this? If not, go back and rework your writing.

3. Color Coding

Color coding can help you see:

- if you’ve answered all parts of a prompt
- how you’ve organized your thoughts
- if you’ve given more space to one part of the prompt at the expense of another

Step 1: Color code your prompt. Use a different color for each part that you numbered earlier.

Your Statement of Purpose should be concise, focused, and well written. It should describe succinctly (1) your reasons for applying to the proposed program at Stanford, (2) your preparation for this field of study, (3) research interests, (4) future career plans, and (5) other aspects of your background and interests which may aid the admissions committee in evaluating your aptitude and motivation for graduate study...



Color code your prompt!

Step 2: Color code your draft.

