***Crafting A Personal Statement for LGBTQ+ Non-Profit Board Applications***

1. **Goals:**

* Clarify your values, motivations, and qualifications.
* Reflect on your lived experience and professional strengths.
* Draft the foundation of a compelling and authentic personal statement.
* Learn how to tailor your message to align with a non-profit’s mission.

1. **Tips for a Strong Personal Statement**

* Be authentic and reflective.
* Center your lived experience and specific passions.
* Avoid jargon; speak plainly but with heart.
* Show, don’t just tell—use examples.
* Tailor each version to the Board’s mission and culture (consider working in aspects of the mission statement).

1. **Key Elements of an Impactful Personal Statement**

| **Element** | **Reflection Areas** | **Example Sentence Starters** | **Notes** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Who Are You? (Identity + Lived Experience)** | * Reflect on and articulate your identities (gender, sexuality, race, ability, etc.) and how they have shaped your personal journey. * Identify and describe pivotal experiences that have influenced your passion for LGBTQ+ advocacy. * List the communities you represent or feel deeply connected to, and consider how they inform your perspective and work. | *As a [your identities], I have experienced [brief experience], which has taught me [lesson/insight]."*  *Growing up as [identity], I learned early on that [insight]. These experiences shaped my commitment to...* |  |
| **Why This Work? (Motivation + Mission Alignment)** | * Clarify why you are passionate about LGBTQ+ advocacy or legal justice. * Reflect on what motivates you to serve on the board of a non-profit organization. * Identify a specific issue in the LGBTQ+ legal landscape that energizes or inspires you. | *I am motivated to serve because [core reason]. This connects to my values of [value 1], [value 2], and [value 3].*  *My commitment to this work stems from [moment or experience], and I believe my story reflects the urgency of...* |  |
| **What Do You Bring? (Skills + Experience)** | * Identify and articulate the unique skills, perspectives, or resources you can contribute to a board. * Assess and document your experience in key areas such as fundraising, legal strategy, governance, and community outreach. * Highlight specific successes or outcomes from your professional or volunteer work that you are most proud of. * Reflect on and share how you have navigated leadership as someone from a historically marginalized identity. * Evaluate and describe the soft skills—such as emotional intelligence, mentorship, or bridge-building—that you bring to a team. | *With my background in [field/role], I bring [specific skill or knowledge]. In my previous work with [organization], I..."*  *Beyond technical expertise, I bring an approach grounded in [soft skill or value], which has helped me to...* |  |
| **Your Leadership Values + Style** | * Reflect on your approach to leadership within LGBTQ+ spaces. * Consider how you uplift others, center underrepresented voices, or challenge existing systems. * Think about ways you create space for others’ voices at the table. * Reflect on how you handle conflict or tension in diverse teams. * Explore what transformative or restorative leadership means to you personally. | *My leadership style is rooted in [principle], and I strive to [action]. I believe inclusive leadership means...*  *I lead with a lens of [e.g., equity, transparency, care], believing that effective leadership must also...* |  |
| **Fit + Contribution to the Board** | * Reflect on how this organization or board aligns with your personal and professional goals. * Consider the ways you envision making a meaningful difference through your involvement. * Think about what aspects of the organization’s history or leadership resonate with you. * Identify which board responsibilities (e.g., finance, governance, strategic planning) match your strengths. * Reflect on how you might support the organization’s accountability and sustainability. * Contemplate the kind of legacy you want to leave through your board service. * Explore your hopes for the evolution of the LGBTQ+ movement in the next 5–10 years and the role you want to play in that growth. | *I’m excited about this board because [organization mission or recent work]. I hope to contribute by...*  *I’m drawn to this board’s work because [specific example]. My contributions will focus on...*  *In the long term, I hope my leadership helps create a future where...* |  |

1. **Draft Your Statement**

**Opening (identity, motivation, connection to cause):**

**Middle (skills, leadership, experience):**

**Closing (fit with the board, hopes for impact):**