Transcript: Finding Fit: Understanding the Power of the Personal Statement

Welcome everyone my name is Nelli Balkarova and thank you for joining us for

today's webinar Finding Fit: Understanding the Power of Personal

Statements. Just a few things before I introduced the speaker. If you're having

technical difficulties during the webinar, we suggest for you to leave a

webinar and then join back in through the link that was sent to you via email.

We also recommend shutting down other programs such as email as they tend to

slow down the video and audio. If you have any questions during the

presentation please type them into the question box in your control panel and I

will bring them up at the end of the webinar. We will share the link to the

webinar recording within the next week via email. Lastly, at the end of a webinar

you will see a quick 1-minute survey pop up on your screen. Please take a moment

to fill out the survey we would really appreciate your feedback. Now, I will turn

it over to Dr. Greg Niemeyer the director of APA's Office of Continuing

Education.

[Greg Niemeyer] Good morning and welcome to understanding the power of the personal

statement. The personal statement is among the most vexing of all of the

components of the graduate application precisely because it invites the

greatest anxiety because it has the least amount of structure. So, it makes it

difficult to anticipate in advance exactly what admissions committees are

looking forward to and we're going to talk about that it jot and tiddle from

the lofty to the sublime all aspects of how you can create a powerful personal

statement. Let me say by way of introduction that has Nelli indicated I

do direct the Office of Continuing Education in Psychology at the American

Psychological Association and also the Center for learning and Career

Development and the Center for Interprofessional Training and Education.

I come to this with a background as a university professor for about 30 years

during which time I served both as a director of training and an APA approved

doctoral program and also as a graduate coordinator overseeing six different

doctoral programs both on the professional side like counseling and

clinical and on the research side or science side -- things like neuro psych

behavior analysis, developmental, social and so forth. So, my goal today in talking

with you about the power of the personal statement is to try to bring in and

leverage the kind of experience that I've had sitting on the other side

of the admissions committees for three decades sue to you in advance of your

application so that you can find out and learn now what you need to know rather

than finding out by trial and error after the fact. We would have a short

time today together, only about thirty minutes, I'm going to talk through some

sort of critical points in fifteen or twenty minutes and then get out of the

way and make sure we leave lots of time for you to ask any and every question

you have. So, as I talk and as you listen to me I invite you to jot down questions

thoughts whatever may be useful to you. Think about what I'm saying try to apply

it to your own circumstance. Imagine how you would weave what I'm talking about

into the personal statement that you're writing or modify or revise your

personal state to a statement to sort of accommodate the things we're talking

about. And then we'll open it up to any kind of questions you

have -- that's really where I see the primary value of our time together in

being. Let me say that this Finding Fit presentation today is part of a larger

series. Some of you may have been involved in the earlier installments in

this series where you're talking about different types of degrees and degree

programs. And let me tell you, I'm not telling you anything you don't know. It

is an alphabet soup out there of different kinds of degree programs -- MAs

MSWs, PhDs, PsyDs -- you name the alphabet and there are letters to match

it. So, there aren't important considerations then we've already talked

about in relation to that and also an earlier version of the series we talked

about getting in and getting through graduate school. The goal of course is to

get in but we very much want to invite you not only to set your sights on the

horizon of admission but also on the horizon of completion. Because ultimately

at the end of the day what matters most is that you get through and you get your

degree -- that you go beyond admission to completion and have a fruitful career.

Today we're going to concentrate all about the personal statement and then

there will be additional installments in this series as well to talk about and

those are going to include talking about interviewing

and and hopefully you'll be able to make that today's presentation I'll say

another word about that. Let's turn to talk about the personal statement. I want

to underscore first and foremost that every single component of your graduate

application has a specific purpose. It has an intent, it has a design, it has an

objective associated with it. Ff it did not, it would not be part of your

application. Why? Because people are busy and they are not interested in just

generating make work for you or for them. For that reason each and every component

of your application -- here I'm talking about the GRE the GPA your personal

statement which is the subject of what we're talking about today, your

application itself your letters of recommendation, every one of those things

has a specific objective or specific purpose. Now, it is the case that there is

a gestalt the whole is greater than the sum of the parts -- they all work together

and there is some degree of overlap so you don't need to fear or avoid

redundancy but each one nonetheless has a kind of bullseye of intent or distinct

purpose associated with it. And the purpose of the personal statement is to

present yourself effectively, coherently, cogently and importantly to make the

connection between your specific interests in graduate training and the

program to which you are applying. Now I'm going to repeat that because

this is the sine qua non of the personal statement -- to present yourself

effectively, coherently, cogently and to make the connection, if you will, connect

the dots between your interests and the program to which you're applying. Please

do not depend on the reader to make that connection for you. Do not stop with I am

a great candidate, I'm applying to a great program. Great candidate, great

program equals perfect match. No, what you need to do is to go the extra step

and answer the question, why would I be a great fit for your particular program? It

is at the end of the day that goodness of fit, the match, the hand-in-glove

that determines your success in gaining admission to the programs of your choice.

Think about it this way... if you had the experience that

I had as a kid with those sort of dot-to-dot books

where you would have an image or a picture and you would sort of draw by

numbers and you would draw and connect number one with 2 with 3 with 4 or 5 at

6 and then gradually that page that picture would emerge for you and you

would see -- a picture of a chicken or a ghost or whatever it may be. And it

emerged only as you connected the dots -- it wasn't immediately clear when you saw

the dots alone but as you started to join them together the picture emerged.

That's what the personal statement does for you. It allows that picture to emerge.

I cannot emphasize this more strongly --

you cannot require or leave that load to connect those dots on the admissions

committee itself. They should not be tasked with having to figure it out

how it is that your general excellence translates into your ideal fit for

their program. You need to spoon-feed them -- that's what the personal statement

is it is a form of spoon-feeding. So, that being said, let me turn to say

this: Ordinarily a personal statement is very brief typically it's only 1 to 2

type pages and like snowflakes, like fingerprints, no two personal statements

are alike and that's completely reasonable. Why? Well because no two

people are exactly alike. So, it would be very odd if you saw two personal

statements that were substantially similar and you really don't want that.

You want it to be distinctive, you want to characterize your unique strengths,

your unique experience and how you uniquely fit the programs to which

you're applying. They're relatively brief -- a single page type would be fine

two pages would be plenty. Three [pages] begins to get into a novella and if you get up

to five or more you are in the category of a novel. Beyond

that you are you are diagnostically pathological -- it gets to be you know it

gets to be somebody you're concerned about a personal statement that is full

or five or six or eight pages long because it begins to read like a

biography. So, you're looking for something that's short and sweet, punchy

and informative that characterizes you as a person. We're going to talk about how the

personal statement is a significantly different element of your overall

package than for example your CV. Because your CV of course will contain

a great deal of your experience, a great deal of information and prior experience

that you've had but the personal statement in a sense weaves those

together into a fabric a whole cloth. It is as if the elements, many elements of

your personal statement are contained elsewhere like in your CV but they are

threaded through to create a fabric in the personal statement. Talking about

something that's relatively brief a page or two and oftentimes it starts with a

broad statement not usually at the point of birth.

Most people are starting as their interests in

graduate programs emerge or as an interest in the area to which they're

going to reapply and emerge and that oftentimes is high school maybe an

influential teacher, influential experience or class or oftentimes in

college. It's very common, you would say, my earliest interests in the

area of neurobiology began in my high school classroom in biology. It became

clear to me that while other people were were squeamish about aspects of

anatomy, I found it quite interesting and I

particularly found the brains working to be quite interesting and I began to

explore the area of neurobiology and was quite fascinated with the

interaction and the effects of the brain and its processes and mechanisms on human

behavior and when I think back on it that's probably the earliest impetus

that led me to my ongoing experience and the development of my interest in

pursuing a degree in say neuroscience. So, a broad overall statement oftentimes

beginning with, not necessarily a high school or college [experience]. And then you're

focusing on the particular experiences, events or opportunities that have

sharpened your interested focus across time.

After that initial experience I became interested in college, again I just

thought I took an anatomy course, a biology course, I found that as I was

taking my chemistry courses I was particularly interested in the

neurochemical aspects of the brains operation and that led me to

take part in Dr. Brown's laboratory on neuroscience at the

University of X and so forth. What you're doing is then you're taking your

initial statement, your opening statement and you're animating it with

specific experiences and opportunities that you've had. You're telling the tale.

You're telling a story -- you're helping connect the dots

for the individual. A way to think about this is to think about it as kind

of a reverse pyramid. Your story, your personal statement is kind of an upside

down pyramid. You're starting with a broad statement of your interests

that you know articulate with the programs to which you're applying.

You're not applying to ten different types of programs, you're applying to all

developmental psych programs, all social psych programs, all clinical psych

programs, all neuroscience programs so you know your opening statement is in

that ballpark and then what you're doing is you're weaving in more and more

specific experiences and your tailor making it until eventually you're

getting narrower and narrower and narrower and narrower until you're

leading down to the very point of that pyramid that happens to land exactly in

the program to which you're applying. Are you with me? You're starting off broad

and then you're weaving in specific experiences and opportunities that you

had inside the classroom and outside that have led you closer and closer and

closer and closer and closer and intellectually to the very program to

which you're applying. And that should be clear to the person who's reading your

personal statement. Have them think, wow, this person was predestined for this

program. Wow! The experience they've had is ideal. This is like the ideal candidate

who has prepared his or her career to maximally take advantage of our training

program. So that's what you're doing -- reverse pyramid starting broad and

moving down and I encourage you as you write your personal statement to use

relatively upbeat words. Now I'm not inviting you here or encourage you to be

ollyannaish but I am encouraging you to consider that people are reading

dozens, scores or even hundreds of these applications, so it's actually an

advantage to not have somebody drone on in a monotonous tone or to be overly

officious or to be arrogant or any of those things -- trying to

sound smart -- none of those things. You're really just talking about yourself and

about your experiences in a personal kind of way and I encourage you to use

relatively upbeat words. Use expressions like, I had the terrific

opportunity to participate in Dr. Brown's -- who could have known that it

would be such an exciting opportunity. I was privileged to have the excellent

mentorship so and so. I'm so pleased to have been selected as a member of the

president of Psi Chi. I I was extraordinarily gratified to be admitted

into you Dr. Manasses's research laboratory. I was surprised to find how

extraordinarily excited I was in the laboratory on the mechanisms of

neuroanatomical processes in the brains operation or a pretty good disorder or

whatever it may be. You're conveying your excitement,

you're conveying your enthusiasm, you're conveying your interest in your

dedication. And these are important ingredients because don't forget at the

end of the day especially if you're thinking about a doctoral program which

is going to be five or six years, these people have to they're amped they're

trying to seek an answer to the question what will it be like to work with this

candidate day in day out week in week out for years. Think about that...

For years this is gonna be a person I'm gonna be mentoring and I'm gonna be

talking with them almost daily for years. So you really want to convey the notion

that you're the kind of person who would be good to work with.

You'd be upbeat, enthusiastic, you'd be engaged you being on fire you would be a

joy to work with. In the process of writing a personal statement you're

identifying your current research interests, of course whatever you indicate

your interests are what you will get tagged with. You will be the person who

is interested in whatever it may be -- neurotransmitter processes in office and

so be aware of that and you're gonna want to identify faculty at each

program with whom you would like to work -- that you have a natural affinity. If you

have done what I recommended elsewhere you will have already had contact with

faculty beginning in the spring prior to your graduation where you would simply

identify a faculty at prospective places of interest, you would write those people

for a copy of recent research they've done. You would thank them. You would get

back to them with a couple of follow-up questions to what you read. You

would ask if they had any ongoing recent research that hadn't yet been published

in that area and then in your final touch you would say gosh I'm applying to

graduate school would you be accepting anybody next year? So, if you have the

advantage to do that in the spring prior to your application

in the fall, huge advantage because you're setting the stage. But if not, you're in

the place where you're identifying your research interest here and you're trying

to effect a match between you and one or more faculty in the program to which

you're applying. Be sure that as you campus the faculty that they are core

faculty. Every university has core faculty and then they have

adjuncts or affiliates who will not themselves be accepting students -- very

unlikely they're there typically to just to teach courses or to do a practicum.

They might not be core faculty or accepting students so you want to be

sure that these are full-time typically they're the tenure accruing faculty and

can be assistant, associate or full but they are corps members. Be sure that

you're identifying one or more people who you think would be a good fit for

you but you're not naming the whole faculty because then that begins to get

into a second guessing paradigm where you were perceived as potentially

name-dropping and really your interest should be specific enough that you

couldn't work maximally effectively with five or six or eight different faculty.

Probably there are one or two who would be sort of the bull's-eye match for you.

You want to identify those. I'm particularly interested in the work with

Dr. Rogers who is doing work in X area. The other thing I'll mention is that you

know in terms of overall style at the personal statement, I encourage you again

to think in terms of conveying a sense of enthusiasm, a sense of humility and a

sense of focus and dedication. These are the kinds of qualities that people

covet in their graduate students as you do generally and colleagues and

employees. It is very important that you keep in mind that at no point do you

ever want to stretch, modify or enhance anything. I'm asking you here to do truth

in advertising, including your interest in the level

your level of interest in doing things like research if it's not actually true.

In other words, I want you to say what you mean and mean what you say. The worst

thing in the world you can do is to talk a great game about how genuinely

enthused you are with research, get into a program and then you are freighted

with massive amounts of research and then you turn around you say, gosh I'm

really unhappy. The program is all about research. So, you have to be careful what

you ask for -- because you're going to get it. Again, you honestly want a good fit. You

don't want just to gain admission through artifice. You want an authentic

good fit between your interests and what the program is interested in promoting

it training you to do. You're not trying to sound smart, everybody who applies is

smart. You're just trying to be yourself because that's how you're going to be

for your four or five or six years there. They want a sense of you as a person

that's why it's called a personal statement. Sometimes people have a

difficult time saying flattering things about themselves. I understand that, but

there's a good way to go about doing that. You don't want to be stepping on

your own feet in this dance move of the personal statement you want to be able

to put your best foot forward. A good way to do that is to attribute

flattering things about yourself to sources other than yourself. You can

say for example, a number of my faculty have noted my extraordinary level of

dedication and initiative. I've been very gratified to have been chosen as the

head of the research team I've been very gratified to have been selected the

Psi Chi president. It's been my great honor to serve in X capacity. Having

received the award for X, I feel really flattered. I enjoy working with

people and I'm so pleased that they see me is working well with others. Whatever

it may be. You're attributing to other people a positive impression of yourself.

Sometimes that's easier for people then saying directly their own

accomplishments. They feel braggadocio or they feel in some ways that their their

flouting or counting themselves in a way that's not fully comfortable and I

certainly understand. Couple last things -- number one, it's very

important once you have read the once you've finished your first draft of

the personal statement that you read it out loud. Sometimes reading out

loud gives you a much better sense of how

it's likely to be read by somebody who is reading it not because they will be

reading it out loud but because they will be reading it for the first time

whereas it's gone through your head a hundred times or a thousand times. And

time it. It shouldn't take more than you know three or four certainly no

more than five minutes to read it. And then you want to give it to friends

and you want to ask them if you would please read this and tell me does it

sound like me? if it doesn't sound like you, if they say

that doesn't sound like you, I don't get a sense of the person

or that sounds really stilted or you don't talk like that. Take that seriously

because you want it to sound like you. Once you get it through your friends, the

crucible or gauntlet of your friends, two or three friends who are likely to be

candid with you, then give it to a faculty member to read and to provide

feedback on. This is a critical and final point. When you give them the personal

statement I want you to ask them this: Dear Dr. Brown, here's a copy of my

personal statement. Would you please be willing to read it and give me an

impression of how it reads. On a scale of 1 to 10, how would you view this

statement? 1 being very poor weak, 10 being outstanding. And then get back to

them in a day or so later and say you get a chance to read my personal

statement? And they say, yeah it sounded fine and I do not want

you to let it get away with that. I want you to say back, fine oh that's good

like on a scale of 1 to 10 what would you give it? Oh really I thought it was pretty good. Good, on a scale of 1 to 10 what would you give it? I don't know I saw it a strong, I

thought it's really a very good statement. Like a 7 or like the 9? Well

I'd give it an 8 or a 9. Okay, now you've got what you want an

8 or 9. Now the question becomes what could I do to improve it. How can I move

it from that 8 to a 9 or a 10. How can I move it from the 7 to an 8 or a 9. All

you want if form them to anchor it in some number and then you ask them

to do this the hard cognitive work tell you what you could do to inch it up 1 or

2 and more points. And at that point they'll say well you

know, I think of you as remarkably

responsible and that doesn't quite come through. Or one of

things I really enjoy about working with you is you're very responsive to

feedback you know I don't hear that in there. And

you're really humorous and you get along really well with people, people enjoy

working with you and somehow that didn't get in there. They will give you feedback

that will help you craft or sculpt your personal statement and just get it up

that extra point or two. So, I'm going to stop there and I'm

going to encourage you to ask any and all questions you would like and then I

will say just the word about some upcoming programs along this line here

in the future. Here are some other resources that that are available to you. Let me

open it up now for questions.

[Balkarova] Thank you Greg it looks like we have a few questions already. I'll go ahead and jump into starting with this first one. It says, I have been advised to list a specific research

question I would like to explore on my personal statement. Is a specific area

enough or should I come up with actual questions?

[Niemeyer] Well, I would say a specific

research question is enough. I've seen people ask this

before and I'm not thrilled with it. I understand what they're trying

to get -- they're wanting to see whether you're sufficiently focused and directed

or whether you're sort of casting about. They want to know where

they're starting from so that's a very fair question. On the other hand, if you

think about it for just a second, think about how much you've changed people

between where you are now and where you were in high school -- as a person

professionally in all ways. That's how much you're going to change again in

graduate school. So, it's not really a good prediction, it's not quite fair to

ask that question because graduate school changes you a lot and it changes

your interests and your directions and your research -- it changes everything. So, it's

a fair question in a sense to ask, but I encourage you to stay fairly broad so

that means you don't have to have a very specific research question...you could say,

I'm interested in the neurobiological underpinnings of autism spectrum

disorder. And if you want to do additional specification of that you could set

particularly interested in the interruption of neurotransmitter transmission or I'm interested in dementia and particularly interested in the mechanisms that lead to the amyloid plaque buildup

in specific brain areas as a course of development. You don't have to have a

specific question that you would indicate for your dissertation but an

area of study is sufficient. That's very different than something

like, I'm interested in the area of depression. They're going to want

something more specific than that. I'm interested in depression in children.

I'm interested in psychopharmacology and depression. I'm interested in the

neurobiological mechanisms of depression. Those are sufficiently specific.

[Balkarova] Next question is, if applying to multiple grad school programs, is it appropriate to use

the same personal statement with some tinkering depending on the program?

[Niemeyer] I'm so glad you asked that! Yeah absolutely. Here's the deal --

if your interests are specific, now if you're casting about you don't

know what you want it makes it really difficult, but the more clear you are

what you want to be doing the more consistent your personal statement can

be in fact all the elements of your application can be across programs. But

what I would do in the personal statement is, somethings your CV is your

your CV right? It's the same exact thing that would go to probably

all five or ten places that you apply. With a personal statement what I would do is,

remember how you're in the reverse pyramid at your startup broadly and

you're working your way down to greater greater specificity. By the time you get

down to the bottom you're indicating why all this experience leads you to match

perfectly with the program to what you're applying. That final paragraph is

where you change that final paragraph to read at Temple University

at the University of Wisconsin I'm particularly interested at UCLA the

laboratory in disordered eating among adolescent females. That's where you

tie things together and make a pinpoint association between your

interest in the specific program. So you really shouldn't have to change anything

more on your personal statement then the final paragraph if you have homogeneity

the kinds of programs you're applying. If you're applying to all social psych

programs and you're interested in whatever attribution theory you're

applying to all neuroscience programs that you're interested in the

same area of neuroscience, your personal statement could remain exactly the same

you're only changing the final paragraph the people you might work with and the

university that you're applying to. it's Great question.

[Balkarova] When it comes to word counts is it okay to minimally go over the word count

if it completes your personal statement. For instance, if the count is

five hundred and yeah five hundred seventy [words].

[Niemeyer] Yeah I wouldn't worry about it.

Number one, nobody puts these things through word count.

Nobody's not going to read your last 70 words.

You don't want to put 750 words but 500 600 it's not going

to disadvantage you to put 400.

They don't want people to just put you know a sentence or two and

they don't want you to write a book but there's no problem at all in going over

by a few words -- it's not going to shut you off the definitely will read it. It

will not be held in prejudice in any way shape or form. And remember, this this

is a non sequitur aside, but you want distinctiveness in this

personal statement but it's not like you might write from high school

into college where they're looking for a creative essay. They're not looking

for a creative essay they're not looking for something that shows wild

creativity. They're really looking for something that answers the question, how

does this candidate fit with what we do? Believe me, their interest, they're

not interested in your training. I mean I hate to say that, their primary interest

is in promoting what they do and so they're recruiting you as talent to help

adjudicate their mission and their training mission but also their research

mission. They want people who can come in with experience and background that

will contribute to their program and bring novelty enthusiasm and some set of

experience and skills to the research programs that they are running.

[Balkarova] Next question, is there a difference between a personal statement or an

statement of purpose?

[Niemeyer] No, in word only. It's n word only. They're basically

the same deal two different titles or phrases.

[Balkarova] Do you advise people to include references in their letters of intent?

[Niemeyer] No references in your letter of intent no no references in your letter of

intent. What I do advise and this is part of a different office, on your CV

which is typically going to be like two to three

pages. I mean maybe it's another page longer or certainly it's not going to be

one page certainly it's not going to be six pages, but almost always, the

CV doesn't end perfectly at the bottom of a given page it's like a half page or

a quarter page or whatever -- that's where I put my references.

If you have a half page of white space at the back of your CV, put three or

four references there, put the person's name, put their title and put contact

information after you've checked with them to see whether or not it's okay to

use them as a reference. There may be people who are writing letters for you

they may be additional people who you didn't have write letters for you but

that's that's a great place to put your references at the bottom to fill that

white space. 95% of the time those people will never be contacted but it's a way

of saying, hey these are my people these are the people who are standing for me

Dr. Brown, Dr. Greene, Dr. Smith -- these are people who are in my corner. It has a

an impact just by saying, wow, look at the people who are

standing their doctorates are ready to recommend Jamal or Sally or whomever. so

That's a great place to put references but not in the personal statement. [Balkarova] We'll

take a few more questions. The next one is, if a GRE score is lower, is it

important to address it in the personal statement? [Niemeyer] I say no.

Number one is, you're drawing

further attention to it and far better for you to cover that with your academic

advisor your mentor whoever somebody who's

getting ready and larger recommendation it have them address it. And they can say

something like, I know that so-and-so got a you know 50th percentile

or 60th percentile but let me tell you some people just on any

given day are not great test takers and I can't tell you how inconsistent that

is with my impression of his or her performance including the A's they've

got in my courses including the publication's we've had together, the

presentations they've done. I take seriously the GRE but honestly,

it's a better predictor in some cases than in others and this person is a

diamond in the rough. And coming from an adviser, coming from a faculty member,

it's gonna be much stronger than you trying to account for it which is

naturally going to invite an attribution of excuse making.

Put your best foot forward. Why would you put your ugliest foot forward?

If you're gonna do an Instagram picture turn to your good side

profile to the camera -- don't go to the other side so it's the same

thing here. You don't want to reintroduce a valley what you can concentrate on the

peaks!

[Balkarova] The next question is, if you met with the faculty member you wish to

work with is it appropriate to mention this meeting and how it impacted your

decision in the personal statement?

[Niemeyer] Golden! Whoever asked that question you get

a huge gold star because that's what you should have done. You should have already

have contacted somebody have some interaction and you definitely want to

mention that because you can say very diplomatically and very humbly, I had the

great opportunity to meet with Dr. Stephenson back last July at a

conference or when I was visiting or whatever and truth as excited as I

was about NC State, it redoubled my excitement many times over I could see

myself you know someone he read a bunch of his or her work and I can see myself

fitting ideally within that laboratory and I'm just so pleased

about the possibility of working with Dr. Stephenson and I just see the

program at NC State as being a great fit for me. Absolutely, because at that

point you're no longer a number you're not candidate one to six three, zero. You're Julie Smith, a

person. They're trying to evaluate at the end of the day how well,

how good of a fit you are you for that program. If you are a person who they

know and you are reminding them that you that they know you, that question has

already been answered. They know you so that's a

giant feather in your cap. Absolutely you want to mention that.

[Balkarova] This will be the last question, do you think it would be okay to skip a broad statement at the beginning in favor of beginning a discussion about fit? [Niemeyer] Yes, there are many roads to Rome and my suggestion was only just that -- it's one

possible road but I've seen very effective and powerful statements that

started off with saying, in reviewing the clinical psych program at

NC State I believe I have found a program that is for me in relation to my

background, experience and the opportunities I've had, the ideal fit. Let

me explain why and then boom you're into it. That's another very effective

way -- you're backing into it instead of building toward it -- you're starting off

with a statement of an ideal fit and then you're demonstrating how that is

the case. Very effective. Let me just call your attention to the fact that that with our variety of other resources you see up on the slide here, I want you to be aware of lots of other resources that are available for you. These are links that will come to you obviously. You'll have a

copy of this program and the audio. You can click on these links and go to these

resources there are additional programs coming out. I will be doing a program on

the letters of recommendation which I'm looking forward to in the coming day or day --

it's tomorrow and then also we're going to be scheduling

it's a to be announced program on interviewing for graduate school. And let

me tell you I have a 10-point performance check on your interviewing for graduate school whether you do it on site or do it the phone. You should be in control you

should have the opportunity to know in advance not only how you're gonna

perform but that you are going to perform in an outstanding way by doing a

series of performance checks in advance so that you are blindsided by

nothing you are prepared for everything and you have gone through the process so

that you can maximize your performance. Let me tell you, the interview is where

you seal the deal. Everything we've talked about up to this point

doesn't get you admission it gets you a ticket to be reviewed -- it qualifies you.

But the interview seals the deal. The slate is wiped clean by the time

you're invited for an interview and that's when you really need to

distinguish yourself and rise to the occasion. We'll talk about a ten point

performance check for interviewing for graduate school in psychology. Thank

you for your time I hope this was useful to you and again you will all

receive a copy of this. Feel free to share with colleagues, I hope you found

it helpful and I wish you well in your pursuit of graduate study in the field

of psychology.