The Admissions Committee is looking for evidence that you are a good fit for the program of choice. The Statement of Purpose is your opportunity to talk about your motivation for pursuing graduate study---your work and project experiences to date, the challenges you have faced in your professional career, and your longer-term personal and professional goals.

As you develop your Statement of Purpose, consider the following guidelines:

a. **Research the program** for which you are applying before you write your SOP, and demonstrate your understanding of it in your essay. Understandably the Committee is anxious to learn more about you. But know that it reflects well on the candidate when he or she has taken the time to investigate who we are, what we teach, and the enduring principles that we hope you will take with you when you graduate.

b. **Paint a clear picture of who you are.** While your childhood history and unwavering passion for computers and software is interesting, your time (and allotted space) is better spent in talking about prior project involvement, internships, and professional work activities.

c. **Tell us why** you want to pursue graduate study in the area of software engineering at Carnegie Mellon. Like you, we already know that Carnegie Mellon is an amazing place. Tell us the reasons why you’ve decided to dig deeper into the discipline of software engineering and more specifically, why you’ve chosen the particular program for which you are applying.

d. **Elaborate** on your personal software engineering experiences (good and bad), their impact on the project and the team, and reflect on how (or if) these experiences influenced your software engineering perspective.

e. **Explain** why you think you will be successful in our rigorous and demanding program. Identify evidence of your ability to work under pressure, and your academic and professional preparedness.

f. **Share** with us your professional goals, dreams, and aspirations. Where do you see yourself in your career in five years, or in ten?

g. **Boast humbly** about your achievements. We invite you to list the awards, publications, tributes, merits, and prizes that surely you’ve earned. There is no need to submit them in their entirety. A simple mention is sufficient, point us to a link or URL if there is one, and trust that we’ll reference it.

And finally, the Committee appreciates Statements of Purpose that are thoughtful, well-written, and grammatically correct. We urge you to take your time, edit, revise and re-edit as appropriate, and submit only when your final Statement is as near to perfect as you can make it, recognizing that Carnegie Mellon and the Master of Software Engineering Professional Programs admits only those candidates of the highest level of excellence.

We look forward to reading your complete application packet.