Preparation of Personal Statement

The purpose of the personal statement is to make it as unique and original as possible. The statement should be tailored specifically to you - so there is no formula to follow. Don't use a template to just add your information. Keep the following points in mind:

- Do not start with your name or where you were born.
- Do not include any information in the personal statement that is a standard part of the rest of the application.
- Include information about your unique background. This should include any extenuating circumstances/hurdles you had to face to get where you are. (Examples include whether you were the first one in your family to go to college etc.) If you didn't have any special circumstances that is also fine. Just focus on what motivates you.
- Try and answer the following questions:
    - Why are you interested and excited about biosciences research?
    - Why do you want to go to graduate school?
    - How does your experience make you different? Why would you be an asset to the graduate program you're applying to?
- Talk about why you want to pursue a PhD degree. A PhD degree can have a lot of uncertainty - there is no specific time in which it is finished. Research can be unpredictable, long and sometimes tedious. Explain why you still want to follow this career choice.
- Make your statement specific to the university program you're applying to. You should not be sending the same exact statement to all programs. If you do so, this will be obvious to the admissions committee and they will not seriously consider your application.
- Explain why you selected a particular university/program. Do some research on the program. Find their strengths and mention the ones that attract you.
- Mention some faculty you are interested in. Focus on WHY you are interested in their research.
- The main purpose of the statement and the application is to get you into the program. Having mentioned any specific research or faculty member does not mean you're committing to that field/lab.