

Keeping the voice. Changing the structure.

An editorial demonstration adapted from my own personal statement. The source is written prose, not an interview transcript. No client work or private third-party information is represented.

THE BRIEF

Turn a dense account of independent music work into a short professional narrative. Preserve the speaker's insistence on discipline and preparation while giving the reader a clearer route through the idea.

BEFORE / ORIGINAL EXCERPT

"Most importantly, and contrary to popular perception, survival and success as an independent artist in one of the most competitive industries in the world requires focus, discipline, tenacity, and attention to detail. Researching markets, tracking analytics, organization, and promotion are peripheral yet crucial components to the success of a live performance. Materials and associated labors include writing, recording, production, engineering, graphic design, and networking with professionals in all above disciplines on top of overseeing my team of professionals, including performers, agents, and all technical-related support."

WHAT IS ALREADY WORKING

The passage has a definite point of view: the audience sees a performance, but the artist is also responsible for the work that makes it possible. Its useful details are buried inside long sentences and lists. The edit brings that observation forward.

The work behind the performance

The audience sees the performance. For an independent artist, much of the work happens before anyone walks onstage.

I had to write and record the music, understand the market, promote the shows, and coordinate the people who helped make them happen. Performers, agents, and technical staff each had a part in the result. Keeping those parts moving took focus, discipline, and attention to detail.

That work belongs in the story of a creative career. A performance depends on decisions the audience may never notice: what to prepare, whom to involve, and how to bring the pieces together. The music is the most visible part of a much larger practice.

WHY THESE CHOICES

A concrete opening. The distinction between the visible performance and the preparation carries the argument. It gives the paragraph a point of entry before the list of responsibilities.

A recognizable voice. “Focus, discipline, and attention to detail” stays because it carries the source’s conviction. The edit changes the pacing without replacing that conviction with marketing language.

A tighter claim. The superlative about the competitiveness of the industry is removed. The specific work is enough to establish the point.

Source: Anthony Lee Thomas, personal statement, fourth draft. This selected passage was reworked for the portfolio in September 2026. The revision is an illustrative editorial adaptation of the author’s own material.

Have a draft that contains the right idea but needs a clearer shape?