

Problem of Practice Statement of Intent – EdD Applicants

Maximum length 500 words

The Statement of Intent relates your past and current professional experiences to EdD doctoral learning. The Statement contextualizes your doctoral aspirations within your current professional role, for the application adjudication committee.

In the Educational Leadership EdD, students develop a scholarly plan from which they can initiate change in their professional contexts. As you consider what your future might bring in your role as a change agent, what is one area of your professional responsibilities that you might consider as a focus for change? In the Statement of Intent, discuss this focus for change as a **Problem of Practice**.

Problem of Practice (PoP)

The PoP is an essential aspect of the EdD degree and defined as a “persistent, contextualized, and specific issue embedded in the work of a professional practitioner, the addressing of which has the potential to result in improved understanding, experience, and outcomes.” Ultimately, the PoP will be framed using your comprehension of and ability to apply theory and literature that you gain through coursework. For more information about the PoP, please go to this [link](#).

Note that when including a PoP in your Statement of Intent, it is understood that as students learn and grow throughout the EdD Program, Problems of Practice may change significantly.

As you discuss a potential educational leadership PoP, consider that the PoP is:

- Connected to leadership
- Familiar to you
- Issue-based
- Relevant to your workplace
- Practical and observable
- Identified as a perceived gap between the current and a future state
- Manageable to address
- Actionable (leads to a plan that can be implemented and measured)
- Reasonable, given your position in the organization
- Identified through practice, dialogue, and examining qualitative and quantitative research
- Underpinned by a strong desire for organizational change
- NOT driven by solutions!

Consider including any the following topics in your Problem of Practice Statement of Intent discussion:

- Your identity, e.g. BIPOC, LGBTQ2+, and how your identity influences your leadership and scholarship
- Your leadership philosophy, including the attitudes, dispositions, and values that influence your leadership
- Your agency to effect change – what power you have to effect change, rather than what you want others to do

Finally, good writing is essential to EdD student success. Ensure your Statement of Intent is clearly written, addresses the question, and demonstrates your potential for adjudicators.

Key Readings

Archbald, D. (2008). Research versus problem solving for the education leadership doctoral thesis: Implications for form and function. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 44(5), 704–739.

Belzer, A., & Ryan, S. (2013). Defining the problem of practice dissertation: Where's the practice, what's the problem. *Planning & Changing*, 44.

Dirkx, J. M. (2006). Studying the complicated matter of what works: Evidence-based research and the problem of practice. *Adult Education Quarterly*, 56(4), 273-90.

Dunlop, S. Problems of practice. Retrieved from <http://suedunlop.ca/tag/problem-of-practice/>