### PERSONAL STATEMENT WORKSHOP PREPARATION

# WHAT PURPOSE DOES THE PERSONAL STATEMENT SERVE?

- Serves as a "first interview"
- Should make the reader want to meet you/get to know you better
- Should convey your personality
- Should demonstrate motivation, maturity, understanding of the field

#### DEFINITION OF A STATEMENT: THE DO'S & DON'TS

DO: • Create a picture.

- Create an invitation for the reader.
- Write a story, or more precisely, your story.
- Indicate your priorities and judgment.

DON'T:

- Write an academic paper with you as the subject.
- Write a journal entry.
- Write a resume in narrative form.

#### STEP 1: REFLECT

- Motivation Why are you pursuing this profession?
- Fit How do your values align with the values of this profession?
- Capacity What are your most defining experiences?
- Vision What impact do you want to have?

#### QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- Who are the most influential people in your life? What did they do for you?
- What have been the pivotal moments in your life? Looking back, what can you recall having changed you? How were you affected?
- Do you feel a passion for medicine? What is the source of that passion?

### CONSIDER HOW YOU HAVE CHANGED OR MATURED

#### • Lessons learned

- Insights gained
- Demonstrate growth
- Remember the "so what?"
- You don't want to simply have a resume of experiences.
  - Do not duplicate application experiences.



#### CONSIDER AUDIENCE

- Often health professionals or associated with programs
- May be professors/researchers
- May not all be in health professions

#### STEP 2: BRAINSTORM

- Explain your clinical experience.
- Describe a unique experience and how it shaped you.
- Think about your volunteering experiences.
- Think about leadership roles you have played.

#### GETTING STARTED...

• Make a list of some of your most defining experiences

• Extracurricular, specific class, volunteer work, research, hobbies, etc.

- Try to select an experience that demonstrates a personal trait that will show how you will be a good health care provider
- Now write about that experience

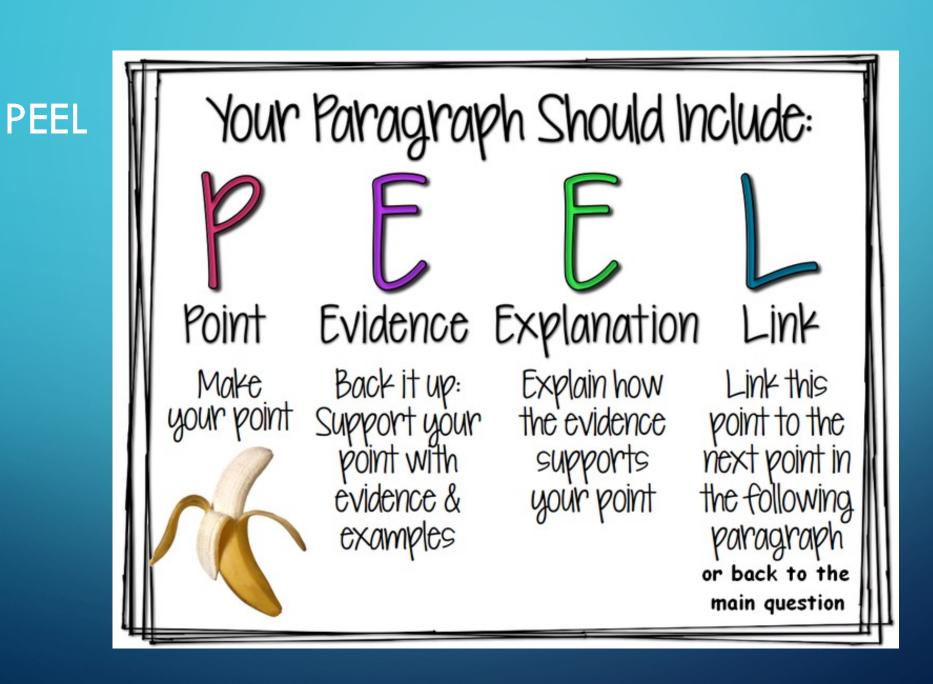
#### **STEP 3: EXECUTION**

- Introduction What is your motivation/inspiration?
- Body Actions/experiences, changes, insights
- Conclusion Future goals, What impacts do you want to have?

#### THE BASICS

- Answer the questions that are asked (see prompts)
- Tell a story
- Be specific
- Find an angle
- Concentrate on your opening paragraph
- Tell what you know
- Don't include some subjects
- Avoid Clichés
- Don't focus heavily on someone other than yourself Focus on yourself





#### STAR METHOD

- Situation-Describe vividly the environmental condition; ie. department, organization, timeframe
- Task or Obstacle- Concisely describe what was expected or asked of you in terms of responsibilities OR what challenges or obstacles did you have to overcome?
- Action-Detail the specific action steps that you took to handle the tasks or address the obstacle
- **Result**—What impact did you have on the situation? No matter how big or small, the listener/reader wants to hear the outcome.

## STEP 4: TAKE A BREAKANDSTEP 5: EDITING AND PROOFREADING

- Who are you intending to have review your essay?
- Put your draft away for a few days
- Expect to write multiple drafts

\*\*\* For the workshop – please bring 3 hardcopies of a draft. \*\*\*

#### A WORD OF CAUTION

• Don't use someone else's personal statement as an outline to follow

- Your voice/personality will not be reflected
- Don't put off the personal statement until just before applying

#### SECONDARY APPLICATION/ADDITIONAL ESSAYS

- Write a unique essay/answer for each school
- Review the mission of the institution
- Be specific!

#### RESOURCES

- University of Minnesota: <a href="https://www.healthcareers.umn.edu/events/online-workshops/personal-statements-health-program">https://www.healthcareers.umn.edu/events/online-workshops/personal-statements-health-program</a>
- Dental & Pharmacy: <u>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YsixQfYC-</u> <u>YE&feature=youtu.be</u>