



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



PEEL

Your Paragraph Should Include:

P

Point

Make
your point



E

Evidence

Back it up:
Support your
point with
evidence &
examples

E

Explanation

Explain how
the evidence
supports
your point

L

Link

Link this
point to the
next point in
the following
paragraph
or back to the
main question

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 BREAK AND STEP 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: <https://www.healthcareers.umn.edu/events/online-workshops/personal-statements-health-program>
- Dental & Pharmacy: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YsixQfYC-YE&feature=youtu.be>