

WRITING YOUR PERSONAL STATEMENT

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SOUND FAMILIAR?

"I don't like to write."

"I don't like writing about myself."

"I don't know what to write about."

"Writing is not my strong suit."

"I haven't written anything like this since I applied to medical school."

"I'm having trouble getting started."

"I know what I want to say, I just don't know how to put it into words."

"I have a draft, but I don't think it's any good."

"A resident told me that the personal statement isn't that important."



FORGET THESE, AND LET'S DIVE IN!

DON'T WORRY!

"MEET ME HALFWAY"



**(WITH YOUR BEST ATTEMPT AT A DRAFT IN A
TIMELY MANNER) AND
I'LL ENSURE YOU HAVE A STATEMENT
YOU WILL BE PROUD OF!!**

**DON'T UNDERESTIMATE THE TIME AND DIFFICULTY
INVOLVED IN DEVELOPING YOUR STATEMENT**

NEED 'INSPIRATION'?

**SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT TO READ SAMPLES
IN MY OFFICE!**

PERSONAL STATEMENT

YOUR PERSONAL STATEMENT IS A ONE PAGE ESSAY OUTLINING YOUR MOTIVATING INTERESTS AND STRENGTHS AS THEY RELATE TO BEING A SUCCESSFUL RESIDENT.

POINTS ON LENGTH / FORMAT...



❑ START IN MS WORD, SET PAGE MARGINS TO 0.5" TO 1" ALL AROUND, SELECT A STANDARD FONT STYLE (ARIAL, TIMES ROMAN, GARAMOND); USE 10 - 12 PT. FONT, AND ADD ONE SPACE BETWEEN PARAGRAPHS.

❑ IF WELL WRITTEN, "SHORT & SWEET" CAN HAVE MUCH MORE IMPACT THAN "LONG AND WORDY"! KEEP IN MIND HOW MANY STATEMENTS PROGRAMS DIRECTORS READ IN A SHORT TIME FRAME! CUT THE



❑ TYPICALLY, BETWEEN 500 AND 800 (+/-) WORDS* IS AN APPROPRIATE GOAL (REMEMBER: QUALITY VS QUANTITY!)

* THIS IS *NOT* A RULE OR REQUIREMENT, BUT AN EFFECTIVE LENGTH BASED ON MY EXPERIENCE.

PERSONAL STATEMENT

IT IS AN OPPORTUNITY TO:

- ❑ INTRODUCE YOURSELF TO THE SELECTION COMMITTEE BY EMPHASIZING YOUR STRENGTHS, UNIQUE CHARACTERISTICS, ENTHUSIASM, AND PERSONALITY.
- ❑ PROVIDE AN OVERVIEW OF WHO YOU ARE AND WHAT YOU WILL BRING TO THE PROGRAM.
- ❑ PROVIDE A COMMON TOPIC FOR CONVERSATION (POSSIBLY) DURING INTERVIEWS.
- ❑ SHOW YOU KNOW ABOUT THE SPECIALTY AND ARE A GOOD MATCH FOR IT.
- ❑ PROVIDE INFORMATION / REVEAL SOMETHING ABOUT YOU THAT IS *NOT* IN YOUR CV, TRANSCRIPT, OR ERAS APPLICATION. IT IS DISTINCT!

A WELL WRITTEN PERSONAL STATEMENT CAN STRENGTHEN YOUR APPLICATION; THEREFORE DEVELOP A HIGH QUALITY ONE.

POSSIBILITIES FOR CONTENT / THEMES

"LIFE CHANGING" EVENT

"EYE OPENING" MEDICAL MISSIONS TRIP

INSPIRATIONAL FAMILY, FRIEND, MENTOR, TEACHER

INNOVATIVE RESEARCH OR TEACHING YOU'VE DONE
(AND / OR SPECIFIC SKILLS YOU HAVE THAT ARE VALUED BY THE SPECIALTY)

EXPERIENCES AND INTERESTS - INCLUDING A HOBBY OR COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES - THAT
DEMONSTRATE YOUR RESILIENCE (VIOLIN, SURFING, HORSEBACK RIDING, MARTIAL ARTS)

PATIENT-INTERACTION THAT MOTIVATED YOU

IMPACT YOU HOPE TO MAKE ON PATIENT CARE

CONTRIBUTIONS YOU CAN MAKE TO THE SPECIALTY

YOUR GOALS WITHIN THE PROGRAM / WHAT YOU ARE SEEKING FROM AN IDEAL RESIDENCY

QUOTE (EITHER 'FAMOUS' OR SOMETHING SOMEONE SAID TO YOU) THAT UNDERSCORES HOW YOU
CHOSE YOUR SPECIALTY AND / OR MOTIVATES THE WAY IN WHICH YOU WISH TO PRACTICE
MEDICINE

“DON'Ts”



- 1) **DON'T DEFINE THE SPECIALTY (THE PD KNOWS WHAT IT'S ABOUT!):**
 - ❑ “EM IS FAST PACED, AND YOU NEVER KNOW WHO WILL WALK THROUGH THE DOORS NEXT!”
 - ❑ “AN ANESTHESIOLOGIST NEEDS TO ESTABLISH QUICK RAPPORT IN ORDER TO CALM ANXIOUS PATIENTS.”
 - ❑ “INTERNAL MEDICINE IS LIKE A PUZZLE THAT NEEDS TO BE SOLVED.”

- 2) **DON'T WRITE MUCH (IF AT ALL) ABOUT HOW YOU “LOVE” OR “ENJOY” ASPECTS OF THE SPECIALTY. THIS IS IMPLIED; PLUS, YOU CAN DO SO ON YOUR INTERVIEWS:**
 - ❑ “I HAVE ALWAYS LOVED WORKING WITH CHILDREN; THEREFORE, PEDIATRICS IS THE PERFECT FIT FOR ME.”
 - ❑ I AM PASSIONATE ABOUT WOMEN’S HEALTH, SO I AM PURSUING OB/GYN.”
 - ❑ “I ENJOY WATCHING PSYCHIATRISTS’ ABILITY TO ESTABLISH RAPPORT WITH HARD-TO-REACH PATIENTS.”

- 3) **LAST, BUT NOT LEAST...DON'T WRITE YOUR STATEMENT LIKE A “CASE REPORT.” THIS IS ABOUT YOU, NOT THE PATIENTS YOU HAVE MET.**
 - ❑ “MRS. X. PRESENTED TO THE FAMILY MEDICINE CLINIC WITH SYMPTOMS OF....”
 - ❑ “I BROKE THE ICE WITH THE YOUNG PATIENT BY TALKING ABOUT THE LATEST SUPER HERO MOVIE.”
 - ❑ “NOTICING THAT MR. Y’S HEMOGLOBIN A1C WAS ELEVATED, I DISCUSSED WITH HIM...”

HELPFUL HINTS

VERY IMPORTANT:

CATCH THE READER'S ATTENTION WITH A "BOLD" OPENING!
COMPEL THE READER TO KEEP READING!

- ❖ *"What's wrong with her?"
I asked my father with the candor of a curious child.*
- ❖ *I was immediately startled when I heard the trauma alert paged!*
- ❖ *Shortly after 3 am, while resuscitating an elderly gentleman who coded, the 'hero' showed up...*
- ❖ *When you repeat something over and over, somehow it stops sounding real.*
- ❖ *The plane rattled wildly.*
- ❖ *I never would have imagined that I would find my calling while driving through a flooded street in rural El Salvador to reach a clinic full of patients.*

BEGIN AND END STATEMENT IN A STRONG, POSITIVE, AND ENGAGING MANNER –
TIE INTRODUCTION AND CONCLUSION TOGETHER!

HELPFUL HINTS (CONTINUED)

- **CREATE A NATURAL FLOW - DON'T JUMP FROM ONE TOPIC TO ANOTHER.**
- **HAVE AN OVERALL 'THEME' (DON'T CHOOSE A TOPIC / THEME BECAUSE YOU THINK IT "SOUNDS" IMPRESSIVE - SELECT ONE THAT BEST REFLECTS WHO YOU ARE).**
- **BE CONCISE AND DIRECT (IF A WORD OR PHRASE ISN'T MEANINGFUL, THROW IT OUT!) A FEW EXAMPLES...**
 - I HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO SUTURE = *I SUTURED...*
 - I PARTICIPATED IN DATA COLLECTION = *I COLLECTED DATA...*
 - I WAS ABLE TO SCRUB IN = *I SCRUBBED IN...*
 - I CAME TO THE REALIZATION THAT = *I REALIZED...*

 - AVOID THE PHRASE "I BELIEVE..."
(THIS IS YOUR STATEMENT, SO IT IS UNDERSTAND THAT IT IS YOU WHO "BELIEVES...")
- **AVOID REPETITIVE SENTENCE STRUCTURE. DO NOT RE-STATE SAME IDEAS. DO NOT REPEAT THE SAME WORDS OVER AND OVER AGAIN.**
- **DO NOT USE THE WORDS "I" AND "MY" EXCESSIVELY.**
- **DON'T UNDERESTIMATE THE IMPORTANCE OF THE STATEMENT!!!**

EXCERPTS

MEMBERS OF PREVIOUS CLASSES - WHO WROTE OUTSTANDING STATEMENTS - GRANTED PERMISSION TO SHOW EXCERPTS TO "SPARK" IDEAS. COPYING/PLAGIARISM IS STRICTLY PROHIBITED! THESE SENTENCES ARE INTENDED TO PROVIDE A SENSE OF THE TYPE OF TOPICS ABOUT WHICH YOU CAN WRITE.



HOW ONE'S PERSONALITY WILL HELP PATIENTS

MY ENTHUSIASM TO LIVE AN ACTIVE AND FIT LIFESTYLE WILL HELP ME TO LEAD BY EXAMPLE AND EDUCATE PATIENTS TO ADAPT THEIR OWN HEALTHY HABITS. I BELIEVE THAT SOMETIMES THE BEST MEDICINE IS A DOSE OF FRESH AIR, SUNSHINE AND A SMILE! I HOPE THAT MY POSITIVITY, OUTGOING SPIRIT, UPBEAT PERSONALITY AND SENSE OF HUMOR WILL MOTIVATE MY PATIENTS AND COLLEAGUES.

A PATIENT WHO HAD AN IMPACT

I VISITED HER SEVERAL TIMES DAILY WHILE AWAITING THE BIOPSY RESULTS. WE SPOKE OF NOTHING EXCEEDINGLY IMPORTANT, SMALL TALK MOSTLY, BOTH OF US BIDDING TIME AND NOT FEELING THE NEED TO ACKNOWLEDGE WHAT WE WERE BOTH THINKING. I HELD HER HAND AS THE BIOPSY REPORT CAME BACK: SMALL CELL LUNG CARCINOMA. FURTHER WORKUP REVEALED METASTATIC DISEASE. HER PROGNOSIS: POOR. I OFTEN CONTEMPLATE THE RELATIONSHIP WE DEVELOPED IN THAT SHORT TIME. IF I CAN BOIL IT DOWN TO A SINGLE TRUTH, WHAT I RECEIVED FROM HER WAS PERSPECTIVE. I REALIZED THAT DEEP WITHIN MY INSECURITIES, CRITICAL INTROSPECTION, AND ANGST LAY THE CAPABILITY TO ACHIEVE FAR MORE THAN I IMAGINED.

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WHY THIS SPECIALTY IS APPEALING

THIS PERSONAL EXPERIENCE SPARKED MY INITIAL INTEREST IN DERMATOLOGY; A FIELD THAT EMPHASIZES DISEASE PREVENTION, EDUCATION, FOLLOW-UP AND PROMPT TREATMENT. EMPHASIZING PREVENTATIVE MEASURES IS ONE WAY THAT PHYSICIANS CAN INFLUENCE PATIENTS' HEALTH WHILE SIMULTANEOUSLY DECREASING THE BURDEN THAT MANY DISEASES PLACE ON OUR HEALTHCARE SYSTEM. THROUGHOUT ROTATIONS, THE MIX OF CLINIC AND PROCEDURAL TIME - COMBINED WITH THE RANGE OF AGES TREATED - HAVE BEEN APPEALING ASPECTS OF THE SPECIALTY.

A PERSONAL INTEREST / HOBBY AS IT RELATES TO MEDICINE

AFTER FLYING THROUGH THE AIR FOR WHAT SEEMED LIKE AN ETERNITY, MY HORSE LANDED FROM THE SUBSTANTIAL JUMP WITH A GRACEFUL THUD. THE MAGNANIMOUS APPLAUSE SENT A WARM SENSATION THROUGH MY CHEST AS I REALIZED THAT MY YEARS OF COMMITMENT HAD PAID OFF: I HAD CONQUERED THE HAMPTON CLASSIC, THE BIGGEST HORSE SHOW OF THE YEAR! THE JOURNEY THROUGH MEDICAL SCHOOL IS LIKE RIDING A HORSE BECAUSE BOTH REQUIRE STRENUOUS YEARS OF SELF-DISCIPLINE AND PERSONAL SACRIFICE. JUST AS A RIDER COMMITS HERSELF UNWAVERINGLY TO HER HORSE AS A UNIFIED TEAM, A DOCTOR MUST COMMIT TO HER PATIENTS AND TO THE ART OF MEDICINE. AND, MOST IMPORTANTLY, WHEN YOU FALL HARD ON THE GROUND YOU MUST DUST YOURSELF OFF - WITHOUT HESITATION - AND GET BACK IN THE SADDLE.

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A LIFE-CHANGING MEDICAL MISSIONS TRIP

HIKING THROUGH DEEP FOREST BRUSH AND ACROSS REMOTE STREAMS IN THE MIDDAY HEAT OF THE EL SALVADORAN SAN FERNANDO VALLEY WAS NOT A TYPICAL DAY FOR MOST SINGLE MOTHERS OF THREE FROM LONG ISLAND. HOWEVER, I AM ANYTHING BUT TYPICAL AND THIS WAS HOW I GRATEFULLY SPENT A JULY DAY IN 2013. TREKKING FROM ONE WOODEN HUT TO ANOTHER AND DRAWING BLOOD SAMPLES TO INVESTIGATE LOCAL EPIDEMIOLOGICAL TRENDS ON POPULATIONS AFFLICTED WITH CHAGAS DISEASE, I WAS ALLOWED INTO THE LIVES OF MULTIPLE FAMILIES VIA A LANGUAGE WHICH WAS NOT MY OWN BUT ONE WHICH I WAS BECOMING RATHER COMFORTABLE USING.

AN INFLUENTIAL PERSON

[MY BROTHER] HAS MOTIVATED ME TO FOLLOW MY DREAM TO BECOME A PEDIATRIC NEUROLOGIST AND USE MY LIFELONG SKILL OF QUICKLY ESTABLISHING TRUST AND RAPPORT, PARTICULARLY WITH THE MOST VULNERABLE PATIENTS. [HE] HAS ALSO INFLUENCED THE TYPE OF PHYSICIAN I WILL BE; ONE WHO MAKES A DIFFERENCE IN CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND WELLBEING BY SEEING BEYOND DISEASE OR DISABILITY AND TREATING THE WHOLE PERSON WITH RESPECT, EMPATHY, AND COMPASSION.

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WHAT I AM SEEKING FROM RESIDENCY TRAINING

I WANT TO BUILD UPON MY EXTENSIVE RESEARCH EXPERIENCE IN GENETICS AND SURGERY; THEREFORE, AN IDEAL RESIDENCY PROGRAM WOULD OFFER RESEARCH AND CLINICAL OPPORTUNITIES, EXCELLENT TEACHING AND MENTORSHIP, AND THE ABILITY TO EXPLORE THE CUTTING EDGE OF SURGERY.

HOW DO I GET STARTED? MAKE AN OUTLINE. ASK YOURSELF THESE QUESTIONS:



1. WHAT ARE MY **REASONS** FOR CHOOSING THIS SPECIALTY? WHY AM I **INTERESTED** - WHAT ASPECTS **INTRIGUE ME**?
2. IS THERE A **PERSONAL EXPERIENCE** THAT SPARKED MY INTEREST IN THIS SPECIALTY OR EXPLAINS WHY I AM A **GOOD MATCH** FOR IT?
3. WHAT **PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCES** OF MINE "FIT WITH THIS SPECIALTY?"
4. IS THERE A **PERSON** WHO INFLUENCED MY DECISION TO ENTER THIS FIELD??
5. WHAT **SKILLS** DO I POSSESS THAT ARE VALUED BY THIS SPECIALTY?
6. WHAT ARE MY PROFESSIONAL **GOALS**?
7. WHAT TYPE OF **TRAINING** AM I LOOKING TO ACQUIRE IN A RESIDENCY PROGRAM?
8. **WHY** SHOULD A PROGRAM SELECT **ME**?



PANICKED?!

DO THIS:



THINK (AND TALK) ABOUT WHAT YOU WANT TO WRITE.

TALK TO A RELATIVE OR FRIEND ABOUT YOUR IDEAS. FOR MANY, TALKING IS EASIER THAN WRITING. USE "STORYTELLING" TO SEE HOW YOUR IDEAS DEVELOP. BY DOING SO, YOU'LL GET PERSPECTIVE ON WHAT IS REALLY INTERESTING (AND WHAT SEEMS CLICHÉD OR BORING).

JUST START WRITING!!!

EVEN IN A "STREAM OF CONSCIOUSNESS" FASHION. GET TO 1 - 2 PAGES (SINGLE-SPACED, 1" MARGINS). INITIALLY, DO NOT WORRY ABOUT ANYTHING BUT PUTTING YOUR THOUGHTS ON PAPER.



SEND ME WHAT YOU HAVE WRITTEN.

MY STRENGTH IS "FINESSING" YOUR WRITING BY MAKING IT ORGANIZED, FLUID, CONCISE, AND COMPELLING.

TO BE FAIR TO ALL STUDENTS...

EMAIL IS MY RECOMMENDED METHOD OF COMMUNICATING ABOUT YOUR STATEMENT. IF YOU PREFER AN IN-PERSON APPOINTMENT, I WILL BE HAPPY TO SCHEDULE WITH THE FOLLOWING CONSIDERATIONS:

- 1) FIRST, PLEASE EMAIL ME YOUR DRAFT.
- 2) ONCE I HAVE EDITED IT, I WILL CONTACT YOU TO SCHEDULE.

TO ENSURE ALL STUDENTS RECEIVE A DETAILED REVISION OF THEIR PERSONAL STATEMENT, ADHERENCE TO DEADLINES IS IMPERATIVE:

~ AUGUST 1 ~

I CANNOT GUARANTEE THAT I WILL BE ABLE TO REVIEW DRAFTS FOR 'SECOND' AND 'THIRD' SPECIALTIES TO WHICH YOU APPLY. IF TIME PERMITS FOR REVIEW OF A STATEMENT FOR ANOTHER SPECIALTY, I'LL GLADLY ACCOMMODATE.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR UNDERSTANDING AND COOPERATION!

What's Next?



[HTTPS://WWW.NYIT.EDU/MEDICINE/ERAS_CLASS_2020](https://www.nyit.edu/medicine/eras_class_2020)

EMAIL YOUR PERSONAL
STATEMENT DRAFT:



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ROADMAP TO RESIDENCY “INTERVIEW SKILLS” WORKSHOPS

WEDNESDAY, MAY 29

(EM APPLICANTS ONLY TO REVIEW HOW TO TAKE THE
STANDARDIZED VIDEO INTERVIEW)

THURSDAY, JULY 18

MONDAY, AUGUST 5

THURSDAY, AUGUST 22

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 18

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 3

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 22

WORKSHOPS WILL BE HELD IN ROCKEFELLER

~ EXACT TIMES TBD (BETWEEN 5 PM AND 8 PM)~