

Your Personal Statement

Explaining your journey into the Medical field

Your Personal Statement

How to tell your story, and move your audience!

BE GENUINE

- I highlighted **my background** and **how I deciphered my desire to be a nurse.**
- If you are first generation college student, come from a low socioeconomic background, etc. mention it because **admissions officers are curious to know how you, without extra resources, made it out and got a college education.**
- **Tell them what you learned from volunteering.** I mentioned a patient story I had while being a CA @ VFC. What about your experiences made you say **"Yes! I can't imagine doing anything else!"**
- **Admissions want genuineness and determinism.** You must show that in your essay.

REFLECT ON YOUR EXPERIENCES

- **Tell your own honest story,** but don't be trite. These admissions committee receive thousands of applications so be unique and honest to grab their attention but please **be sincere** because they can easily spot artificial sentiment.
- Tell your story but be sure to also **REFLECT** on it, and **explain how this affected you and your journey into medicine or how it has better prepared you for medical school.**

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CREATE A COMPELLING NARRATIVE

- I definitely included my time at VFC and my **desire to work with the underserved population.**
- It's also important to **create a narrative** of you and your desires, rather than a listing out all of your experiences and accomplishments.
- **Don't sound fake!**

FOCUS ON THE DOCTOR-PATIENT RELATIONSHIP

- I focused on my **previous experiences as a patient**, and **what the doctor-patient relationship meant to me** – how it should be viewed as a bond between two people rather than numbers.
- I also wrote about one instance of **shadowing in an ER** that stood out to me, as well as **what I learned volunteering at VFC!**
- **Read it out loud.** Make sure to have a good number of people read it to, and hopefully one of those can be a medical student or physician.

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PERSONALIZE YOUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- **Make it personal.** The one mistake I made originally with my personal statement is that I essentially rehashed my resume and explained the major accomplishments that I'm most proud of and how they reinforced my decision to go to med school.
- Someone recommended that I write something that would not just supplement my undergraduate and post-grad experiences, but instead write a personal statement that would allow the admissions committee to look at all my clinical, outreach, and community experiences from my perspective to **understand not just what I was doing, but most importantly why I was doing it.**

SHOW YOUR PASSION

- **Stay away from the usual "I want to go into this profession because I want to help people".** The readers know that everyone going into the medical profession have great intentions and want to help make a difference in the lives of others. You can add that, but don't focus on it too much.
- From my experience and the advice I was given, the admissions committee want to know **"why" you want to get into the profession and "what" you plan to do with your degree.**
- **Show your passion.** Demonstrate that you have **long-term goals** and have **put a lot of thought into your decision to go into the field.**

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WRITE SEVERAL DRAFTS

- It is important to **give yourself ample time** when writing your personal statement.
- **Sit down and make yourself a timeline of all the experiences you've had** relating to your decision as to why pursue medicine.
- Then, choose which experiences you think are the most important and **start forming a narrative** in your mind to tell a story.
- Of course there are many ways you can write and organize your personal statement but the most important thing is to make sure you answer the question: **Why medicine?**
- **Make sure you have many other people read it and not just medical professionals** but people from all walks of life. If they can clearly tell you why you want to pursue medicine from just reading your essay, then you've done your job of delivering your point.

HOW TO FORMAT YOUR NARRATIVE (Example)

- **First paragraph: Throw your reader in the middle of an experience.** Get the reader hooked into your story but they'd still be intrigued to read on to figure out more details.
- **Second paragraph: Pull back, and give the reader the whole picture of your story in the beginning.** Then provide a road map of the rest of your essay. Mention "why medicine" here, and then include supporting evidence using your experiences in the rest of the paragraphs.
- **Conclusion: Summarize your experiences, and reiterate "why medicine".** Emphasize to your reader your purpose. Close the essay by referring back to your initial experience that you mentioned in the first paragraph to make it feel complete.