Personal Statement

For medical, dental, podiatric, optometric and veterinary school applicants
Write it

Use pen and paper!

Don’t analyze, just write.

What are you the most proud of?

Don’t stop until I call time!
Map it

- Circle important concepts.
- Label common themes.
- Connect related concepts with lines.
- Label lines to indicate how the two concepts relate.
Analyze it

What were your major themes?

Can you build your personal statement around one of those?

Will that statement show:

• Who you are?

• Why you want to be a doc?

• How you are qualified?
Now imagine that you have 5 minutes to talk directly to Admissions. What would you say and why?
A Personal Statement has 1 goal:

to make the reader want to get to know you better
A Personal Statement Should Not:

• Be generic
• Include quotes
• Focus on the negative
• Try to cover everything
• Be open to misinterpretation
• Make statements about your awesomeness
• Leave the ultimate question unanswered
Sensitive Information

How to decide if you should include it:

• Is it an important part of your journey?
• How have you grown because of this?
• Has it impacted the kind of doc you will be?
• How might it be received by different readers?
A Personal Statement Should

• Be personal!

• Be organized around a central theme

• Be easy to follow

• Be written in direct, active, clear language

• Be completely free of errors
Start Now

• You will likely need to write *dozens* of additional essays for your secondary apps!

• Establish a writing schedule
  – Put it in your calendar and keep it sacred
  – Use the time to research, brainstorm, analyze, organize, outline, write, revise, repeat
  – Any work that will help in developing a quality personal statement / secondary essay is legit!
Banish errors

• Errors are the kiss of death – they say: I couldn’t be bothered to put the time into this so I obviously don’t really want to be a doc.

• Spell & grammar check are never enough!

• Read the statement out loud – listen for mistakes and awkwardness.

• Proofread again & again and ask others to proofread too.
Seek Feedback

• All writers must do this!

• Have multiple people read the statement
  – People who know you really well (is it me?)
  – People who don’t (what did you learn about me?)
  – PreHealth Advisor (req’d for committee letter)

• In the end though, it is your statement and you need to decide what should go in it!