

Personal Statement Workshop

Free Write



Hand-write about your motivations towards becoming a physician.

Don't think. Just write whatever comes to your mind for an entire 10 minutes

TOMORROW: read what you wrote

HIGHLIGHT phrases/thoughts that stand out, and **CATEGORIZE** the thoughts with different colors

FREE WRITE AGAIN on each category.

OBSERVE: Areas that you can write a lot? Could be the start of your PS. Can't write a lot? Trash it.

Personal Statement Lengths

Med School (AMCAS/AACOMAS): 5300* characters

PA School (CASPA): 5000*

Dental (AADSAS), PT (PTCAS), Pharmacy (PharmCAS): 4500*

**Characters include spaces!*

REMEMBER YOUR AUDIENCE:

- They know more than you!
- They have more medical knowledge!
- They know what it's like to be a healthcare practitioner.



This is your time to shine by showing your accomplishments and experience. Do so with grace and humility.

This is not about showing off and being cocky.

Address WHY YOU WANT TO BE A

This is *different* from how you were inspired to be a _____



Back up your argument with a specific example from your experience

Choose and elaborate 1-2 of your experiences



Share your background if it's appropriate



Show. Don't tell.



Limit the number of 'I' statements



PS: DON'Ts

DO NOT summarize what you listed on the activity list. **DO NOT** repeat what you wrote on the activity list.

DO NOT talk too much about other people (family member, mentor, patient, etc). *TALK ABOUT YOURSELF!*

DO NOT use words you don't know/ or how to use.

DO NOT overuse medical terminology. **DO NOT** show off your knowledge about medicine.

DO NOT assume everyone knows what you know.

DO NOT begin with a quotation.

Try to avoid foreign language.

Try to avoid using cliché's. "The look in the children's eyes made it all worthwhile."

Try to avoid humor.

Secondary Application Essays

- Research the school you are writing for.
- Make sure you understand the topic/questions **well**.
- **DO NOT summarize** what you wrote in the activities list
- **DO NOT repeat** what you wrote in the primary personal statement

Just like for your PS, don't forget who your audience is.

Composition

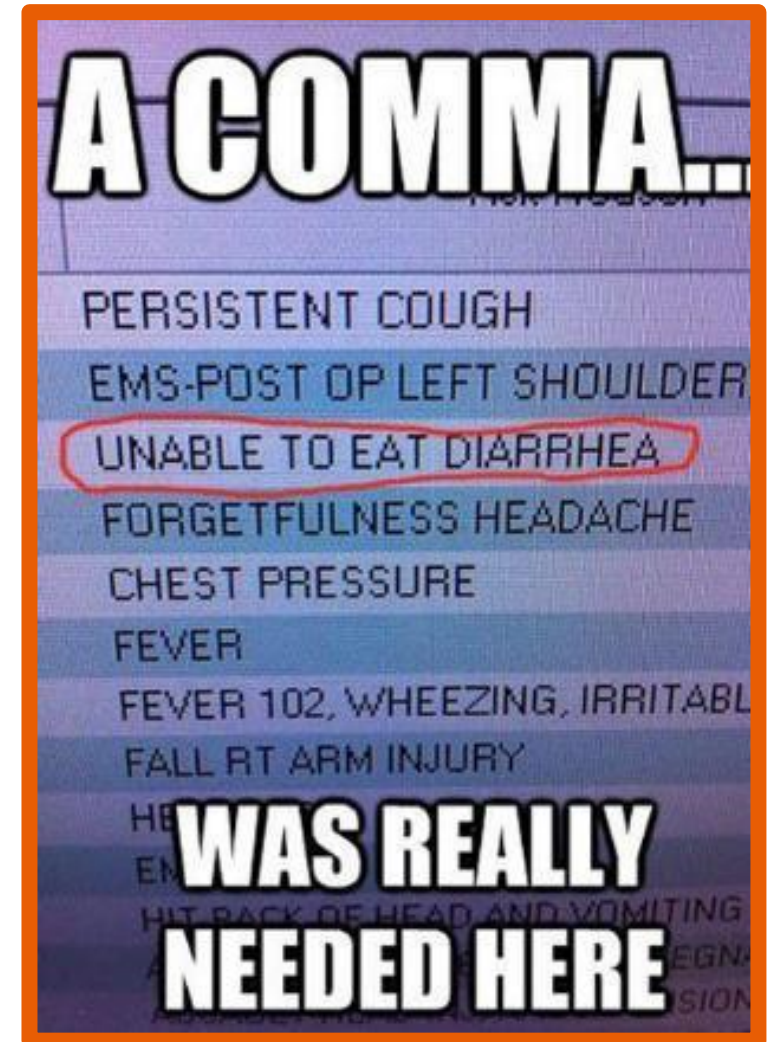
Spelling

Punctuation

Grammar

Why is this important?

Details Matter





Get Feedback!

Have people you trust (prof, doctor, med student, family support, PPA advisor (!) Writing Center tutor, etc) read your work and offer feedback.

Be careful not to ask too many people!



What are they REALLY looking for?

PreMed Competencies for Entering Medical Students (AAMC)

Professional Competencies

- Commitment to Learning and Growth
- Cultural Awareness
- Cultural Humility
- Empathy and Compassion
- Ethical Responsibility to Self and Others
- Interpersonal Skills
- Oral Communication
- Reliability & Dependability
- Resilience & Adaptability
- Service Orientation
- Teamwork and Collaboration

Science Competencies

- Human Behavior
- Living Systems

Thinking and Reasoning Competencies

- Critical Thinking
- Quantitative Reasoning
- Scientific Inquiry
- Written Communication

More Practice

THINK ABOUT a clinical experience you've had that was important to you

WRITE brief comments on what you did (bullet point-ish)

WRITE brief points about what you learned about medicine through this experience

WRITE brief points about what you learned about **yourself** through this experience

SUMMARIZE all of these points into an actual paragraph

ADD an opening sentence for the paragraph

SHARE and do peer review in pairs

WRITE three different introductions for a personal statement

TRASH two of them; your first idea is rarely your best!

Questions?

Schedule an appointment with a PPA advisor!

Email Us: ppa@advising.utah.edu