Personal Statement Tips

• Purpose of the Personal Statement
  ➢ The MAIN purpose is to help the Admissions committee understand your lifelong commitment AND strong motivation for the profession.
  ➢ It must CLEARLY convey that you care for other human beings.
  ➢ It should provide a narrative that helps the reader understand you as a person, beyond the accomplishments on a resumé, or beyond what other references might write about you.

• Personal statement should:
  ➢ Clearly state your career goal, AND clearly convey why you want to achieve this.
  ➢ Discuss experience(s) that led you to this career choice.
  ➢ Be PERSONAL and distinct from other applicants. Ideally, it is MEMORABLE.
  ➢ Address setbacks or gaps (use positive qualities and how you’ve overcome this), but only if necessary.
  ➢ Demonstrate or document your feelings about caring for others.

• Personal statement should NOT:
  ➢ Specify a specialty beyond the next phase of training (e.g. don’t say surgeon when applying for medical school, nor nurse practitioner when applying for nursing school).
  ➢ Disparage other people or institutions in any way.
  ➢ Give any indication that you would be better at another career. For instance, don’t spend considerable focus on your research experience if you’re applying to be a clinician.

• When using specific examples
  ➢ Don’t be vague or use an experience that is not completely relevant.
  ➢ Don’t include anything remotely related to private health information (e.g. do not include a patient’s first name that you’ve helped).

• Strong writing
  ➢ Communicate very clearly—if a portion is hard to understand, re-word it.
  ➢ NO grammar or spelling errors.
  ➢ Avoid clichés.
  ➢ Avoid excessive quotes (i.e. no more than one).
  ➢ Make paragraphs flow (avoid terms like “then”, “also”, “next”, etc.).