



Personal Statement Notes

- An ideal personal statement is 60-75% of the full length.
- Your reason for being a physician is the paramount point to be made in the personal statement. Don't leave it for the last paragraph. Instead, it can be effective to tie back to why you want to be a physician.
- Your personal statement should stand INDEPENDENT from all other application material. Assume they haven't read anything other than your MCAT and GPA.
- Indicate why a MD/DO is the right path. Don't simply state "I want to help".
- Tell a story that **portrays** your character, instead of describing your character.
- Foreign language: might bring up speaking Spanish, but probably not other languages.
- Focus on your **caring** of people; not the science, or the intellectualism.
- Make sure each sentence is at the college level. Sentences such as "Then, I was able to..." don't have much impact.
- Always be humble.
- Be very cautious when describing an early life event AND connecting it to that you want to be physician.
- Assume people will read your application VERY fast. Make sure each sentence can withstand a quick read.
- Make sure that all grammar/syntax is addressed with perfection.
- Tell a story; Have a simple goal.

DON'T:

- Limit the field of medicine ("I want to help children")
- Indicate your love for science
- Let readers assume
- Don't play "I am the victim"; Don't discuss family; Don't include shock value
- Discuss international travel
- Disparage anyone... ever.

AVOID:

- Words like "always" and "never"
- Name dropping of clinicians or patients
- Mentioning a family member as determining factor of wanting to be a physician (Inspired is OK if ideal student physician in family)
- Lecturing such as "Good physicians are those who..."
- Negative things about yourself (personal choices, limitations, paths, slowness, indecision unless cleared with Dr. Davis)
- Phrases like "I know I want to be..." or "I will be an excellent..."
- Words such as "realized"...instead use "immediately" or "determined"
- Non-relevant background information—get to the point
- Describing medicine as rainbows and unicorns.
- Physician is a better word to use than Doctor
- Physician vs. Other Health Careers