



Crafting a Personal Statement

Introduction

Think about starting your essay with a story (it might start mid-action) or hook to grab your readers' attention. Consider having a thesis statement or a sentence that forecasts the rest of the personal statement and argues for you as a good candidate. For example, you might say, "the lessons I learned about teamwork, empathy, compassion, and communication will serve me well in a ***specialty*** residency at ***chosen program.***" Whatever you bring up in that sentence should be discussed in more detail in the body of your personal statement.

Body Paragraphs

Develop CSARR. This is an acronym that works to provide specific examples to demonstrate your qualifications/skills, and also to connect you to your chosen field: 1-2 body paragraphs should serve to showcase whatever skills you brought up in your intro. Rather than turning your resume/CV/transcript into paragraph form or listing all your qualifications, pick 1-2 specific examples that demonstrate the skills/qualifications you brought up. Consider the following model: CSARR for each body paragraph.

- C stands for claim. You are making a claim about a skill or qualification you have. You can also use this sentence to connect to a specific program (e.g. "St. Joe's focus on preventative medicine appeals to me because it is one of the aspects of family med I'm so passionate about.")
- S stands for situation. This is a situation that tested the claim.
- A is for action. The specific action you took in the situation.
- R(1) is for result. This is the immediate, local result of your action.
- R(2) is the global result. This is the larger takeaway, or what you'll bring to the residency, or your future as a doctor. Make connections here to what inspires you about ***specialty***, the values a residency might be looking for, or—for your top choice programs—the specifics that you find attractive or how you might fit in with their mission/values.

Conclusion

In your conclusion, I recommend coming back to the story from your intro. If you started a story there, it's nice to end it in the conclusion. That resolution "bookends" your essay and signals to readers that your essay is complete.