



# Curriculum Vitae (CV) & Personal Statement

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# Curriculum Vitae (CV)

- ▶ A CV is essentially a medical resume
- ▶ Make sure to always keep an updated copy of your CV on your computer
  - ▶ Even if the change seems insignificant to you
- ▶ Formal CV is not needed for the application process
  - ▶ Nowadays, the ERAS application is built in a way where you can include experiences about yourself within the application
  - ▶ Once you are done with your application, you can download or print out a copy of your CV

# CV Categories

- ▶ Can be created for any specific experience
- ▶ Order of your experience should vary on your expertise and what you are applying for
- ▶ All experiences should be in reverse chronological order (the most recent listed first)
- ▶ Account for all gaps in time (even if they are not medical school related)
- ▶ If you have nothing to list in a particular category then do not include it on your CV

# CV Categories

- ▶ Contact Information
- ▶ Education
- ▶ Honors and Awards
- ▶ Work Experience
- ▶ Research Experience
- ▶ Publications
- ▶ Presentations
- ▶ Volunteer/ Community Service Experience
- ▶ Extracurricular Experiences
- ▶ Committees
- ▶ Professional Memberships
- ▶ Hobbies or personal (Optional)

# Contact Information and Education

## ▶ Contact Information

- ▶ Up to date contact information
- ▶ Full Name – as it will appear on your application
- ▶ Email address – professional, respectable, and something you check often
- ▶ Phone Number – can be reached easily, voicemail greeting is professional

## ▶ Education

- ▶ List all graduate and college/universities that you attended
  - ▶ List degrees being earned and the discipline of study
  - ▶ Make sure to list the most recent first

# Honors & Awards, Work and Research Experience

- ▶ Honors & Awards
  - ▶ Any honors or awards you received in school
  - ▶ Can include USMLE scores
  - ▶ ECFMG Certificate if applicable
- ▶ Work Experience
  - ▶ Move this down in the list if not medically relevant
  - ▶ Include title, name of employer, location and dates worked
  - ▶ Can include a brief description of work (not necessary)
- ▶ Research Experience
  - ▶ Include title, name of employer/principle investigator, location and dates worked
  - ▶ Can include brief description of work (not necessary)

# Publications and Presentations

- ▶ These 2 sections can be merged
- ▶ Publications
  - ▶ All publications should be cited in AMA style
  - ▶ Use the same style consistently
  - ▶ Include authors, title of publication, journal in which it was published, and date of publications
  - ▶ If the publication has not yet been published indicate when a manuscript was submitted and whether or not it was accepted
- ▶ Presentations
  - ▶ Formally list all presentations made at national and local meetings or medical school meetings.
  - ▶ Include formal title presentation, authors, location of presentations and date

# Volunteer/Community Service and Extracurricular Experience

- ▶ Volunteer/Community Service Experience
  - ▶ List all service related experiences that took place during medical school
  - ▶ If any experiences before medical school, include any that pertained to the medical field
  - ▶ Also, be sure to include experiences that were especially meaningful
  - ▶ Include experience name, your position, location, and dates
- ▶ Extracurricular Experience
  - ▶ Handle the same way you would Service Experiences



# Committees, Professional Memberships, and Hobbies or Personal

- ▶ Committees
  - ▶ List all committees on which you served
    - ▶ National, local and medical school or hospital committees
  - ▶ Include the name of the committee, your role, location and dates
- ▶ Professional Memberships
  - ▶ List any/all professional memberships
- ▶ Hobbies or Personal (optional)
  - ▶ List most important and valuable outside interests

# CV Formatting

- ▶ CV should be clean, simple, organized and easy to read
- ▶ Be consistent with fonts, margins, and headings
- ▶ General rules
  - ▶ Use 1-inch margins
  - ▶ Use 11 or 12 point Arial or Times New Roman font
  - ▶ Keep titles, fonts, and style consistent throughout
  - ▶ Remember that simple is better. Avoid fancy fonts and formats
  - ▶ Try to keep it 1 page in length

# Personal Statement

- ▶ Be sure to “show” rather than “tell” what qualities, characteristics, and interests you have that would be a good fit for their program
  - ▶ Explain why you find a specialty interesting and what experiences have led you to this conclusion
- ▶ Make sure personal statement has the broadest appeal possible
- ▶ Try to take a “middle of the road” approach
  - ▶ Include some details about who you are but also focus on the specialty itself
- ▶ Personal statements are used as a screening tool for candidates
  - ▶ Use it to try and set yourself apart from other candidates
  - ▶ This can help you get an interview for the program but not necessarily a position

# Hints on Writing Personal Statement

- ▶ Start with something to engage your reader
- ▶ End with a strong conclusion to leave a lasting impression
- ▶ Do not use cliché phrases or quotations
- ▶ Always ask yourself if someone else could have written your paper and if the answer is yes go back and re-write it, BE AUTHENTIC!
- ▶ Do not regurgitate or repeat yourself
- ▶ Use the active rather than passive voice
- ▶ Make sure you have smooth transitions between paragraphs
- ▶ Avoid medical jargon and abbreviations
- ▶ Be self promoting but not arrogant
- ▶ 3 Don'ts:
  - ▶ Don't overuse the word "I"
  - ▶ Don't be negative

# What experiences do I write about?

- ▶ Focus on examples that lead to your interest in the specialty
  - ▶ Use examples from rotations, elective, research and/or teaching
  - ▶ Use personal story from your life
- ▶ Hobbies or interests that distinguish you
- ▶ Consider writing about any red flags in your application
  - ▶ Be careful not to explain red flags
  - ▶ Try to focus on how the red flags led you to the specialty

# Who reads your statement?

- ▶ Program director
- ▶ Associate or assistant program director
- ▶ Other faculty members
- ▶ Chief residents
- ▶ Residents, in general
- ▶ Interviewer (may or may not have read it)

# Make sure your Personal Statement

- ▶ Flows well
  - ▶ Easy to read
  - ▶ Focused and straightforward
  - ▶ Makes your path to the specialty seem logical
- ▶ Is not too long
  - ▶ Ideally, personal statement should be 5300 characters with spaces
    - ▶ Offers enough space to tell your story while still being easily digestible
    - ▶ Remember everyone reads personal statements online now
  - ▶ “One page” rule
    - ▶ Only use this rule if you can tell your story and write a convincing statement in one page
- ▶ Is about you
  - ▶ Focus on your interest, your accomplishments, and your path
  - ▶ Be forthcoming about your achievements and what you've done

# How do I get started on my Personal Statement?

- ▶ Brainstorm by writing down your most pivotal life experiences
  - ▶ Where you grew up, where you attended college, valuable hobbies or outside interests, personal challenges or milestones, important events in your life that impacted you
- ▶ Identify which of these experiences has been most influential on your path to residency and the type of doctor you want to be
- ▶ Try to come up with at least three important milestones!



# Make sure your Personal Statement answers the following questions

- ▶ Why are you interested in the specialty?
- ▶ When did your interest begin and how has it evolved?
- ▶ What have you done to explore your curiosity about the specialty?
- ▶ Where do you see yourself in the future?
- ▶ What do you bring to the specialty?
- ▶ What type of program do you hope to join?
- ▶ Who are you as a person? If I were to meet you outside of the hospital, what would you be doing?

# What to avoid in a Personal Statement?

- ▶ Don't tell your life story
- ▶ Don't preach
- ▶ Don't put other specialties down
- ▶ Don't embellish
- ▶ Don't plagiarize
- ▶ Don't write about sensitive topics
- ▶ Don't boast
- ▶ Don't write an overly creative piece

# Specialties and stereotypes

- ▶ Regardless of what anyone says, certain specialties are seeking distinct qualities in applicants
- ▶ Try to research these qualities and characteristics online
- ▶ Make sure that your written work conveys these qualities
  - ▶ Hard working, committed, professional, personable, organized, honest, ethical, reliable, mature, independent, eager to learn, enthusiastic, resourceful, and great team players are qualities that all residents should have
  - ▶ Make sure you are unique!

# Red Flags

- ▶ You are able to explain red flags in your ERAS application
  - ▶ Only write about red flags in your personal statement if you have more to explain
- ▶ Try to explain any red flags in your application
  - ▶ Gaps in time, a leave of absence, course failure, a board failure
- ▶ Make sure to explain what happened succinctly
  - ▶ Don't dwell or make excuses, BE HONEST!
- ▶ Whenever possible, write about how you have matured or grown from the adversity or what you may have learned and how this benefits you

# Good grammar and writing

- ▶ Submitting a statement that is well written shows that you are educated and it conveys that you are a professional and have excellent communication skills
- ▶ Good grammar and writing also offer a glimpse of who you are and what type of medical professional you will be
- ▶ Make sure to use spell check and proofread your statement various times before submitting it!

# Writing multiple personal statements

- ▶ ERAS allows you to write multiple personal statements
- ▶ You should write personal statements for each individual specialty that you choose to apply into
- ▶ It is also encouraged that you write a personal statement for each geographic area or specific program type that you apply to
  - ▶ Community vs. Academic setting
  - ▶ East vs. West
- ▶ If you rotated at a program that you are especially interested in make sure to write one personal statement specifically catered to that program

# Getting professional help

- ▶ Be sure to work with someone who has expertise in residency admissions and understands the purpose of a residency statement.
- ▶ Program directors or department chairs can offer great insight
- ▶ Be careful with using companies or individuals who will meet with you and write personal statements for you as they do not know you very well and can convey an image that is not representative of you as a person
- ▶ Be careful when deciding from whom you will take advice

# Final Helpful Advice

- ▶ Be sure to go through various drafts of a personal statement before committing to a final draft
- ▶ Have various individuals proofread your work that can offer unbiased input, but still know you as an individual
- ▶ Make sure to do your research on the programs you are applying to
  - ▶ KNOW WHERE YOU ARE APPLYING TO!
- ▶ Apply to as many programs as you can!
  - ▶ LUCK IS A FACTOR!
- ▶ Make sure to look at the licensing requirements of the states that you are applying to and make sure you fulfill those requirements





Any questions or comments?