



PERSONAL STATEMENT STARTER KIT:

Your Foolproof First Draft

The personal statement is your chance to shine—to show the admissions committee at your top-choice schools what differentiates you from the pack. This is your time to express yourself, to show your creativity as well as your compassion, skills, and enthusiasm for the profession. You need to make a memorable impression in a matter of seconds, which is likely the time committee members will spend reading your personal statement if it isn't compelling. This will be your one opportunity to make them say, "This is someone we should meet. Let's schedule an interview."

Strong personal statements do not all follow the same format, but those that follow the format below will showcase your qualifications while highlighting your passion for becoming a PA. Follow our collection of prompts to create a strong first draft personal statement that showcases your strongest asset—you!

MAKE YOUR MARK WITH A STANDOUT INTRODUCTION

Opening Paragraph: Start your personal statement by describing a lightning-bolt moment that launched your interest in patient care or confirmed that the PA profession is right for you. Be sure to include specific, compelling details that give the reader a good sense of why this story had such an impact on your decision to become a PA.

Inspiration abounds! Consider writing about:

- An experience with a special patient that helped you decide to be a PA
- A critical health or safety incident that pushed you to act and taught you that you perform well under pressure
- A time when you or a family member were cared for by a dedicated PA
- What you learned from growing up in a medically underserved area
- Volunteer experiences that taught you the important impact you can have on the health of underserved individuals

Draft your standout opening paragraph here:

SHOW US YOUR JOURNEY

Paragraph #2: How did your decision to work in healthcare evolve? (One caveat—please don't start with childhood experiences—admissions committees won't care what you thought as a five-year-old). Did you volunteer to gain experience? Take a job working with patients? What path did you take to build your patient care hours?

Specific details make your personal statement shine. Show your readers more about how you relate to patients and colleagues. Whether you're a paramedic, medical assistant, or hospital volunteer, how do you perform your duties while taking time to make each person you encounter feel cared for and heard.

Draft your Paragraph #2 here:

Paragraph #3: How did you build your understanding of the PA Profession? What experience do you have shadowing/working with PAs or other healthcare professionals? What do you

admire about the PAs you've met? Why do you want to be a PA specifically rather than a doctor or nurse practitioner?

Keep in mind: Your target audience already knows what PAs do and why they rock, so try your best to go beyond simply stating what you like about the profession. Instead of rehashing the “what,” show readers why you are passionate about the PA profession.

Draft your Paragraph #3 here:

Paragraph #4: What specific skills will help you be a successful PA? What experiences (professional or personal) developed these skills? Show readers why your skills, personality, and trademark awesomeness will benefit your future patients and the profession.

Bonus points: It's always a great idea to work in some details that show your commitment to teamwork and communication—both are essential components to a PA's success.

Draft your Paragraph #4 here:

Optional Paragraph #5: Do you have experience volunteering or working with underserved people? Is this a focus that you'd like to have in the future as a PA? How do you show empathy to patients with special needs?

Pro Tip: Be sure to highlight the specific ways that your similar personal background or relevant professional experience can meet the special needs of a certain population (e.g., urban medically underserved communities; immigrants with language barriers; rural residents who experience long delays for service or must travel some distance to receive specialty care).

Draft your optional Paragraph #5 here:

Optional Paragraph #6: Are there any academic issues you need to discuss (grades of C or below, or any withdrawals)? Provide an explanation for any lower grades or academic issues.

No excuses—it's better to take ownership of any mistakes and show how you worked to overcome the challenges. Be sure to indicate how you will manage any similar issues to avoid problems during PA school, if necessary.

Draft your optional Paragraph #6 here:

CLOSE WITH CONFIDENCE

Concluding Paragraph: End your personal statement with a paragraph that connects to your standout opening or overall theme and reiterates why you will be a great PA.

It's a great time to remind the reader of your empathy, skills, and dedication to patient care and the profession. Don't be shy about showing us that you're passionate about being a PA!

Draft your confident concluding paragraph here:

YOU MADE IT!

Great job on finishing your foolproof first draft! Now it's time to pull it all together and share it with some beta readers whose opinions you trust.

The words that succeed with admissions committees are usually the ones that show the most honesty, self-knowledge, creativity, and hard work. Admissions officers have an uncanny ability (honed on the job) to detect when an applicant's essay rings false.

Let us do the work for you! Just send us your essay and a copy of this starter kit. We will assemble, revise and edit your essay so that it's on point, personable, polished, within the character limit, and most importantly; 100% written by you. You will also receive a free digital copy of our book "How to Write Your PA Personal Statement" just for signing up.

The Personal Statement Collaborative
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