BRAINSTORMING IDEAS FOR PERSONAL STATEMENTS

Think about the following skills, experiences, attributes, and accomplishments. Write down 2-3 examples (medical and non-medical) that would demonstrate your abilities in these areas:

- **Leadership** – school, community, job
- **Time Management** – balancing school, family
- **Possible future practice location** – rural/urban
- **Hands-on skills** – hobbies, jobs
- **Team-Building skills** – team sports, clubs, group projects
- **Delegation skills** – managing complex tasks, delegation to others
- **Language/cultural competency skills** – other languages, resided in a foreign country
- **Empathy** – clinical experience/relationship with meaningful patient, personal/family experience with illness or trauma
- **Organizational skills** – military, jobs, extracurricular
- **Exposure to future demands** – EMT, former teacher, shadowing, clerkships
- **Teaching skills** – tutoring, teacher, camp counselor
- **Demonstrating a long-term interest in a career** – medical experiences, shadowing, role models
- **Building a knowledge base over time** – presentation or attendance at professional meetings
- **Ability to work under stress** – work or recreational activities requiring you to think quickly and perform under pressure
- **Problem-solving/research skills** – research, puzzles

PLANNING YOUR FIRST DRAFT

Using the ideas you’ve gathered from above, start outlining specific content for the 1st draft.

1. **Opening idea** (This is important: it is the first impression you will give to readers. Use something that will grab the reader’s interest).
   - The beginning or ending sentence should give a “road map” for the rest of the personal statement (i.e. similar to thesis statement)
2. What accomplishments, attributes, skills, and experiences do I want to emphasize? What examples can I use?
3. What are my reasons for choosing the specialty? (Demonstrate you know about the specialty).
4. What are your career plans? (Rural, academic, etc.)
5. What contributions can I make to the specialty and the residency program?
6. What is in the summary paragraph? (This is your time to brag about what you can bring to the residency program. What points do you want to emphasize? Relate this to your opening.)