

WHY MEDICINE?

What did you learn?

1. What did you think about what you did or what you saw?
2. Extract meaning from each experience immediately (journal)
3. How did the experience clarify your choice to be a doctor (or not)?
4. **Reflect rather than describe**

Examples



I folded towels, stocked saline, gave blankets to patients.



Although I was mainly helping to stock and distribute needed supplies, I felt good just knowing I was helping someone.



While working in the ER, I noticed that even when doctors were busy, the time they took to explain what was happening to the patient relieved a lot of the patient's anxiety.



I participated in the summer undergraduate research fellowship (SURF) program at ... My project focused on the use of a transposon mutagenesis system to generate tumors in mice and subsequently screen for genes that play a role in glioma formation.

The Bailey-Boushay House offers residential care and day health programs for people with AIDS. The residential program also offers care to patients with life-threatening diseases. I volunteered 4 hours a week in the Adult Day Health Program taking orders for and serving a hot breakfast. During my time there I interacted and built relationships with participants, staff, and other volunteers.



What I find pleasing about pediatrics is the ability to shape a child's life early on so they can start out healthy and hopefully make good decisions later on in life. One must also be able to gain the parents trust in medical treatments as one is dealing with their most precious object. I also love working with kids and am very interested in pursuing pediatrics someday.

Later, I would scrub into the surgeries and witness the plan that was discussed in rounds. I found this very interesting to be able to see a patient in the morning, try out your plan of action during the day, and almost immediately see the results.

WHY MEDICINE?

Words that leave us hanging

1. Broadened my exposure- how?
2. Helped me understand- what?
3. Made me realize- what?

How do I fit all my experiences in the AMCAS application?

1. Group your research project, its presentation, honors, and publication, together
2. Group academic honors together
3. Group sports together

Shadowing

1. Not a “hoop” to jump through
2. If you are not interested in shadowing then you are probably not interested in clinical medicine
3. Find out what the career is all about
4. Find a role model
5. Recommending minimum of 40 hours

WHY MEDICINE?

Why shadow? Understanding doctor-patient interactions

1. What seemed to make the doctor happy?
2. What seemed frustrating to the doctor?
3. How did the doctor adapt his/her communication style to the patient?
4. How did the patients react to the doctor's behavior?
5. How did the doctor handle a tough situation?
 - Can't solve problem or cure disease
 - Patient autonomy in decision making
 - Won't cooperate with Dr.'s suggested plan
 - Patient keeps returning with same problem related to unhealthy lifestyle
 - Unable or unwilling to make a change
 - Delivering bad news
 - Not enough time

What is it like to be a doctor in a particular specialty?

1. Range of patients (age, gender)
2. Types of problems (straight forward, complex)
3. Predominance of chronic or acute problems
4. Anatomic parts involved
5. Large body of knowledge with moderate understanding or limited body of knowledge with in-depth understanding
6. "Corporate personality" of discipline

WHY MEDICINE?

Possible lifestyles

1. Solo practice or group (small or large)
2. Academic medicine (research & teaching)
3. Rural or urban
4. Underserved (all of the time, some of the time)

PERSONAL STATEMENT

1. Motivation
2. Why are you interested?
3. In what ways are you suited for medicine?
4. Show us how you know that this is the right career for you.

Self assessment

1. Strengths and Areas for improvement
2. Biases
3. Personal learning style

WHY MEDICINE?

Knowledge of self and medicine

What characteristics should a good doctor have?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
4. Look back at your experiences and see how they might show that you have these characteristics.

Incorporating your findings into your personal statement

1. How are you suited to medicine? (mix and match)
2. Which experiences or people have had a positive influence?
3. Don't make reader feel like the 4th person you asked to the prom (when chronological is not good)

WHY MEDICINE?

Examples



I tried engineering but the applicability seemed too distant. I tried research but I missed working with people. Medicine will allow me to combine problem solving and discovery with working with people.



Medicine appeals to me because helping people and solving puzzles are both stimulating to me.



I have spent my entire life training to be a doctor. All of my toys and friends have been treated by me. I am a doctor at heart; that is why I want to go to medical school.

I entered University with the intention of pursuing a degree in mathematics, my main interest in high school. My first math class was Linear Algebra. This was an interesting course but I soon discovered that I was far more engaged by biology and chemistry courses. These classes taught the way things work in the natural world, and demonstrated to me the importance of understanding how they work. This led me through a number of inspiring courses from Human Physiology to Advanced Organic Chemistry and ultimately to my major in biochemistry which combines both my interests in biology with an understanding of the chemical principles that control biological processes.



The prospect of death and the blessing of life occur daily before the final diagnosis. Unshakably moving forward in such slippery conditions, I learned, is a doctor's gift.

Reflecting on my college experiences as well as my current ones, I found that my life seemed most meaningful when I was working to help a person overcome something beyond his or her control.

Through confronting such a harsh, unforgiving reality, I found a deep desire to both better understand nature's actions and to assist in medical problems like Alice's. After learning that current medical research has found no cure for many illnesses such as Alice's, I found myself on PubMed for hours learning about the research ...
