

Leadership essay
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My senior year, I became captain of my swim team which was something I'd been working towards in those previous three years. Adding my input into how the team was run was an exciting new challenge to experience and be a part of. One article that I feel relates to my time as a leader is "Solitude and Leadership" by David Deresiewicz. The author puts being a leader into a new perspective, in regard to how it's done and how it looks. This article wrote about different ways people have achieved great things and it looks very different than what most would imagine.

Leadership to me means showing others you want to help improve the people around you by setting an example and showing what it means to have respect. This huge responsibility is a lot to put on a young person, especially when many of the people you are now 'leading' have been your close friends for many years. I learned to think about how my words and actions could not only affect my team, but my friendships. I loved my team, and being chosen to be their captain was an amazing feeling, but figuring out ways to talk to them about expectations or how they should act was difficult. I spent a lot of time alone and with my co-captain discussing how to lead teenagers who don't want to listen. It was extremely important that we built a bond of friendship and respect to maintain my authority so we could have success throughout our season. When the author writes about coming up with ideas and how the first thought is never his own, I feel like that is how I feel when trying to resolve things. It's always "how would ___ do this" instead of me figuring out the best way to handle something which definitely reflects on my lack of "training" to lead others. Unfortunately it is not something many people are taught, it just happens which is why for many, leadership isn't right. They just happened to be in the right place at the right time.

Overall, I loved being the captain of my team and being able to give them a fun season and make my last year of high school a memorable one. They taught me many valuable things that were also brought up in this essay, like learning how to think and feel on your own without caring about others. They also showed me that respect is something that is earned, not immediately given. These experiences are tools I'll have forever as I continue to lead others and overcome the challenges that go along with it.