

One avenue to learn the skills necessary for leadership was varsity water polo. Leadership skills are necessary for success in times of hardship. During my senior year of high school, I was elected captain of the water polo team. Without a captain, the team had internal conflicts and could not play as a team. As the season continued, the team accepted me as the captain and I attempted to bring order and an unselfish attitude to our play.

Many times either as a student or athlete or both we need to take initiative at some point and lead your group. Leadership in my opinion is a very necessary skill you need to have in order to succeed in what you are doing and I think I possess this skill. The reason for me knowing that I possess leadership qualities is that I've once had to lead a whole team for a year throughout our best and worst times. This all happened my senior year in high school at the waterpolo team. We started off a new season and we were desperate for a leader to guide us. At first we didn't have anyone and that caused a lot of conflict within our team. We did not play as a team and we would just play as an individual minding their own business, it was just selfish waterpolo. At this point I knew someone had to step up and do something so I decided to do exactly that. At first I was weary if the team would accept me as their captain but as the season went on I knew they accepted me. I was the one that brought order to the team. I taught my teammates how to run many plays I've learned from other people such as my past coaches and my brother. All of this only had good consequences because with me as their captain we started to truly play as a team and not be selfish, we played like brothers meaning we knew what every last one of us were thinking at the moment when we had the ball, we all knew what play to run and that lead us to something truly great.

Our season was filled with both wins and losses. We viewed the team as a band of brothers so as to keep the cohesion going in spite of the win-loss record. As captain, I took responsibility for each loss and it was not a good feeling. One always wonders whether the game could have been altered with one blocked shot, or one more goal. All we could do was learn from our mistakes, and I emphasized that to my teammates. These experiences helped me to refine my skill as a leader.

In the long run we knew that we have become something more than teammates. It was almost like we were brothers. It might be like an exaggeration but this is how I and the others felt. During the season we had our ups and downs. We've won plenty of games but we also lost plenty. To me losing was always the worst feeling in the world, knowing that you could've won that one game only if you had 10 more seconds on the shot clock or maybe if you could've just blocked the game winning goal from the opponent. All of this was a terrible feeling and makes you want to give up as a leader but at the end these are only mistakes that happened in the past and the only thing we could do is learn from those mistakes. At the end of it we as a team experience this together like brothers when they first fight over something it makes you feel like crap but experiencing it together makes you have a stronger connection with one another and as a leader you tend to learn from it and that's what makes us a better leader. With all these experiences I think I've become a good leader, one that is capable of leading many people and I think this showed in our last game of my high school career.

The last game of the season brought us an opponent that seemed insurmountable. Mentally, I could tell my teammates had lost the game before the first whistle (*note: I am using a metaphor here*). I chose to encourage my teammates by telling them to hold their heads high, and to play with pride and to play as one unit. Although we went down fighting in a tough loss, my teammates (especially the seniors) played at peak performance, leaving everything in the pool. We left the match with a sense of satisfaction, knowing that we did everything we could despite losing. The experience of my senior year water polo season showed me that I am able to lead people through tough but also exciting circumstances. I intend to apply my experiences to college, and I am ready for a new challenge.

When

we knew we were about to play a team we knew we couldn't beat we all even put our heads down. We all rolled over like puppies giving up and just having this mentality that we've lost the game before it even started. At this point I knew I had to step up like I did before and do something. I just told my team "keep your heads up high and get ready for our last game of the season. I know that we all think we can't beat this team but we'll never know until we try. So let's

go out there and play not only with our strength but with our pride and effort and even if we lose we know that we gave it our all." This is what I told them and they were motivated. We all entered the pool with our heads up high ready to play a team. We played our hearts out that day we left everything we had at the pool and we went down fighting. At the end we lost the game and I kind of expected the team to be sad knowing that they lost the last game of the season by more than 5 goals, but they didn't. They were all glad that the seniors played their last game of high school with everything they had and the under class men knowing they put all their pride and effort to their last game of the season. Overall at the end all of this was such a great experience to me. I learned what it was like to lead a whole team through the tuff and fun times. This experience in general prepared me for college and now I feel like I'm ready for anything.