**Prompt 1 - Describe an example of your leadership experience in which you have positively influenced others, helped resolve disputes or contributed to group efforts over time.**

My debut as a student council president started with a mess. I was a strict perfectionist who had to make sure everything worked according to my expectations. On one occasion, the arts division produced a poster that was really underwhelming. So, I alongside other core council members, berated and forced the arts team to do a full revision. Consequently, the art division was devastated and grew bitter. Some were even planning to leave the council before the inauguration ceremony.

I realized that the harsh approach created tension and an unpleasant atmosphere, so I decided to consult with my mentor and council alumni to contemplate the best approach to resolve the issue. After the discussion, I decided to implement a softer approach. I first attempted to understand the team’s perspective on the issue, conversing with each art member to understand their situations. Afterwards, I apologized on behalf of the core council team for the criticism and clarified that our critics were only meant to help improve their designs. Once the tension subsided, I attempted to bring my core council and art division members together to end all conflicts and rekindle their bonds.

Following up this event, I tried spending more time with the arts division. I used my knowledge to teach them how to use Photoshop and inspired them with some design ideas. Not only did I invest my time acting as a mentor, but I also wanted them to feel comfortable as a member of the student council. As months passed by, I felt proud as I saw their designs and work ethic gradually improve. Moreover, the art members’ relationships with the council members got better as everyone now could collaborate amiably.

I discovered that being a leader involves more than just being able to direct and instruct. Being a successful leader means having the flexibility to offer both counsel and assistance through inspiration and motivation. A great leader should also attempt to foster a positive atmosphere by getting to know his peers, forging bonds of solidarity with each individual, and gradually gaining their trust.

Hi Sam,

I can see that you’ve revised the essay quite thoroughly based on our past feedbacks. Good job! Now, there are more explicit instances that made your essay more coherent.

One thing that you can still improve on is giving more details from the art members’ side. At the beginning, some of them wanted to leave your team, so what happened during your mediation? How did you reach a compromise?

To make your essay more unique, I think it’s also a good idea to write about how your leadership defies the expectations the council members have for leaders. Is there anything different about your leadership in comparison to the ex-presidents? Your elaboration will help set you apart from other applicants.

Best wishes! - Melinda