**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. (350 words)**

Without a strong base, all structures above it will simply crumble down.

The most intricate stage throughout my participation in the International Science and Innovation Fair was the brainstorming process. Too much outspokenness and creativity in a group meant each member desired the validation of their own idea. Our visions clashed.

This dilemma would have been dealt with if at least one was attainable, yet ours was the complete opposite—too imaginative and too unrealistic for the work of five high school students. With no progress made, enthusiasm quickly faded within the group.

It was not until three weeks prior to the deadline that my sudden initiative led me to arrange a meeting to ultimately settle down. Through conversing with each member, I took some time to understand their field of interests—one was technology, one computer science, another medicine, and the other was cosmetics. Eventually, I pitched the idea of addressing a health disorder or disability by combining the use of technology, computer science, and an understanding of aesthetics. I convinced them it was not too difficult to simply join the four together.

The two-hour-long discussion ended up being fruitful. Upon the recollection of a visit to a disabled orphanage and familiarity with the Arduino system, we collectively agreed on developing an invention catered to the visually impaired: a pair of glasses that utilizes ultrasonic technology to detect surrounding obstacles.

Through this, I learned the essence of compromise—a trait I previously associated with as a weakness. To effectively communicate is to find a balance between listening and speaking. That is, guaranteeing each member an expression of their creativity while establishing limits when needed. Evidently, the integration of all inputs led to a smoother flow of progression. I noticed an improvement in the team dynamic as soon as all our interests were considered.

Above all, it proved to me my capacity for selflessness. We would not have been awarded a gold medal if it were not for such a compromise.