**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 friends sighed in concern after finding out I was grouped with the two peers they allegedly found challenging to work with for a film project weighing 30% of the grade, not to mention that every other group had over four members, while mine only had three (or four?)

I wasn’t disheartened, however. ~~My heart raced not of anxiety, but utter thrill for what was to come,~~ especially after hearing the words of reassurance teachers gave me. “We’re confident you’ll succeed, but feel free to request for a new team allocation.” I refused the offer knowing that it would be no easy feat.

The initial progress of the project was almost zero, so I constantly took initiative to act as the ‘glue’ of our group. Representing myself as the ‘leader’ that time would also dissuade the members from partaking in the project as the title alone might appear intimidating and imposing to indifferent individuals such as my group mates.

Instead of allocating tasks forcefully, I listened and gently asked for their input, thoughts, and ideas. In addition to working on the project itself, I reassured my members that it’s alright if they needed assistance and positioned myself as if I were in their shoes. Though not perfect, we earned a 94 for our grade, and a remark made by one of my teammates filled my heart with warmth and satisfaction.

“This group is too wholesome :),” said one of the members in our group chat. I had faith in my team from the start, but it was beyond me that they felt as content as I did throughout the journey.

At first, the seemingly apathetic character is all there is to these individuals, but this thought is completely flawed; how someone is stereotyped by others mustn’t confine people into labels. Understanding that dealing with people is not a ‘one size fits all’ was why the project came to fruition – and this should be the essence of a leader’s mindset.

Hi Ashley,

Good job on being real about your experience as a leader and having to deal with people who were considered “problematic” by others. I can see your effort in portraying your members as objectively as possible.

I’ve left some comments above to help make your essay more coherent and stay within the word limit. Furthermore, it is a wise idea to reveal what it was truly like working with these “apathetic” members. There are some questions in the comments above to help you add more details, to help the admission officers see how your leadership was unique. Were the members misunderstood by others? What do you mean by “I positioned myself in their shoes”? More context would be helpful here.

By elaborating on that part, you’d help the admission officers understand that due to your soft approach, they were able to open up and respond well to you.

**Previous draft**

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

“Oh no… good luck with that Ash,” my friends sighed in concern after finding out the two students I was grouped with for a film project weighing 30% of the grade, not to mention that every other group had over four members to work on such a significant project.

I wasn’t disheartened, however. My heart raced not of anxiety, but utter thrill for what was to come, especially after hearing the words of reassurance teachers gave me. “We’re confident you’ll succeed, but feel free to request for a new team allocation.” I refused the offer knowing that it would be no easy feat however, so I constantly took initiative to become the ‘glue’ of our group, because representing myself as the ‘leader’ that time would actually dissuade the members from partaking in the project, as the label alone may appear intimidating, imposing, and repulsive to indifferent individuals such as my groupmates.

Rather than allocating tasks in a forceful manner, I listen and gently ask for input, thoughts, and ideas. In addition to working on the project itself, I reassured that my members are able to execute their roles, telling them that it’s alright if they need assistance, and faced them with an open mind, as if I were in their shoes. Though not perfect, we thankfully earned a 94 for our grade, yet a remark made by one of my teammates was what filled my heart with warmth and satisfaction. “This group is too wholesome :),” to quote a message from one of the members in our group chat. I had faith in my team from the start, but it was beyond me that they would feel as content as I did throughout the journey.

At first, the seemingly apathetic character is all there is to that individual, but this thought is completely flawed; how someone is stereotyped by others mustn’t confine people into labels. Keeping an open mind and acting upon it, understanding that dealing with people is not a ‘one size fits all’ was why the project all came to fruition. This is the essence of a leader’s mindset.

Notes:

I can see that you’re trying to be more discreet and cautious in portraying your team members and your cause for concern. However, by not mentioning why your friends were concerned about your team members, the main point of the essay gets lost and the story becomes vague.

The reader would be asking questions like: Why were your friends concerned? Why did you have to become the ‘leader’ in your group? Who was apathetic?

It’s not that you should sweep the issue under the rug for fear of being seen as prejudiced towards your team members. Rather, to objectively portray the realities of leadership, you need to acknowledge that yes, there are people we may not agree with, or that other people stereotype negatively, or those with different values. Mention what the concern was, what other people thought, and what you did with that information throughout your leadership journey that lead to a positive outcome for yourself and others.

All the best!

**Every person has a creative side, and it can be expressed in many ways: problem solving, original and innovative thinking, and artistically, to name a few. Describe how you express your creative side.**

While art, as cliche as it sounds, is how I channel my creativity, art and creativity to me isn’t merely for show, it is a love language.

It’s been an ongoing tradition for me to surprise my parents with handmade crafts as a present, a gesture of gratitude, or a show of concern. dalwayssmya until today The fact that even my messiest creations can bring light into my parents’ darkest days drives me to continue this custom.

It all started with simple A4 paper cards. At the age of six, the only thing I could do was draw and clumsily color stick figures of my parents and I holding hands. Through the years, I felt basic two-dimensional handmade cards weren’t enough. I believed that my parents deserved more than something repetitive.

Ultimately, my medium diversified: I experimented with pop-up art, pleating sheets of paper to create interactive paper cards with puppets of people and planes, a functional picture frame, or self-sewn mini pillows, to name a few. Acknowledging my father’s fascination for music, I decided to utilize my ability to play instruments to synthesize a recording of a self-orchestrated *Happy Birthday.* It comprised violin harmonies, the pianica, as well as my own vocals, specially dedicated for my father’s birthday a while ago.

Despite the love I firmly hold for my parents, I’m not someone who can vocalize my “I love you”s confidently. Thankfully, through my creative expression, I get to compensate for my lack of words, and their feedback has shown that love does not have to be expressed one way.

What a powerful, heart-warming essay! I love how the intro begins with a simple yet intriguing hook. It seamlessly reveals how you used your inclination towards art to express your love for your family.

Rather than directly stating “I am creative because….”, you managed to show your readers how you utilized your creativity while working on your art projects. One thing you can add to reach the 350 word count and make your essay more cohesive is your father’s response after receiving your best project (see comment above).

All in all, your essay has successfully conveyed powerful emotion and shown your take on creativity. ☺

Best wishes,

Melinda

**Previous draft**

**Every person has a creative side, and it can be expressed in many ways: problem solving, original and innovative thinking, and artistically, to name a few. Describe how you express your creative side.**

I despised Arts class back in elementary school. Not because I wasn’t into creating, but pasting buttons on the incorrect area of the paper and coloring skies purple instead of blue would drop my grade down to a ‘D’. Ironically, it is only when I’m out of Art class that my creative juices can flow freely. That ‘D’ mark on my grade report did not repudiate my belief that I express creativity through creating art. Art and creativity to me isn’t merely for show, but a love language.

It’s been tradition for me to surprise my parents with handmade crafts as a present, a gesture of gratitude, or a note of concern. It started off with simple A4 paper cards at the age of six, where I drew and clumsily colored stick figures of my parents and I holding hands. Through the years, I felt as if basic two-dimensional handmade cards weren’t enough. I then experimented with pop-up art, pleating sheets of paper to create interactive paper cards with puppets of people and planes, a functional picture frame, or self-sewn mini pillows, to name a few.

Every time I’ve executed and ticked them off of my “Gift Ideas” list, more ideas start to spring up. Ultimately, the medium diversified through time. Acknowledging my father’s fascination for music, I decided to utilize my ability to play instruments to synthesize a recording of a self-orchestrated *Happy Birthday.* It comprised of violin harmonies, the pianica, as well as my own vocals, specially dedicated for my father’s birthday two years ago.

This tradition stays ongoing even until today. What incited me to keep going is the fact that even my messiest creations can bring light into my parents’ darkest days. My father would often share how he’d cry tears of contentment after receiving the gifts I’d secretly slip into his office bag early in the morning. He’d often tell me how these gifts were the sole reason he’s able to keep going.

Notes:

Great revised draft! I can see how you have worked to address the prompt and shown how you express creativity as a love language.

My comments above are to address and weave in your family’s reception of your gesture throughout your journey of creating and show how it motivated you to develop your creativity. Currently you only show this in your conclusion which I think is very heartfelt but a missed opportunity for you to include in the 2nd and 3rd paragraphs.

In the concluding paragraph I suggest for you to show your perspective, feelings, and reflection in creating and seeing how your creative gestures bring love to your family.

All the best!