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

The beginning of last summer was my first week as the Co-Director of Outreach at MyFLY, a student-run organization that advocates financial literacy. Our team of 4 were on high gear: focused, enthusiastic, ambitious, and cooperative. We divided our tasks and aimed to organize a 3-day international finance and blockchain conference. Our attitude was “challenge accepted.”

At the time, we had time to spare and weren’t burdened by dreadful differential equations and mind-shocking electrostatic forces. However, things changed when summer ended. Student life happened; our communications got scarcer, progress was slow, and, thus, internal deadlines weren’t met.

Concerned, I’d set up meetings with each member to uncover our issues and discovered that everyone was swamped with school commitments. “How can I help?” Reviewing our current workflow, I realized that our task delegation could be further optimized by taking into account each member’s strengths and weaknesses, easing the completion of our job.

So, I identified each of each member’s strengths and weaknesses and assigned tasks that suit our skills. Moreover, I proceeded to ask for all our members' schedules and used them to create a Gantt chart to improve our project management.

I then set up a meeting to explain their new tasks and deadlines as well as offer them help should they encounter any difficulties or scheduling conflicts. Most importantly, I reminded them that we were holding this conference for a greater good.

Over the next few days, the scarce communication was undone. I was relieved that the team became more proactive in asking for assistance. Subsequently, I could see progress being made and deadlines being met.

In the end, we successfully held a conference with 300 attendees. It took a scare, a re-evaluation, and a lot of effort, but seeing our collective efforts manifested into a smooth, successful event was worth it. Moreover, this event taught me important lessons on leadership. Being a leader isn't about barking orders. Rather, it's about becoming the team's support system. It's about becoming the team's safety net. Last but not least, it's about becoming the force that pushes the team to thrive under pressure.