**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 truly the brainstorming process. Too much outspokenness and creativity in a group meant each member desired the sole validation of their own idea. Our visions had 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 5 high school students. With no progress made, the enthusiasm quickly faded.

It was not until 3 weeks prior to the deadline, where my sudden initiative led me to arrange a meeting to ultimately settle down. Through conversing with each member, I took time to understand their field of interests: one was technology, another 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 understanding of aesthetics. I convinced them it was not too difficult to simply join the 4 together.

The 2-hour-long discussion was fruitful after all. Upon the recollection of a visit to a disabled orphanage and familiarity with the Arduino system, we collectively agreed on the topic of developing an invention catered to the visually impared: a pair of glasses that utilizes ultrasonic technology to detect surrounding obstacles.

Through this, I learned the essence of compromise—a trait I previously associate as a weakness. To effectively communicate is to find a balance between listening and speaking. That is, by guaranteeing each member an expression of their own 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 the capacity of selflessness. We would not have been awarded a gold medal if it were not for such compromise.