**Describe a time when you were able to lead and inspire by example to solve a problem or project. What was the outcome?**

My dad, and role model, is an authoritative leader: assertive and a visionary. Despite not going to college, he managed to build a successful company. Aspiring to be like him, I’m currently working on a networking startup - Cita - with my friends and learning how to lead.

However, I quickly realized that authoritative leadership didn't match a startup’s culture of ambitious, young individuals. During our meetings, I’d always demand tasks to be completed on my timeline and also give new assignments without giving them any choice. I was excessively bossy, which led to discontent, arguments, and, eventually, a divergence in our vision. I recognized the need for change in my leadership to prevent the project from falling apart.

I started by acknowledging everyone’s schedules, making sure that their tasks didn’t conflict their personal schedule. I tried to be more appreciative of their opinions on new ideas, instead of deciding on my own. To mend the strained relationship, I had one-on-one conversations with each member to re-align our vision and mission: Connecting Bright Minds. I’d continue with constructive discussions like how to achieve our short and long-term goals, the action plans, and re-setting our timelines. Moreover, I also implemented structured weekly meetings complete with organized agendas to update the team on what they’ll be doing, keeping ourselves accountable for our tasks.

Now, we understand each other’s thoughts better, forming a strong chemistry and synergy in our workflow. We’re even considering expanding our team while employing the collaborative leadership style. Through this experience, I learned that there is no universal formula to leadership. Adapting one’s leadership style to fit the team is crucial. But there’s one key takeaway, one can earn the respect of who they lead if one shows sincerity to connect with one’s team.