**UC Essay 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.**

There I was… wet and tired… standing on the tallest podium… with my teammates… receiving our SHINY medals… Indonesia – ASEAN School Games (ASG) Grand Champion… This is one of my proudest moments, “We did it!! Go Team Indonesia!!”

Many believed swimming is an individual sport. I DISAGREE! It’s as much of a team sport as soccer, basketball, and football even though we swim individually. Timing, strategy, finesse, teamwork, mentality, and a team captain… swimming needs them and this is how we got our medals.

My reserved-self’s jaw was wide open, unable to close from the surprise when I got appointed team captain months prior. Indeed, I was a stickler for discipline, but I’m usually one short of bravery to lead. Nevertheless, I accepted the challenge. It wasn’t an easy transition: becoming the team’s moral support, brainstorming strategies, and executing them. These are my new, exciting job upgrades as an athlete.

“Lucky no. 7 is the goal,” said coach as he held out seven fingers. . My jaw, again, was wide open. This time, so does everyone. We knew what he meant: the number of gold medals. Excited yet discouraged, clear yet confused, motivated yet desperate. This was our mood as anxiety hit our morale… HARD!! It sounded exaggerating, but it’s like we’re reached the dark age. Practices were mediocre full of negative thoughts. This team, needed assurance STAT!!

I took initiatives to ensure the success of our goal. Positive reinforcements, dry jokes, and team yell to boost morale, performance vs. stress level trends and personalized training plans to improve individual skills, and performance data analysis and training simulations to develop the best winning strategy. One joke and yell at a time; one training and vomiting routine at a time; one simulation at a time, we’ve begun to synergize into a faster and tougher team. We’ve begun to see the light at the end of the tunnel. We’ve become the victor with 10 gold medals.

“Leaders are meant to know everything,” was how I envisioned leadership, but not anymore. A leader is supposed to not pull everyone to the finish line from the front, but to push everyone together from the back and make sure none gets left behind. It’s about encouragement, inspiration, and instilling one’s vision as a whole and turn it into everyone’s vision.