Personal Interview with Jay Sridharan

INTERVIEWER: Tell me about a time you’ve experienced failure.

INTERVIWEE : Hmm. I, uh, remember this one time when I was in the eighth grade, I was supposed to build a robot for a competition, but couldn’t get done in time. I ended up scrambling to finish the day of, and I never actually got it working.

INTERVIEWER: What was this competition?

INTERVIWEE : It was called “Science Olympiad.” It was this international science competition where small groups of about 2 or 3 either build a device or prepare for a test, and they compete other schools at competitions.

INTERVIEWER: Huh, I’ve never heard of that. So who was in your group?

INTERVIWEE : It was a couple of girls, they were both two years younger than me. I can’t seem to remember their names, but they were really clueless when it came to robot building. They were really lacking the basic knowledge. But-

INTERVIEWER: Is that why you guys couldn’t finish in time?

INTERVIWEE : No, actually, and this is why I would call this a time where I failed. When I was assigned to this, I was really excited, because just a year before, I had joined my local robotics team. I figured that I could use those skills that I had learned and make a winning robot. These girls didn’t have the basics, but within just days I had designed and 3D modeled my design. And they went along with it. I figured that teaching them would take too long, and that they would pick up as we went along. As time got short, I realized that I needed more hands, but nobody could help me.

INTERVIEWER: And you never got it done. So what would you say you learned from this experience?

INTERVIWEE : A couple things. One, that if I put in a little time teaching others, they can double or triple your productivity. But also, and more importantly, that I can’t get cocky about my experience or knowledge, because that’s just going to end up hurting me. Learn what you can and share what you have, you know?

INTERVIEWER: Absolutely. Great talking with you, and thank you for your insight.