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Procrastination and her tricks

Procrastination – it’s something we do all the time, and it usually gets back at us in some way or another. Typically, in a bad way, when we end up getting a bad mark on an assignment that we did the day before it was due. Other times however, it somehow works in our favour, like the time I did my entire application for student ambassador the night before and got it. But that was a one-time scenario because procrastination usually only results in consequences. Maybe I should’ve kept that in mind when working on my CCP application, which had remained untouched since applications opened. I knew that procrastination wouldn’t work in my favour, unless I could somehow replicate that student ambassador experience, by grinding and pouring my heart into a document that may just end up in an email’s trash folder. The single strand of determination inside of me is what drove me to submit my CCP application, even if it would be rushed and ultimately, rejected.

One day in October, I was looking through Edsby announcements and I came across a post that caught my attention. The CCP executive applications had been released, and the post listed that five applicants would be selected for this year’s committee. I instantly felt a twinge of interest, as I had been waiting for this moment. About two weeks prior, the co-chair applications for CCP had opened. However, the immense workload of the role, as well as the heavy competition is what made me turn towards applying for the executive position, which would be a more feasible feat. As I continued reading, I noticed that I would only have five days to submit my application. Being in grade twelve, I had a crazy amount of homework and would have to find time in my schedule to work on the application. Given the tight circumstances, I turned off my phone and got back to working on my functions homework. “I’ll work on the application the day before,” I told myself. After all, I could probably finish it in time, just like I did with my student ambassador application.

Four days later, I turned on my laptop at 9:17PM, with my brain ready to accomplish the task that I had planned out for the day. I was still behind on some of my schoolwork, but it was necessary to prioritize my application, which would be due in under 24 hours. “Why do you want to be part of CCP?” I read to myself. “What are you extra-curriculars inside and outside of school?” I quickly began typing away, thinking of convincing reasons and experience to impress the co-chairs, who were responsible for choosing the executives. CCP had always been something that caught my eye. In grade 9, I was intrigued in being involved, but could only help as a volunteer. The executive role was only an opportunity for grade 11 and 12 students. After nearly 3 years, CCP had decided to return in-person, and being in grade 12, I was determined to claim a spot on the executive team. As I wrapped up my first question, I noticed that it was 10:21PM and I immediately jumped into the second of five questions. I had made progress, but I needed to continue working ferociously if I wanted to submit my application before 3:00PM the next day. It was until 11:15PM when I finally closed my laptop, with one and three quarters of my questions being complete.

Determination was my only motive for getting to school early the next day, where I took advantage of every possible break and free time to finish up my application. Luckily, my last-period spare was going to be the shining moment where I was going to make the most of every minute to finish my application. Surely enough, at 1:35PM, I went straight to the library and immediately got into typing my responses, muting the world around me so I could give complete focus on the 3 questions I had left. I instantly got into the zone, and minute after minute, sentences were being produced like toys in a factory during Christmas time. I rarely looked at the clock, as I didn’t need myself to be more stressed than I already was. I continued working rigorously until the first three questions were finished. I had to ponder for the fourth one and decided to take a quick break to give my brain some relief. As I took my hands off the keyboard, my eyes glanced at the clock which caused my heart to drop. 2:47PM, it read, with the numbers puncturing through my soul.

Immense stress gripped my entire body as I instantly turned back to my laptop. 2:48PM, the clock read. I started viciously writing things for the fourth question but constantly had to battle through feelings of doubt. My confidence began dropping exponentially as I realized that I wouldn’t be able to finish my application in time. Pushing my thoughts aside, I thought of a plan. The last question was simply asking if there was anything that they should know about me, and I figured that my best option was to leave it blank and use my time towards finishing the fourth question. After all, I didn’t need to worry too much about a question that could be answered with a simple “no”. As I completed the fourth question, I felt a mixture of relief and urgent stress stirring within me as I prepared to submit my application. 2:59 PM, the clock screamed. It was a race against time and my determination was the fuel supplying me to beat the clock. The intensity skyrocketed as I waited for the document to finish uploading when finally, it was complete, and I clicked send. 2:59 PM, the clock read as I exhaled a breath of relief. I had done it. I closed my laptop and left the library, feeling accomplished yet downcast, as I knew that my application wouldn’t be able to compete with some of the other submissions.

It wasn’t until two weeks later when I suddenly received an email from the co-chairs. It was 9:10 PM on a Thursday evening and I had been scrolling through my social media feed when the notification popped up on my screen. As the notification was being displayed, I caught some of the first words of the email and my eyes instantly lit up. “Dear Joseph Ren,” it said, “We are pleased to offer you a position on the gifts executive committee!” A rush of joy went through me as I hurriedly clicked on the notification to read the entire email. A smile began spreading across my face as I read through a series of congratulating remarks, which confirmed that I really had gotten the role. I then got out of my chair to tell my family, who congratulated me warmly. As I returned to my seat, I paused to enjoy the moment and reflect on everything that had just happened. A part of me was in shock, since I didn’t think that I had a chance against the other applicants. But ultimately, I was glad that my determination had somehow managed to pull through and lead me to success.

Perhaps I had been lucky with that experience because procrastination usually doesn’t win you gold medals or trophies. It does however, win you valuable experience that allows you to improve and develop as a person. That’s certainly something I received from this experience, and it’ll help me to improve my time management skills for the future. It’ll also help me learn from my mistakes, so I won’t try to do things last minute again. After all, procrastination working in your favour is a one-time thing. Or in my case, a two-time thing.