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A leader is a term often misused and misinterpreted in today's world. Some may think that being a leader means you have to be aggressive and serious in all situations. By definition in most dictionaries it means someone who commands a group or organization. My meaning of a good "leader" is someone who has the potential to contribute and impact a group or organization with logic, altruism and democracy.

I consider myself to be a leader by my own definition. In school I have asserted my leadership qualities in my three years as class president. From sophomore to senior year I have been my class' president. As president I feel I have made contributions to my classmates spirit, participation, and overall high school experience.

The qualities that make me a good leader include, most importantly, my desire to lead. This sounds like something that should go without saying, but it is true that some people were meant to be leaders and some were meant to be followers. My first year as president I felt as though no one had the same amount of creativity and drive as I did, so that's why I ran for the position. Due to this drive I did become class president for the last three years running. These past few years as president I have refused to sit back and watch things unfold, I have been the one to make them unfold, happily doing so. I have made decisions about tee shirt designs, proms, activities and class events with confidence that I would see them through. My self confidence and desire to be a leader has made it quite easy to make decisions for myself and my peers around me.

Though I believe that having confidence in your abilities makes you a great leader, I also believe openness and democracy are extremely important too. A leader is one who creates a plan to reach a common goal with their group and organization, so it is essential that you know your group's needs and desires are being met. My classmates opinions and ideas were of the greatest value to me. I listened to them pitch ideas about themes for prom, shirts and activities that we should have implemented during our senior week. I created social media pages so I could quickly respond to their ideas and updates. I opened up votes and polls for them to vote on shirt ideas for the past three years and prom venues for the past two. I have been open to change as well, even changing what our caps and gowns look like at graduation all the way to our senior trip. No other president has done that before I did, because no one has thought to ask their following their opinions on the outdated traditions. I have allowed my classmates to get involved with various aspects of the things I plan as class president and I did this because I realize that being a leader is not a dictatorship but rather, a democracy. If I am going to lead a group I should listen to them. They know themselves better than I do.

Communication and friendliness is key as a leader. I am the most proud of this quality for it is the one I have the most confidence in. I feel that my peers feel comfortable to talk to me about anything whether it be school related or personal. There have been plenty of times my peers have come up to me in the hallway or in class about things they are concerned with. I have had people directly message me on my personal account and Class Twitter Page about questions they had, comments or concerns. I listen to them because I truly value their feelings and opinions and what they have to offer. I only try to help and encourage them to be as much of a part of the class as I am. For the past three years I have realized it is my duty to not only give them the

relevant information they need but as well as a listening ear and encouragement. I encourage my classmates to do fundraisers, join clubs, do scholarships and participate. This is something I do not only because it's my job but because I care. I care about everyone's well being in and outside of the school system.

And finally my last leadership quality I have exhibited is commitment. I have collected all fundraiser money, have attended every class officer meeting, have attended every venue and company meeting, and have missed classes just to help students pay their senior dues. The best thing I could do as a leader is be there for my peers so they can see I am dedicated to them. I am always in action doing something for my class, communicating information, or doing events for other clubs that I encourage other classmates to join.

I'm not sitting here telling you I am the best leader. Even the greatest make mistakes sometimes. But I do believe I have encouraged my classmates to participate in life. To never say "no" to something they may regret not doing. I hope I have encouraged them to be active in class events because one day I know they will be seventeen, on top of the world, with all their best friends and the next they could be on totally different paths and they will miss these moments I helped create. So they should be making the most of their time in highschool now and I can only hope I've encouraged them to do that. Every leader is different. Some may have these qualities, some may not. But they made me who I am as a class president and part of who I am as a person. I am driven, I am kind, and I know I am a future leader.