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ELI Spring 2005

26 April 2005

**Emerging Leader Institute Spring 2005:
Final Paper**

The Emerging Leader Institute is without a doubt the most enjoyable class I have ever taken. Others classes teach lessons concerning academic issues, but ELI taught lessons concerning life. Not only the lectures but the people made it a success. The teachers and students are all special people who love being involved in something more. I really feel the people taught me just as much if not more than the lectures. It is the relationships that I have formed that I can take with me along with the lessons. It is just an enjoyable atmosphere to be a part of.

What:

This is only one of the few classes that I looked forward to going to. Everyday class was a surprise. I never knew what to expect. The things that stood out to me the most were some of the more effective speakers like Chris Thuringer and Bill Maloney. Both had great presentation skills that kept my attention, and they made it interesting to listen to what they had to say.

Concerning the activities, the first few days were a lot of fun as well. I loved the beginning ice breakers we participated in. They opened the doors into each others lives and allowed for a little competition between teams. I personally love activities in which I can compete. The hand squeezing activity was the most fun.

While those activities were enjoyable, I had the most fun during my mentor group meetings. They provided me the opportunity to get closer to a few individuals than

anyone else in the program. I feel very close with Jen, Joey, Megan, Lindsay, Amberlee, and Mr. Edgerton. Despite what anyone else says we had the best mentor group. Amberlee and Mr. Edgerton were amazing. They helped with our group projects and with other problems outside of ELI. Every meeting was a blast. We got things accomplished, but we had a great time doing it; we joked and laughed a lot. Without a doubt I think the key to the best possible ELI experience lies within the mentor group. And I could not have asked for anyone better than Amberlee and Mr. Edgerton. They were so much fun.

So What:

As I mentioned in my presentation to the class, the most important thing I learned was the differences among being a good, successful, and effective leader. A good leader is someone who focuses on the human aspect of leadership, while a successful leader is one that makes sure the goal is accomplished, and an effective maintains a balance between the two. I think this is the most important lesson I have learned because being an effective leader is quite an accomplishment in the business world. I feel that too many times leaders focus on the task at hand and not on the people working towards the task. And I honestly believe that anyone who can function as an effective leader will make a name for themselves.

Another important topic is recognizing contributions. Rewards can go a long way in terms of motivation. Divvying out bonuses for a job well done will motivate them to try just as hard on the next project to receive the same reward. And rewarding some people might indirectly motivate others. They will see what could come their way for hard work. Also it never occurred to me that leaders can reward in other ways besides

monetary gain. Like Chris Thuringer mentioned, he often rewarded with concert tickets. Other leaders will encourage with recognition like IBM did by renting out a football field and allowed their employees to walk through the tunnel and onto the field. After the lecture I thought for a little while about alternatives to a monetary reward, and I think offering time off or leaving early from work would be quite a motivator. I know it would light a fire under me.

Obviously the Five Practices of Exemplary Leaders is of the utmost importance. Each of the steps is equally necessary to success. Modeling the way, inspiring a shared vision, challenging the process, enabling others to act, and encouraging the heart all carry the same weight. No one point is more essential than another. You must first lead by example, then explain the plan to people, go against the grain if necessary, recruit people onboard, and reward appropriately. Following these five steps correctly will more than likely lead to success.

Each of the lectures was significant for different reasons, but it was these in particular that stood out to me. These lectures got me thinking critically about the topics. It sparked an interest.

What Now:

Now that the class is almost over it is time to put what I have learned into action. For me that starts with the continuation of my service project with the University of Kentucky Children's Hospital. I have already collected quite a few donations by way of merchandise and cash donations, but I have not collected enough to satisfy my visions for this project. I admit that at the beginning I decided that any donation would be enough. But now after visiting and learning more about the hospital, I feel I have a moral

obligation to the kids, the organization, and myself to successfully conclude this service project. I still have a bit to do.

I have also decided to start a service project in my own community of Louisville. After listening to Brent's presentation I started thinking about what a great idea the Pepsi Pitch, Hit, and Run really is. It is a competition that allows kids ages seven to fourteen the opportunity to come out and showcase their baseball skills, while simultaneously stressing the fun aspect of the sport. The event has the potential to create so much good for the community. Just a few days ago I decided I am going to try to do the same in Louisville at Slugger field. So I called my cousin who is thirteen and has been playing baseball for as long as I can remember, and asked him if there is any sort of event like this in Louisville. He immediately responded that there is not and seemed very excited about the possibility of being able to compete in one. Every year he takes part in a similar event geared toward football called the Pass, Punt, Kick Competition, and said he would love to take part in one concerning baseball. So I am going to see what I can accomplish.

I honestly cannot find a down side to this project; everyone wins, and that is why I believe it is definitely worthwhile. Children in the community can come out for a fun day of sporting activities, Pepsi increases its advertising, and Slugger field gains more popularity in the community as well as profits from concessions. Anything that creates positive change is worth doing. I am not banking on a positive reaction from all of the necessary parts, but I am hopeful.

I plan on achieving my vision by following the Five Practices of Exemplary Leaders. By taking the initiative in the community I am modeling the way. From there I

need to contact the necessary individuals and explain my vision to them. Then by challenging the process I need to get out there and see what I can actually get accomplished. Also by recruiting the appropriate individuals I will be enabling others to act. And finally after a successful event I need to encourage the heart. I need to let people know they did a great job planning and working the event. The Pepsi Pitch, Hit, and Run has massive amounts of potential in the Louisville community, and I hope it all works out for the best.

Finally:

This class has taught me so much about be a great leader. I really appreciate the opportunity you all have given me. It is inspiring to know you all care so much about creating change in the world that you are starting with the youth. Thanks again for the chance to be a part of something so much greater than anything I have ever been a part of. It really means a lot to me. If there is ever anything I can help you with I would more than happy to. I would like for nothing more than to assist you in the same way you have done for me. Again I truly appreciate the awesome opportunity you have presented to me.