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Satire, Irony, Humor

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College Essay

I got the call at 8:00 a.m., the crime lab reporting a hit and run fatality. My team and I arrived on scene within ten minutes and went to work processing the evidence. The scene was chaotic with sketchers, photographers, evidence loggers, and perimeter personnel going in and out. As lead investigator I was there to oversee the whole operation and make sure everything was completed efficiently. We processed the scene within three hours, and the medical examiner took the body for autopsy.

My teaching advisor (TA) at the National Student Leadership Conference (NSLC) Forensic Science program in Washington DC was at the mock crime scene to oversee my every move. I was under a microscope and 100% outside my comfort zone. I had never been great under pressure, so being analyzed and evaluated for every move and decision I made was unnerving. I prefer to stay in the background. Everyone from my TA to my team was expecting something from me, either evaluating my every decision or waiting for my okay at every step.

As lead I made the final decisions and delegated jobs during the active investigation and case file prep. I also delivered the final presentation with the help of my group. Pushing boundaries at the conference was a way of testing our abilities, but also a way to see if we would be able to manage and work in a stressful work environment. I was able to push my boundaries as a leader by learning how to include everyone in the final product.

I was the one that went to the crime lab to get new leads and helpful information; I worked on the project late into the night while the rest of my group members were in their dorm rooms sleeping. As the investigation progressed, I gained knowledge about my conflict resolution style and my personality profile. I learned that my conflict resolution style is a smoother or a person who gives in to keep everyone happy. I also learned that I have an easygoing and relaxed type of personality.

Based on my personality type, being placed in charge of loud and controlling people was a major challenge. I had to learn how to manage one peer who thought she could do a better job than I could. I had to figure out how to get the rest of my group to listen to me and not her. It was a difficult task, but I was able to persuade the group members to follow my instructions by addressing them one on one instead of as a whole group. It was a way for me to interact on a personal level, but it was also a way to show my devotion to the project.

Another group member persisted as a disruption during the investigation, and we only had a limited amount of time to solve the case. She constantly disobeyed my instructions, and I struggled with how to productively engage her in the project. I could tell the rest of the group was getting annoyed, but I had never been one to confront people, especially someone so assertive. After consulting my TA for advice I figured out a solution. I gave her tasks like running back and forth from the crime lab to police and capitalize on her energy.

Through this whole experience I learned how to use my strengths to my advantage and how to make my weaknesses less noticeable. I'm still a quiet person who prefers to stay out of the limelight, but if placed in this type of situation again I could lead a group. I was pushed beyond my comfort level, but I realized throughout the ten days that I had a lot going on in my head and that I just needed the courage to voice my opinions and ideas.