



Learning to Lead Myself

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Direct Beneficiary

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I am Mark Jason Taguinod, the youngest son of a government employee and a presidential security agent. A lot of things keep me busy. I am currently a Grade 9 student at ninth grade at Fort Bonifacio High School (FBHS), and I am the batch representative to the student government. My term is about to end, and I am applying to run for President next year. I write

about sports for the school paper as well, and I also dabble in fiction in my spare time. I like going on the Internet and looking for trivia I can share in class.

I was not always this active. As a younger student in elementary, I was easy-going. Yes, I participated in academics, but that was all. I graduated valedictorian of my elementary class but I was not really productive in other ways. I wanted to go straight to work. It was a naive plan and I am glad I realised that high school and college were necessary steps to take so I can achieve my goals in life. After all, I want to be a doctor.

When I entered high school, I decided to explore extracurricular activities. The best group to be a part of was the student government. It was a place where I could learn more about leadership and organisation. I became an officer in my first year and since then, I have always been with the student government. The more terms I had, the more I am able to enhance my leadership skills. I just had to divide my time and attention between my studies and the student government.

In eighth grade, I met Ms. Genersol G. Monton. As my biology teacher, she introduced this Student Reflective Learning and Assessment Plan (SRLAP) to our class. She said it was a tool we could use to change our old unproductive ways into productive ones. It would benefit us if we used it. I did not really understand what it was at first. I also did not bother to study it.

When the first grading was over, I noticed that my classmates who were using the SRLAP were improving their scores and participating more in class while I fell behind. I was becoming lax, maybe because my attention was divided. When Ms. Monton re-introduced SRLAP in the second grading, I vowed to really commit to it. I had been learning how to lead others during my first year in high school, but I realized during my second year that what is more important is that I learn to lead myself first.

I wrote down what I needed to do as a student. The template was already given, so all I had to do was fill it out. It was easy for me to adopt once I committed to it because I knew what I had to gain. I noticed that the results of my quizzes started getting higher. I learned how to concentrate and do self-study when the teacher was not around. Since it worked for science, I applied it to my other subjects as well. My independence and initiative in academics were

improving. It was a blessing because I know that independence and initiative are traits I will need if I want to be successful in college.

My former classmates do not really use the SRLAP anymore, but I still do. It was a helpful tool in eighth grade and it was easy to apply it again in the ninth grade. In fact, I was able to share it with a new friend just recently.

My friend's name is Gabrielle Quintero. She is a transferee from a different school and became my classmate only this school year. We just started becoming close. One time, she confided in that she was finding it difficult to adjust to the new environment and cope with schoolwork. So

I told her about the SRLAP, shared its format with her, and explained to her how it worked. She was receptive and willing to give it a try right away.

I know we are already in the fourth grading period, but with the right attitude, I think Gabrielle may still be able to see the results of her own SRLAP.

Mark Jason Taguinod is fifteen years old. After he graduates from high school, he plans to take up BS Biology as his pre-medicine course in either the University of the Philippines or the University of Santo Tomas.