

Tell us about a personal quality, talent, accomplishment, contribution or experiment that is important to you. What about this quality or accomplishment makes you proud and how does it relate to the person you are

Not until I managed to face my failure in organizing the school's Christmas party drama, I felt ashamed and in despair. How come I cannot even get a round of applause in despite of the numerous late nights that I spent on the Christmas party drama? When I talked to my classmate, I learned that the audience did not understand and simply cannot follow the play. I tried too hard to show off my English vocabulary and knowledge in drama when it should be a team's endeavor. When I tried to organize the school's Christmas party for the second time, I did not only learn about the virtues of team work, but was able to feel the satisfaction that it brought. As the team leader, I learned how to allocate resources wisely and dealt with last minute circumstances as they arose.

In my first attempt as the director of the school's Christmas party drama, I spent hours polishing the script with my dictionary. I thought success means I should make my play sounds like a Shakespeare one! So, actors had to say lines like "the dark clouds are blocking the sunlight from reaching my guilty heart and the chilly rain washes away my courage to apologize". What was worse, I had more than 12 scenes in a 45 minute drama simply because I thought "the longer the better". Also, owing to my ignorance in drama, I failed to play the right type of music at the right time and at the right volume to help me portray the atmosphere. The audience was baffled by the hugging of the two main characters, which was supposed to be the climax and signaled a happy ending. In the end, I received applaus from 10 teachers that sat at the first row but an eerie silence from the 600 hundred students behind.

When I was the director for the second time, I assembled a dance team, a music team, a costume team and a visual effects team along with the actors and actresses. At the end of every rehearsal, I would organize a team meeting with the leaders to gather ideas on how to bring out meaning of the script with their respective talents. The story was humorous and featured a group of students tried to flee traditional boring school life. The dance director suggested to design a dance to show the fear in escaping from the "prison" (i.e. school) in a humorous way, I trimmed the script to make room for it. We also incorporated suggestions from the music, costume and visual effects teams that enhanced the humorous nature of the play. The most challenging incident happened 3 days before the party, where one of our characters had to be deployed for another function. With the help of a trust worthy role selection team, I was able to concentrate on the last minute rehearsals and they eventually found me a replacement that was a good fit for the role. Finally, we hearty applause and cheers from the 600 audience. My classmate even made DVDs of the drama and sold it for fundraising for his other event!

Being able to lead a team and be a team player are important qualities of an engineer. My parents and grandparents are eminent engineers and they always tell me that even the best engineers need to work with production and marketing teams to make product launches happen! I hope to develop cross cultural team building skills through extra curricular activities and research projects in university.