



## Elements of Peer Leading

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### Abstract

This essay translates leadership experiences into chemistry symbols, depicting the roles, challenges, and opportunities that a Peer Leader, guiding multiple workshops in a PLTL program over the course of a semester or more, encounters as a result of the experience of peer leading. Each peer-led experience, a *Leader Element*, is linked with a corresponding chemical element symbol representing a specific leadership quality. These analogies highlight how different aspects, like elements in the periodic table, work together to form a well-grounded and effective leader. Each Leader Element representation, listed in the order of elements in the periodic table, encompasses a consistent recurring theme for the essence of a valuable trait acquired during the leadership experience and provides a shared experience discussed during leader meetings. The physical representations of the Leader Elements could also provide a PLTL program with a series of symbolic badges, to represent stages, semesters, or accomplishments awarded to a Peer Leader during the progress of leadership development. This essay provides advice for newcomers to the peer leading position, describing the expectations, qualities, and traits acquired by being a part of the PLTL program during the experience of leading.

Key Words: Peer Leader, Workshop, Peer-Led Team Learning, Leadership, Qualities and Experiences of Peer Leading, Explorations

## Introduction

At the University of El Paso (UTEP), in El Paso, Texas, our chemistry Peer-Led Team Learning (PLTL) program focuses on creating a psychologically safe environment, fostering communication, innovation, engaged learning, community support, and cultural awareness to inspire the academic lives of undergraduates. Being a part of a program that encourages the advancement of higher education using active learning in weekly sessions often called *Workshop* can be a demanding position to fulfill. Although very complex, this PLTL program offers unique opportunities and experiences that can mold Peer Leaders and students into exemplary role models for career paths. With leadership comes great responsibility. The repeated leader – student interaction in the PLTL experience in these small group sessions, recurring time and again from workshop to workshop in the course of a semester, has consequences in developing attributes very useful to the maturing Peer Leader. These are discussed during pre-semester training and often during twice weekly review and preparation sessions (called *Previews* at UTEP). Different salient *Leader Elements*, described below, make up these qualities of leadership, much like the varied properties of those elements that make up a functioning periodic table. Each quality or theme depicted in a *Leader Element* is associated with a trait acquired during the experience of leading a PLTL workshop over the course of one or more semesters, and each tells a story about the experience of facilitating learning (Patterson, 2023; Becvar, 2023). The physical representations of the *Leader Elements* could provide a PLTL program with a series of symbolic badges. These badges could be used by program coordinators to represent stages or accomplishments awarded to a Peer Leader during the progress of their leadership development.



### **(H)arvesting Leadership Skills: Overcoming the fears of Peer Leading**

The fear of being wrong or making mistakes in front of students, even with prior preparation and planning, can be overwhelming and initially quite embarrassing to a student facilitating learning. Embracing and learning from mistakes made by the Peer Leader can help students become more comfortable engaging and being less afraid of making mistakes or mis-statements in the workshop. Everyone makes mistakes and they can be an important tool in the learning process. For example, in my very first workshop, I incorrectly wrote the symbolic representation for a polyatomic ion. This was one of my most anticipated fears when becoming a Peer Leader: making a mistake in front of my students. When a student noticed, I asked her to explain why what was written was wrong. I was enlightened to see that with this opportunity students began engineering the situation in a different manner. Instead of struggling to find the right answer, we were collectively dissecting the error during the

process. This error helped everyone grasp the concept better. This event, by reflection, later gave way to an activity called “Correcting the Nomenclature Activity,” using a Purposeful Mistake (Calderon, et al., 2006) to help my students overcome common mistakes when learning this specific concept. I noticed that by showing them how everyone can learn from the feared mistakes that we worry about can make them more comfortable in speaking up and answering questions in the workshop, progressively getting rid of the fear of being wrong. It’s OK to be wrong as long as the error is recognized and discussed. Then the error becomes a learning experience.

A fellow Peer Leader for first semester general chemistry, Eduardo Carrera Hernandez, adds:

*I think everyone is afraid of making mistakes in front of a group, and that’s exactly what workshops are all about, embracing those mistakes. We learn from them together, working as a team to find the right answers. I’ve had a student in the past that told me how the workshop influenced her in other aspects of her life, like she wasn’t afraid to speak up or ask questions in her other classes. To me, the power of peer leading lies in having someone to rely on, not just the Peer Leader, but the community we (the Peer Leaders) build together. Workshops create a safe environment where students can ask questions, clear up doubts, and enjoy the process of learning. It’s also a place to develop teamwork skills and foster a love for collaboration.*

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**He**  
Helping Students  
Learn

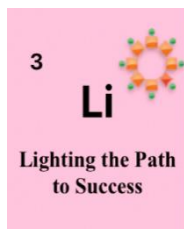
### **(He)lping Students Learn: Facilitating the Learning Process**

Workshop classes encompass a positive learning environment, where forming smaller groups than lectures can create a more engaging and interactive workplace. Through the continuous practice of active learning, collaboration among students and hands-on activities, students gain a deeper understanding of concepts. Moreover, at the beginning and end of every semester, I create a feedback survey regarding the workshop. A lot of the responses describe that they enjoyed the workshop, specifically because PLTL workshops went into more detail about what the lecture covered and used creative practice exercises. They mentioned how workshop activities challenge them in a way that facilitates studying for their exams. Workshop offers an encouraging way to solidify the understanding of chemistry through interactive learning with games and Explorations, simple hands-on activities exemplifying a concept (Floresca, et al., 2018).

Giovanna Rivera, who is a current Council member (Torres, et al., 2022) in the General Chemistry I peer leading program, offers her perspective:

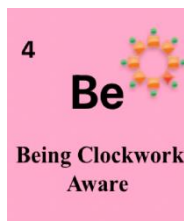
*Finishing my first year as a Peer Leader, I’ve learned a lot when it comes to understanding what “facilitating the learning of students” is. I struggled with really taking my hand off the wheel and letting my students guide me. This semester specifically, my workshop was really my students*

*teaching themselves and their peers. In doing this, I was able to see exactly how my students were thinking, and the students also realized their thought processes as well. This in turn helped deepen their comprehension of chemistry concepts and even sparked further curiosity for chemistry topics. My favorite question that I got this semester was “But WHY?”*



### **(Li)ghting the Path to Success: The Good Thing about Peer Leading**

Whether it is regarding your career, professional life, or community support, peer leading establishes a sense of belonging and readiness and allows for connections to the community through the students, Peer Leaders, and faculty. This opportunity introduces you to behaviors that can prepare you for career expectations or meet with peers with similar interests. Throughout my semesters of peer leading, especially as a full-time student, I have often leaned on my fellow Peer Leaders for advice. The more experienced Peer Leaders, especially those studying in related professional fields to mine, inform me how to prepare for and successfully complete future courses that are upper division and more academically challenging. We study together. As a group of like-minded and goal-oriented people, we use our skills of facilitating learning with each other in our own classes. Additionally, having my own study groups helps me realize that by explaining the concepts, I am more successful in remembering important information and methods.

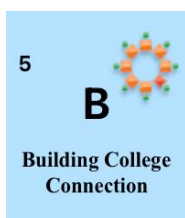


### **(Be)ing Clockwork Aware: Mastering Time Management**

Having to manage the responsibilities of workshops, office hours, course work, personal life, etc. can be time-consuming and can quickly become overwhelming. However, the experience of peer leading helps in managing time more effectively. Needing to plan a workshop for the entirety of two hours gives useful practice to extend those habits into arranging your own homework assignments, deadlines, studies, and examinations. This program has improved my discipline in staying organized and maintaining a scheduled routine. Worrying about our students and their preparation for exams can often disrupt our own habits and studies. In my case, balancing time for workshops, office hours, athletic game/practices, finals, grading, and my own coursework seemed challenging to schedule at first glance. However, I now set time on the weekends to prepare for upcoming workshops, assign a course to study and work on each day, and even grade workshop papers during my office hours when it is not busy. Nevertheless, the experience of peer leading trained me to plan accordingly to reach deadlines and avoid procrastination.

Explaining her routine on how to manage time, recently graduated Peer Leader Aylin Mimbela offers:

*As a General Chemistry Peer Leader, my role has been to guide students through the course material, but it has also been an incredible learning experience for me. Much like tungsten, known for its resilience and strength, I've had to adapt to different personalities and learning styles, learn from my mistakes, and continuously refine my approach. This process has been remarkably rewarding, forging me into a more confident and effective leader. Over the past year and a half, I've had the opportunity to lead workshops at varying times, from midday sessions to 7:30 am starts, and from Monday workshops to Friday ones. These experiences have taught me the importance of flexibility and preparation, much like tungsten's ability to withstand extreme conditions. I've found that structuring workshops with PowerPoint presentations on key points, followed by practice problems, create a strong foundation where students come prepared to take notes. I start with simpler problems to help students build confidence and then progress to a more complex version of the same problem that challenges their understanding. By the end of the workshop, students often realize that what once seemed overwhelming can be broken down into manageable steps.*



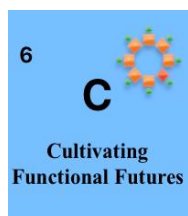
### **(B)uilding College Connections: With vs. Without Peer Leading**

As an incoming freshman, the college experience can appear intimidating, causing students to shy away from reaching their full academic potential. Even as an upper-division student, lectures with numerous students and complex concepts can become tedious. The peer leading program nurtures a sense of academic confidence and engagement, which helps not only workshop students but the Peer Leader to pursue new opportunities. A vivid memory I have, right before joining the peer leading program, is when I was helping my chemistry study group with review questions. My workshop peers had made comments about my having the potential to become a Peer Leader. Intimidated by public speaking on a complex subject, I naturally said no. My Peer Leader at the time started giving us opportunities to present concepts by doing problems on the whiteboard and explaining the process to our workshop members, as well as reaching out to students as to why they would be a great asset to the peer leading program. The support offered to me as a young and timid freshman transformed me into a more confident and capable Peer Leader.

Current Head Peer Leader of General Chemistry I, Asher Min, gives insight into his time in the program:

*Building meaningful connections with fellow students - especially with professors - is a daunting challenge in college. During my first semester at college, I felt as though not only my fellow students but especially the faculty were a towering, forbidding entity. I felt out of place, and alone among all these distinguished individuals. What I quickly learned was that peer leading bridges this gap, giving students like me the opportunities to connect with peers on similar paths,*

*and to start building earnest, important connections with faculty and staff. My time in workshop showed me that the authority figure, like my Peer Leader, was another human just like the rest of us. Workshop is a safe and welcoming space that gives me the opportunity to talk with like-minded students, provides me invaluable growth in social aspects as a person, and gives me networks for inquiry and research that extend to this day. When I became a Peer Leader and was able to participate in twice-a-week meetings with peers and professors, this spiderweb of connections spiraled further and further outward, leading to opportunities for internships/summer programs and other initiatives. Without the establishment of a workshop and assigned Peer Leader with which students can learn to feel safe, respected, and seen, these connections would greatly diminish in number and strength. The absence of a peer leading program would take away the ability of Peer Leaders to interact, learn, and connect with subsequent professors and faculty.*



### **(C)ultivating Functional Futures: How Peer Leading Has Helped Professional Development**

The position of Peer Leader enables connections with mentors and fellow peers with more experience and similar aspirations. These can be an immense aid along the path towards one's career. Taking on the responsibility of a Peer Leader develops improvement in communication, time management, mentorship, collaboration, facilitation, creativity, improvisation under pressure, and problem-solving skills. The experience of leading allows connections to develop and spark creativity and efficiency in any future profession, in my case a path into the medical field. For instance, while writing internship applications and an abstract for activities for the program, I encountered one of my campus advisors and asked for some insight. What began as a brainstorm of ideas about workshop became more focused plans for my path to medical school. This helped me more efficiently organize requirements needed within the semesters I have until graduation. Through peer leading, I developed a connection with a faculty member who specializes in my interest in the medical field.

Anjolie Miranda, a current Council member for the General Chemistry I PLTL program, added how her professional development has benefited:

*Peer-Led Team Learning not only reinforces academic material but also fosters personal and professional growth. Being surrounded by driven, like-minded individuals has inspired me to step out of my comfort zone and strive for greater achievements in life. This program has provided me with a network of role models who have guided me through navigating the professional world, while also giving me the opportunity to mentor others and share my own experiences. Working closely with professors has been an invaluable aspect of this experience, offering me continuous*

*guidance and encouragement. Their advice and support have been instrumental in helping me negotiate challenges and stay motivated throughout my journey.*



### **(N)avigating Similar Situations: Learning from Other Peer Leaders**

Peer Leaders share similar obstacles, achievements, and aspirations. This creates a support system throughout the program, aiding in learning from individual perspectives and trying out different methods of facilitating workshops and studying for courses outside peer leading. Interacting with Peer Leaders of different demanding majors makes dealing with moments of stress, exertion, and busy academic schedules much easier. I have collaborated with my peers in creating games and adapting previously presented games into creative activities for different subject matter. I have visited workshops with other Peer Leaders to learn new activities and to encourage students to grow their social networking skills. These experiences of sharing have helped me build a great support system, in which connections made in this program have extended well beyond peer leading.

Oswaldo Saucedo, a current experienced Peer Leader for General Chemistry I advised me how we can use our support system within the program:

*Nobody said that being a Peer Leader and studying our own coursework simultaneously would be easy, but we are never alone in this situation. Every Peer Leader is always willing to help, from a simple opinion during a workshop to having delicate conversations on difficult subjects. Listening to and coming up with ideas to support this person happens because, in one way or another, we have faced similar challenges and obstacles. This means that if one person is struggling with something, another Peer Leader who has already faced that situation will provide support. Even if nobody has experienced it, we will always find a way to help our peers.*



### **(O)ffering Networking Narratives: How Peer Leading Deepens Chemistry Understanding**

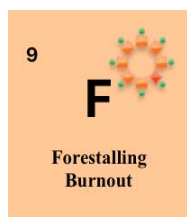
In preparing and planning for a workshop, the responsibility requires us to have a solid understanding of what we are about to present. Getting the chance to work with different professors that structure their lectures in distinctly different ways has broadened my awareness of facilitating learning in general chemistry. Collaboration with faculty, students, and other Peer Leaders creates different ways to encourage active learning. Learning from peers has gone beyond learning for classes and has helped me prepare for the MCAT examination needed for the medical field.

Aylin Mimbela emphasizes the lasting impact that workshops leave on students:

*At the end of each semester, I send out a survey to collect feedback, and I am consistently moved by the gratitude and appreciation expressed by my students. Many share that the workshops were not only their most enjoyable part of the course but also a space where they felt seen and heard,*



*quite a contrast to the anonymity of large lecture halls. I've come to realize that my workshops serve to light the way for students, helping them gain confidence and clarity in general chemistry. Through this experience, I've grown as a leader and mentor, and I take pride in knowing that my workshops have left a positive, lasting impact on my students' learning. Just as tungsten stands as a symbol of durability and brilliance, I strive to embody these qualities in my approach to peer leading.*



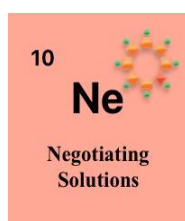
## **(F)orestalling Burnout: Strategies to Stay Energized as a Peer Leader**

Keeping to an organized and scheduled routine avoids procrastination, along with stress and the burnout that follows. Having a strong support system in this program helps, along with efficient preparation. Seeking advice from fellow Peer Leaders and brainstorming activities with one another can aid in dealing with a piling workload. As the semester progresses, we plan our workshops accordingly to keep students' spirits high and focused when burnout can start presenting itself in students. I find that having a community of like-minded learners, especially those in the same classes as me, encourages me to get ahead of my assignments and maintain my organization. Shared responsibility has helped me prevent procrastination and avoid the risk of missed deadlines. Within the program, organization is the salient quality that allows for its productivity. For instance, starting with training week for leading, we learn how to properly plan for our workshops, office hours, and review sessions. Professors share their advice. We get hands-on experience seeing how the workshop runs with other Peer Leaders as the audience. These training experiences translate into dealing effectively with my personal workload.

Recently graduated Head Peer Leader of General Chemistry I, Leslie Carillo shares her methods and advice on maintaining a productive routine:

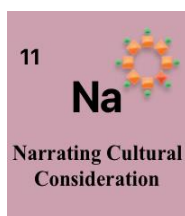
*Being a Peer Leader as well as a college student can become a stressful and busy task, so burnout is not something easy to control. Nevertheless, there are ways to work around it. Being organized and maintaining a schedule is an easy way to prevent tasks from overlapping and stress from building up. Setting aside a specific day to grade or by creating a list of everything you need to do that week and selecting three main things to focus on every day, can really make a difference. Next, the good thing about peer leading is that you are never alone, so rely on other people. In the workshop, use your students as a tool; let them take the lead and allow them to help each other. Outside of workshop, ask for help and share your activities. A heavy task (such as grading or planning workshop) becomes lighter when working in teams, or by simply having company. Finally, do not put too much pressure on yourself, or set unrealistic expectations, a student can only be helped as much as they are willing to accept. So do not focus on things out of your control*

*and remember to have fun. If you're enjoying what you're doing, staying energized will come naturally.*



### **(Ne)gotiating Solutions: Developing Strong Problem-Solving Skills**

In dealing with multiple workshop relocations, miscommunication, or lack of understanding can be predicaments that take place in a PLTL program. Different difficult situations that happen throughout workshop sessions help Peer Leaders be prepared to think quickly on their feet. Using their knowledge and past experience as resources, Peer Leaders learn to compose a quick resolution. Many peer-led programs across the nation train Peer Leaders on workshop dynamics with problem-solving scenarios, such as the University of Houston-Downtown that treats their training as a workshop of its own (McKee, 2023). Throughout the semester numerous distractions can occur; for example, recent construction in our building has disrupted workshop scheduling. We have had to rely on our resiliency because of construction work obstructing our access to workshop rooms at the last minute and having to share rooms. Prior preparation has shown us how to improvise creative solutions: we took this opportunity to change learning environments. One of the accommodations was to combine workshops allowing students to develop connections with other peers (Acosta, et al., 2013). Another was to conduct Explorations outside and to help connect chemistry to real world applications in our daily lives (Floresca et al., 2018).



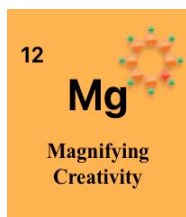
### **(Na)rrating Cultural Consideration: Building Cultural Sensitivity Through Peer Leading**

Large institutions mean large classes, a range of student abilities, and a broad range of cultural diversity. Institutions outside this country such as Queen Mary University of London in the United Kingdom have implemented their own chemistry peer leading program with about 80 Peer Leaders, showcasing the impact that PLTL has across cultures (Christian et al., 2023). When engaging with students, diversity offers Peer Leaders exposure to learn about different cultures. This helps Peer Leaders foster a sense of belonging and inclusivity for all students. Providing a sense of belonging begins with connecting with the students, especially at a campus with a diverse student body. I have been fortunate enough to have groups of students that enjoy sharing their culture. One way I like to try to connect with my students is with music, in which I allow students to add their favorite music to a workshop playlist. This allows them to share their artistic personality. In many cases this incorporates their culture, and they feel more comfortable in the workshop. I also like to implement a slideshow day, where each student can apply any topic that is important to them to chemistry. One international student created

a slideshow of her home cuisine and considered the dishes by what type of mixture they represented. This example allowed the other students to share and apply their own cultural experiences to chemistry. After this, I saw students tended to be more comfortable conversing with each other.

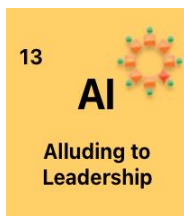
The second author, a current General Chemistry I instructor and a former UTEP chemistry Peer Leader, provides insight on her experience in working with the peer leading program:

*One of the main aims of peer leading is to actively practice inclusivity in chemistry and to ensure that all students have access to the subject, regardless of their religious or racial background, gender, or learning style. Students often feel isolated during traditional lectures due to the large number of students. Therefore, meaningful connections with other classmates are difficult to build. Peer-led classrooms provide a smaller group where students can more easily connect with their classmates and Peer Leaders with the common goal of learning chemistry. UTEP is host to a range of students from many different countries; for undergraduate studies, many of our students come from our neighboring country, Mexico, where teaching styles can be vastly different, along with the classroom size. This often shocks our students who are not used to large classes such as undergraduate general chemistry. Our peer-led classes create a supportive environment where students feel valued, safe, and respected. In the PLTL workshops, chemistry students collaborate and learn from each other, promoting a sense of community and mutual growth.*



### **(Mg)nifying Creativity: Using Games and Interactive Learning**

This program advocates and challenges Peer Leaders to innovate new ways to adapt active learning into workshops, helping us develop our creative skills. By composing fun and interactive games to manipulate into science, we are encouraging students to use their knowledge in activities to enhance their critical thinking skills. One of the games students have liked throughout the semesters is my “Mixture scoop activity” for concepts connecting mixtures and properties. In this game students have a miscellaneous collection of items on the table. I have them blindly scoop up as many items as possible. Whoever has the most diverse collection of items after separating them has the chance to answer a question related to the subject matter of the workshop. This game helps them visually see the difference between homogeneous and heterogeneous mixtures along with physical properties. Another game presented by a fellow Peer Leader was a jeopardy-like game involving building a car. This increased interest in learning for our engineering students. Our program often has different Peer Leaders present a fresh idea for a game or activity on a weekly basis which allows our brainstorming ideas to be ongoing throughout the semester.

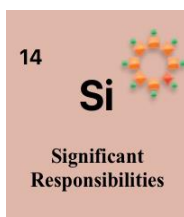


### **(AI)luding to Leadership: Building Strong Leadership Skills**

Being in the position of Peer Leader, our students look to us for mentorship and guidance. It is our responsibility to facilitate their learning to motivate their confidence to take initiative in workshops. We engage in a variety of methods to solidify their understanding and empower their learning experiences. As an extension of the professors, we develop essential leadership skills to guide workshops for a diverse group of students. I have gained knowledge about leadership through this program in the semesters I have been a leader. A leader is not the one talking at all times, but someone who guides and listens to others in a manner that helps them take initiative on their own. The mentorship I've obtained through navigating and encouraging students to build confidence through active learning games, Explorations, and presentations has made me aware of the long-lasting impact workshops can have on students, especially seeing some of my students going on to become Peer Leaders themselves. Two of my previous workshop students are now constructing their own path within the program.

Paulina Luna, another current Council member of the General Chemistry I peer leading program, summarizes the essentials of leadership:

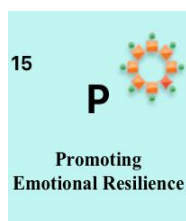
*As Peer Leaders, we create a culture of empathy, trust, and respect. We do this by encouraging students to make mistakes, to have open communication, and to embrace transparency. This not only creates a workplace where students are comfortable asking questions and letting us know about their situations but also opens the doors for them to embrace authenticity. Workshop is aimed to help students academically and emotionally.*



### **(Si)gnificant Responsibilities: Managing Peer Leader Responsibilities Effectively**

Mentorship and leadership are incorporated into being a Peer Leader. Of essence is effectively fulfilling responsibilities. Being in charge of a learning environment, grading students fairly, being punctual, and communicating effectively requires maturity and reliability. Balancing different commitments along with peer leading is essential to maintaining a stable and productive routine. During my first semester of peer leading, I had different responsibilities to fulfill as an athlete, student, and Peer Leader. My obligations were critical. Any mishap or lack of effort would limit learning and not provide the quality of effort the peer leading program represents. This semester I am keenly aware of being responsible in the laboratory setting of my workshop. Any lapse of careful management could end in a dangerous consequence with all the hazards present in a chemistry laboratory. This is why I always enforce proper safety attire and equipment, even if we are not directly working with chemicals. A Peer Leader should be

dependable and accountable, especially if we are trusted to enhance the educational experience of our students.



### **(P)romoting Emotional Resilience: Building Emotional Strength in Peer Leading**

Learning how to foster a comfortable workplace for your students is important for them to develop confidence and want to participate in workshops. Emotional resilience and intelligence are also needed for Peer Leaders to properly adapt and deal with the stress, difficulties, or conflicts that might arise in a workshop. I try to create a comfortable, psychologically safe environment for students in workshop. My experience of leading provided the emotional maturity needed when a frustrated student disrupted the class and put blame on me for his low examination scores. I recognized that this was not the case. His blameful remarks stemmed from a place of stress and overwhelming emotions, which was why I decided to calmly ask him to talk in private outside to listen to his concerns. This created a safe situation for him to speak with me and his tone became more peaceful. Keeping an open mind about what could be done to help and how he had prepared for the exam, he quickly realized that he had just taken on too heavy a workload at once. From that interaction, I offered a reflection exercise in the workshop for students to think and discuss what they could do differently on the next exam, how they could prepare and examine what worked for them. Ever since incorporating this kind of reflection time, I have not had another interaction of that sort. Allowing time to consider their preparation and introducing a safe setting allows students to realize their study habits and how to reduce their stress.

Current General Chemistry I peer leading Council member, Aaron Rivas, advocates the significance of the emotional aspects of our programs:

*As a Peer Leader, having the ability to take valid or even invalid criticism from students is very important. Students can and will voice their concerns with you, and some students, especially older students if you are a younger Peer Leader, tend not to care if they hurt your feelings. Whether intentional or unintentional, it is important for a Peer Leader to have the emotional maturity and resilience to deal with these situations when they occur.*

### Conclusions

This composition stemmed from a small essay describing my different experiences as a Peer Leader submitted for an evaluation letter. That evaluation letter was for an early admission to a medical program called Joint Admission Medical Program (JAMP), providing the opportunity to prepare for the MCAT examination with professional help in study sessions, clinical hours, and volunteering opportunities. My specific prompt regarded elaborating on extracurricular programs, and I thought immediately of my association as a

Peer Leader with the PLTL program at UTEP. It drove me to write about different experiences in guiding workshops that can also translate to navigating the complexity of higher education. My application excerpt eventually led me to submit a more detailed essay. This expanded my courage to venture outside my comfort zone and apply the encouragement we give workshop students into my own academics. As a result, my application evolved into an expansion of specific experiences that include essential components of the Peer-Led Team Learning program.

Each quality or theme in a *Leader Element* is associated with a trait acquired during the process of leading a PLTL workshop. The images of the elements display the logo for PLTLIS. In a given PLTL Program, the logo could be replaced by the “home” logo. The physical representations of the Leader Elements can provide a PLTL program with a series of symbolic badges. These badges could be used by program overseers to represent stages, semesters, or accomplishments awarded to a Peer Leader during the progress of leadership development. This essay offers advice to newcomers to the peer leading position, describing the expectations, qualities, and traits acquired by being a part of the PLTL program during the experience of leading.

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