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ENGR 493  
FALL 2009  
STUDENT REFLECTION  
12/7/09

It is often said that leadership cannot be taught in a class room setting. That a person is born with the ability to be a leader, it does not come through schooling. I believe this is only partly true. There are many types of leaders and I believe it takes a natural sense of leadership as well as a learned sense of leadership to be an effective one. When a person is taught ways to better interact, motivate and relay his or her message to another person it amplifies that inner leadership qualities.

The glass bottle recycling project was an opportunity for the people of the ENGR 408 class to take what was learned in class and use it on a real world problem. This problem was located in the poverty stricken slums of Morocco, Casablanca. The residents of these slums have little or no income to help sustain daily life. Our attempt to improve their way of

life was to take a simple glass wine bottle and recycle them by creating artistic creations from them. These wine bottles would be supplied by the wealthier neighbors of the slums that live in the city since there is no formal way for recycling bottles other than reusing them. These bottles can easily be turned into cups or glasses for drinking and chandeliers which



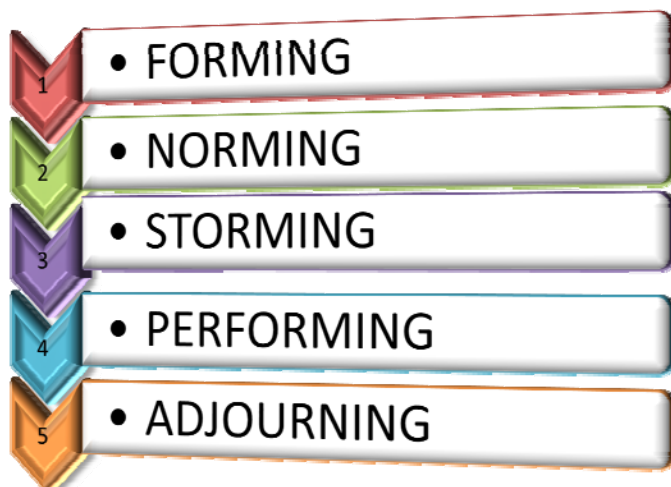
Morocco, Casablanca Slum village

can be used to hold candles and act as a decorative light source. This small contribution of a method and recommended supplies can change many lives significantly just by taking a small initiative and acting instead of remaining ignorant to a problem. This effort to recycle the glass bottle also enrolls a major

topic that has been a huge issue for the past couple of decades which is sustainability. Although the reuse of those bottles is not recycling them back into the bottle industry it keeps the waste out of the streets and will help the poverty stricken residents of the slums. This is a great step towards sustainability for this area, although they do not have the overall resources like more developed countries they can make the best of what they have at their disposal by using this newly created idea.

Through out the semester we covered many topics in 408 pertaining to a wide scope of leadership skills, qualities, traits and values. Some of the topics were ranging from Judgement to Global Values and Diversity to Sustainability. This project in a whole is definitely a good example of a person acting globally. A leader who acts on a global perspective as well as a local perspective is one who can be valued and respected. Their ability to have concern for another section of the world which has little impact directly on him shows their humanitarian and loving side. Not ignoring issues that plague the rest of the society makes a strong leader.

During class we also talked about the “5 Stages of Group Development” our group was no different and followed these fairly concisely without even realizing.



These five steps may seem confusing or generic but they explain the overall group process concisely.

The FORMING step our group made first contact through emails then met in person to discuss the

project and to begin the meshing of the group. The NORMING stage we set the group goals and made sure each member knew what was expected out of them and the group in a whole. Our group had little to say in the STORMING stage other than some design conflicts when creating the chandelier. This conflicted was managed under the PERFORMING stage by consulting the group consensus as well as practicality of the design. Once the project and designs were completed we began the ADJOURNING step where we finalized out presentation and delivery of the products as well as reflect on the ending of the semester. This method of analyzing a group explains the major events which nearly all groups encounter. Its important to recongnize this because although we felt this project and group of people was diverse and abnormal we still managed to follow the common group format.

Coming from an engineering background soon to be recieveing a degree in Architectural Engineering focusing in construction management, leadership is going to be a key skill in my daily life. The background I reveived in the AE program did not concentrate much in the leadership side of the industry. We had one course taught by a management professor which led me in the direction to persue more skills and knowledge in the area of engineering leadership. Since this is the first course in the Engineering Leadership Minor it was much more of an intro to the aspects and theories of being a leader. The course work was much different from the normal spread sheets and number crunching of the engineering world. Reading journal articles, book exerpts, and many other texts led the course in the group discussions on views, group values, and ethics. Understanding the importance of a peer reviewed piece of literature compared to any scientic article will help lead my judgments in the correct direction by not being misinformed by nieve statements by people in positions of power.

This course has changed my view of leadership and management in many perspectives. It will be valuable information to retain in the future as well as in the remainder of my life as a student. The knowledge and decision making skills gained are invaluable in todays world.