

### Reflective Essay 3 – Glen Bradford OBHR 669 4/12/2010

Here I find myself, on one of the most transformational weeks of my entire life writing an essay reflecting on my inability to negotiate. I recently got the determination to purchase a book that is probably one of the most insightful books I've ever read. Last class I wrote down a principle from this book on the board and placed the book at the front of class and it was swept away like dust into eternity. The quote I wrote was "The only way to get the best of an argument is to avoid it."

Criticism is nothing new to me. When I was growing up, I received a lot of it. In the past, I used to believe in my principles to a point that I felt that it was my duty to win an argument that I believed in by simply stating the obvious and expecting that my opponent would come to realize that I was right. In math, I never showed my work because I didn't need to. I assumed that having the right answer was all that was important. I frequently was the only person to stand up for what I thought was right during a class discussion and rewarded as the only person that had the right perspective. The way I went about things was terribly, terribly wrong. Mark Twain has a theory that I've recently been introduced to in my quest to better relate my perspective to others, and it is essentially that people are a product of all of their past experiences.

In fact, last year this time, my friends doubted me, my family doubted me, my classmates doubted me, mostly everyone doubted me, I applied for over 500 internships after saving GE \$1M and didn't get callbacks. Pretty much, the only person that believed me was me. That isn't very effective. Everything made sense to me. I found it incredibly difficult to relate to others because I always approached the situation defensively. In my presentational speaking class, I frequently ridiculed my fellow classmates by saying things like, "I've proven to myself using statistics that psychological experiments have a tendency to overstate the positive effects of counseling/drugs/etc --- to the point which I take the entire field with a grain of salt. I gave an example that psychologists severely injured relationships in my family by helping my aunt remember traumatizing events in the past that didn't actually occur. The mind is a very interesting thing, and if you don't keep it straight and sharp yourself, well.... Good luck to ya.

I used to get a rush by stacking the odds against me and coming out ahead of expectations. Freshman year, I was voted most likely to fail out on my freshman floor, and I got a 4.0. I had worked a construction job the summer before, where I found myself in a manhole holding up a wall of concrete with fiberboard while the concrete dried against my back. My incentive to do well in college was the parting final words on my last day, still echoing in my mind. "If you fail out of school and have to come back here, you get to be our b\*\*\*h."

So, I came to college, completed the toughest engineering assignments faster than they could assign them to me, waking up at 5am on Saturday plugging away multi-variable calculus, trying to do everything in my power to avoid failing. This last month, a supervisor at Krannert questioned my sanity and advised that I go seek psychological counseling immediately.

That's my story, I am a product of my own environment. Why is this the biggest week in my life and what is the point of me being here? I have learned that there is no point in me even trying to be a

distributive bargainer. I suck at that. I've developed the immense talent to point out obvious flaws in other people's logic and ideas and that is something that I can harness, but should never apply on the fly. If I never came to this realization, I'd end up 25 years from now, very rich and very lonely. I don't want to be lonely. I want to empower success. The best way to do this is to listen to others and genuinely try to focus on commending and pointing out their positives while suggesting an alternative possibility (which is actually an improvement to their situation).

People adore sincere admiration. I will give it to them, in heaping quantities. And they will love me for it. Those that believe in me are set to make profits beyond that which the common man believes to be feasible. The best way to help people help themselves involves a few steps. The first is to get them to like you. Once they like you, you can better win them to your perspective. But if you don't win them over, you don't have the argumentative momentum going strongly enough to have them think that their perspective is theirs and not yours.