



2021 YLI National Essay Topic Guidance

Confidential

Knowledge Partner:

McKinsey & Company



Developing the next generation of Indonesian leaders

Write your essay (max. 500 words)



Describe your recent, meaningful, and impactful leadership experience

Choose a theme, your **'leadership experience'** could be one of the following (not-exhaustive):

- **Lead self** (e.g.: addressing personal challenges, creating a product from scratch, initiate a new community, etc)
- **Lead team** (e.g.: leading a campus organization, group of communities, a team of business project, etc)
- **Lead change** (e.g.: addressing educational issue in the community, active contribution to social/national issue, etc)

Essay Framework

- Describe the **context and situation** of the leadership experience
- Explain **your role** in your leadership experience
- Describe what **impact** you delivered in your leadership experience

Please use **any questions** below to guide writing your story that are relevant to your leadership experience

How did you **solve the problem** within your leadership experience?

- **Clearly describe the issue** that you faced:
 - It can be a personal problem, an intellectual challenge, a research query, an ethical dilemma, or a social/national issue
- What **steps and what kind of effort** did you take in solving the issue?
- What were the **significance or the impact you have created** after you solve the issue or challenge?

How did you **lead your team** within your leadership experience?

- Describe your **position, role, and size of the team**
- What were the **challenges you faced** while leading the team? (e.g.: tough decisions, irresponsible team member, conflicting schedule, etc)
- What **kind of approach** did you take in facing the issue or challenges?
- Explain the **lessons learned** from the experience and how it **shapes you as a leader**

Essay Questions



TIPS

- Follow the **essay framework** to help you write a structured essay
- Choose an experience close to your passion where you have made significant contribution
- **Clearly highlight the impact** of the change brings as well as the size of the impact

Showcase leadership experience that are most impactful



Steps

Example

- **Write key points of events that you want to showcase**
 - What specific things in the experience that showcase your strength or your upholding their value?
 - Make sure to highlight why you choose this story
- **Detail out the event highlights**
 - What is your role in the experience?
 - What exactly is your contribution and what did you do?
 - What is the change or impact? What is the size of it? Make sure to quantify it
 - Give facts & figures

- **Key points of events:**

- My experience in arranging a festival for music and art
- I did it because there is limited opportunity for students to participate in organization event, including myself

- **Detail of event highlights**

Situation

- My role is the project officer of this festival where I am the head of the whole committee
- I led a team of 50 students to design the concept, raise funds, and execute the event

Complications

- Managing University principals to get approval, this has delayed the start of the project by 2 months
- Unexperienced students as committee member
- Limited amount of time to raise fund

Resolutions

- Persuade 1 university principals to be our event supervisor, hence expediting approval and endorsement process
- Create multiple team bonding session to strengthen the bond between committee member and discuss improvement opportunity in work together
- Quickly list in potential company to approach and start reaching out one by one

Impact

- The festival was the first student-based music & art festival ever conducted in my University
- And now it has become an regular annual event
- Manage to raise funds of USD 20,000, higher than original target of USD15,000 across 3 months
- Attracted 1800 participants
- Provide opportunity for 50 students to have organizational experience and learn how to work as a team and arrange an event

Run through the checklist BEFORE submitting your essay



Introduction



Use two to three sentences to introduce your personal narrative topic.



Be sure to include personal details in your first paragraph.



Make sure your supporting details completely relate to your personal narrative.



Did you state your personal narrative topic very clearly?



Is your reader engaged and interested from the very first sentence?

Body



You should have 3-5 paragraphs for your personal narrative. Each paragraph should be for each one of your supporting details.



Did you include all of your supporting details? Did you back up your details with facts?



Make sure your paragraphs are clearly structured and easy to understand.

Conclusion



Have you included the original topic of your personal narrative in the conclusion paragraph?



Does your personal narrative leave the reader satisfied?



Be sure to include a short summary of the previous paragraphs.

Overall



Have you made the personal narrative about yourself?



Do the paragraphs relate to the main theme of your personal narrative?



Is the narrative written in first person (using the word “I”)?