

## Sample Reflective Essay

My senior project, “designing a senior party donor marketing campaign”, was very **relevant** to my career goal in business. I plan to attend SOU next year and study business, but, prior to this project, I was unsure what direction in business I would take, as I have found both marketing and accounting attractive. This project really solidified my interests in marketing. I was very successful, developed skills I really enjoyed, and learned a great deal about my ease in a marketing role. I learned that I really enjoy marketing, public relations, and asking people for things. During my project, I was given lots of feedback that I would be good in sales! This feedback, coupled with the fun I had gathering ample donations for our senior graduation party, reinforced my career decision to pursue studies in business marketing.

I have taken business, accounting, and marketing classes in high school. I have also taken three years of math, speech and debate. I have enjoyed all of these classes, but I most enjoy speech and debate. From the time I was a child, I have enjoyed sales, talking to strangers, and convincing them to support whatever cause I am behind, whether it's Girl Scout Cookies, money for a class trip, or recruiting voters for a political candidate. However, undertaking the organization of donor recruitment for all the drawing gifts for our senior party was definitely a rigorous step above other marketing skills I had used in the past. I had to really organize my efforts, as I had several volunteers assisting me. So I had to track who was contacting whom and the resulting donations. I also became very tenacious, never losing sight of my goal.

This project required many skills that I had only begun to develop in school and extracurricularly, including: marketing, negotiating, initiating, organizing, persistence, integrity, working with the public, teamwork, and organizing. Working with a team of seven student volunteers and one parent, I organized a campaign to raise over \$31,000 of donated gifts for our senior party from businesses in our community. I identified all the businesses to contact, organized and stored the donations, created the drawing schedule, and reinforced my volunteers for their hard and successful efforts. We became quite a committed team. I might add that I secured the largest dollar value of donations, including a 2000 VW bug from a local car dealer! I spent over 200 hours doing this project, but, through it all; I learned that, if I set goals, I can achieve anything.

As I reflect upon what I learned that was most valuable, I think it was truly seeing that persistence pays. I learned that I can achieve more than often I think I can, so just push myself! I have not always pushed myself in school, but, in this instance, I enjoyed the challenge and felt driven to do as well as I could. I learned that when I enjoy what I am doing, it is much easier for me to excel.

The bookkeeping system I created originally did not work well, but I learned how to get help when I need it to enhance my effectiveness. This was a big lesson, as I am more of a “do it myself” kind of person. I learned the value of asking for help. I applied much of my classroom learning in marketing, as I designed the donor recruitment campaign. However, I needed to apply business marketing principles to donor recruitment, requiring me to approach this marketing job from a different perspective than what we learned in class. I must have done well, as we secured over 90 donations, 24% more than any class has ever secured in the past at AHS! Please see the attached list of donations, their value, and the name of the student who secured each donation. Also see my journal and work plan to see the organizational skills I exercised.

We have not yet had our senior graduation party. That will be the true test of my work. I feel confident that it will be a huge success, partly because of all the cool gifts kids will get. I can't wait to watch! I am thankful for this opportunity.