Personal Development Plan:

When I enrolled in the Leadership Certificate Program, I have two reasons in my mind. First reason was to learn different leadership styles and discover how people perceive leadership. I was intrigued by the cultural differences between opinions on leadership and wanted to learn more about different leadership styles and roles in the US. The second reason was to meet with open-minded people who share similar mindset towards leadership and personal growth. In addition to learning about different leadership styles and getting to know a diverse network of people, the Leadership Certificate Program also helped to discover myself and learn more about myself. Attending many I-programs so far taught me how I am similar as well as different from people around me and put me in contact with great mentors and advisor. I started to learn from their personal experiences and apply these learnings into my own leadership style.

My two most important values are liberty and achievement. I am a big fan of existentialism and believe that happiness can be only found by people shaping their own lives and characters. My values, liberty and achievement, are two pillar values complementing this ideal. The liberty is the freedom to live as you wish and go where you want. Liberty has become one of the most important human rights in the 21st century. However, I define liberty differently. To me, liberty is being the one in charge to make decisions and to take actions towards them. To show how it connects to leadership, I can propose discussing the differences between a manager and a leader. A leader should be able to picture a vision supported by some core values and ideas, while manager has a task to delegate. The leader shows the destination and provides some guidance on how it should be achieved, while managers have strict to-do's and ways to realize them. At this point, the leader provides everyone with the liberty to take actions on their behalves and explore different ways to get to the destination. It should be also noted that re-definition the destination and goals - as the time progresses- is another aspect of liberty that should be provided to everyone by the leader.

My second most important value is achievement. This can be interpreted in different forms: self-achievement (personal/self), managing change with the help of your teammates (team & organization) or bearing the flag to introduce new changes to be implemented within your community and environment (community/society). I am personally driven by my ambition and passion to solve problems around me. Any kind of problem solving, whether it is proving business consultation to a client or working with RSOs to teach engineering to students, is essential to my character building. As a free person to make decisions, I am not only responsible by my own actions, but these actions also make my own character.

Therefore, working towards and achieving my dreams is a key to define who I am and who I would like to become.

As I provided some hints in the previous paragraphs, a leader to me is the person who takes the following three steps: (1) realize problems around him/her, (2) imagine/think a better future without these problems profoundly and (3) motivate others to solve these problems. In other words, the leader should be first entangled with a problem to solve. After learning more about the reasons and consequences of this problem and empathizing with people, the leader should map all his/her learning to define the problem in a more concise way. The second step is to build a broad vision, supported by key values and ideas, to motivate and encourage people in order to show how significant this problem to them. At this point, the leader should focus on the future ideal of solving the problem rather than proposing solutions. If the problem is defined correctly, it is very probable that other people will be interested in solving this problem as well, who can be defined as teammates or followers. Subsequently, the leader should take the first step to solve the problem and help others to explore potential solutions. While being respectful to everyone, the leader should manage the learnings from these solution trials and propose better ways to tackle this problem as a group.

Frankly, my life goals are vague. I would like to use technology and design thinking methodology to improve peoples' lives and solve problems. Therefore, I am well determined to start my own company/ start-up in the later phases of my life. For the moment, I am still in the progress of inspecting problems around me and impact of these problems on the society/ environment. This vague destination is a way of bringing real-problem solving, work-life satisfaction and life goals together and consequently re-defining how we live and work. To achieve this goal, I am in the progress of acquiring key technical (engineering) and business development knowledge, while gaining soft skills such as leadership and change management from my experiences.

The Leadership Certificate Program complements these goals in numerous ways. First, it helps me to meet with open-minded well-qualified individuals (participants, mentors and advisors) to discuss different aspects of leadership and change management. I am constantly learning from their personal journeys while expanding my library of best leadership practices. Secondly, it helps me to take a more systematic approach to leadership by introducing me to the literature and theories. It urges me to explore different case studies and well-established models which I can utilize during my leadership experience. Finally, it nurtures me to learn more about myself and society /environment as well as different leadership styles. These learnings are and will be very vital for me when I am working with people with different values, passions and leadership styles.

Competency Development Plan	Specific	Measurable	Achievable	Relevant /Realistic	Time Bound
Competency	What do you want to accomplish? Why do I want to accomplish this?	How will I measure my progress? How will I know when the goal is accomplished?	How can the goal be accomplished? What are the logical steps I should take?	Why do I need this? Does this goal align with my mission?	By when should my steps to improving this competency be accomplished?
Reflection	• Thinking about ramifications of my actions and explore consequences of my mindset • To take a break during my busy schedule and 'live' and 'see' what is happening around me • To reflect how I am feeling	• To reflect on my journey at least on a bi-weekly manner • Read a book (Five by Dan Zadra) on personal planning to achieve dreams • Explore how mind works (theory)	• To record my learnings and learn from them • Build a 5-year self-achievement plan • Taking a more academic-oriented step to understand how I feel and why I feel that sense	• To define my life goals better • Keeping track of my progress • Noting the problems, I observe around me and building systematic ways to define these problems concisely	• To reflect on my journey at least on a bi-weekly manner (Immediately) • Read a book on personal management (Summer) • Attend Insight Program (Done)
Group Dynamics	• Learning how relationships within groups work/change • Managing and solving conflicts within a group • Influencing others to achieve common goals	• Participate in a semester-long team project and observe the group dynamics and decision-making process • Actively engage in conflict management within this project	• To participate in a team project, where I am working between the senior and junior teams • Try to establish communication between these groups and • Help these groups resolve problems	• One essential job of a leader is to work with groups and align everyone with the same goal even when there is conflict • Managing group dynamics will help me to keep my teammates engaged	• To participate a semester long team project next fall • To assess my conflict resolution and communication skills via a feedback form at the middle and end of the project

Change Management	• Keeping track of progress and updates on-going projects • Actively investigating what needs to be changed and why • Working strategic plans with other members and informing them on the progress	• Learn and avoid 10 change management mistakes • Read "Leading Change" by John Kotter and learn eight step process for change management • Implement a change management plan for a project	• To take part in a change management project • Learn two or more methodologies / road maps to manage chance in companies	• Keeping track of long term projects and diving tasks into achievable timely chunks make projects much more manageable and understandable for everyone • Learning about the discovery process on which topics/ processes needs to be challenged or changed	• Read "Leading Change" by John Kotter next spring • Learn and implement eight step process for change management
Systems Thinking	• Examine and connect linking parts • Creating well-though and efficient processes • Avoid unintended outcomes or overlaps	• To learn theory and academic background of Systems Thinking • Read "The Fifth Discipline" by Peter Senge • Learn and internalize best examples of systems thinking	• Attend Ignite Program • Learn 5 Best Practices of Systems Thinking • Develop a system maps for a project and discuss it with other experts	• To build long term, sustainable project and to avoid duplication, I should map all shareholders and decisions with consequences before starting a project. • This will help me build more comprehensive and inclusive, as well as more innovative projects by avoiding overlaps and including all shareholders	• Attend Ignite Program (Done) • Read and learn theory of systems thinking by the end of fall • Take organizational module of the ILI this fall

Innovation	- Learning more about continuous assessment and improvement - Challenging status que to change the ways we do business - Learning new ways to fail safe for everyone	- Take an innovation & creativity course (TE Coded) - Work on product/process development for my research or a side project - Mentor students with design thinking	- Take TE598 (Creativity, Innovation and Vision) - Volunteer for a makeathon and help teams build products solving pain points of people	- Innovation is very essential to what I would like to achieve in the later phases of my life (startup) - This will help me find more focused and creative ways to solve problems - Moreover, this help me identify key problems of people and key value propositions of my product/service targeting these problems	- Take TE598 (Creativity, Innovation and Vision) this fall - Volunteer for at least one of BADM and Fablab supported make-a-thons and help teams develop a well needed product by the end of next year
Sustainability	- Creating projects fail-safe that would work without continuous effort - More efficient and long-term ways of thinking/creating	- Attending a sustainability / competency development seminar or workshop - Following sustainability related public discussion and learn what is happening	- Look for workshops in IL area - Register for sustainability and competency related news on my social media and news account	- To build long term, self-sustaining projects, I need to learn about the resources and best practices in the field. - Acquiring this competency will help me develop projects serving for the triple bottom line aim (social, environment and financial)	- Attending a sustainability / competency development seminar or workshop in next spring - Subscribe to sustainability news (Immediately)