

Introduction

As the head of Motivation 4 the Trenches, my work has always been closely tied to where I come from and the people I help. I learned how to become successful despite the challenges growing up and what a community can do for a kid in Washington, DC, living with a single mom and losing both parents young. I also learned how to get around Section 8 housing. These experiences have changed not only the mission of my business, but also how I set goals, lead, and talk to people. This self-assessment looks back on the past year and how far I've come, the problems I've had to deal with, and the path I'm dedicated to taking. The most important thing I learned is that I've become a much better leader, planner, and communicator. However, I also know that there are some important areas where I need more help and training to make the organization as effective as possible.

Recent successes, challenges, and highlights

My organization has grown a lot in the last year. One of the best things we've done is extend our community outreach programs, like our workshops for at-risk adolescents that help them set goals and plan for the future. These workshops mean a lot to me. One of our biggest triumphs is making a safe place for young people to see their future. I know what it's like to be a young kid trying to get off the streets with very little help.

We also did a great job planning our first annual Stop the Violence Field Day, which was a safe and fun way for families and kids to get together. I had to talk to people from different groups for the event, like volunteers, sponsors, partners, and families. This helped me get better at delegating and made my processes more clear.

One of the hardest things for me is still finding a balance between going to school at Old Dominion University and running a nonprofit. Sometimes the two worlds come together, and I have to use reflective practice to stay grounded. I have made progress in learning how to better plan my time.

What to do and what not to do in the future, as well as how to tell if you're doing well

One of my main goals for the future is to help our nonprofit stay open longer. I want to get better at getting money, writing more grants, and working with more groups that want the same things we do. We also want to get better at gathering and analyzing data so we can see how our outreach and workshop activities really change people's lives over time.

Some things that could get in the way are volunteers who aren't always available, not having enough money, and the emotional toll of helping teens who are going through a lot. When more people join the program, collaborations get stronger, and we have regular sources of funding that help us grow without putting too much stress on the team, we will know we have succeeded.

I also want to make mentorship pipelines more structured so that young people not just go to seminars but also keep in touch with us over time.

Career Goals for the Short and Long Term

In the short term, I want to finish my degree at Old Dominion University and keep growing Motivation 4 the Trenches. I want to improve my skills in communication, writing grants, and leading an organization, all of which are important for the long-term success of my nonprofit.

In the long run, I want the organization to grow beyond the DC and Hampton Roads areas and into other inner cities that are also plagued by violence, poverty, and a lack of opportunities. I want to put together a leadership team, educate new mentors, and eventually create a community center where all of our programs can be held in one spot.

In the past year, I've made clear progress toward these goals by taking classes that required a lot of communication, using my IDS ePortfolio to look at how companies talk about diversity and fairness, and learning more about how firms can convey their mission well.

Leadership Skills & Effectiveness W Others

Empathy, real-life experience, and the notion that young people need leaders who understand them and care about them are the foundations of my leadership approach. I have shown that I can be a leader by putting up events, delivering workshops, mentoring young people, and managing volunteers. I've also gotten better at talking to people, especially when I have to talk to parents, community partners, and donors.

This year, I've grown a lot by learning to sit aside and let other people take charge. Delegating has kept me from getting burned out and enabled other leaders in the company thrive.

Support Needed for More Success

To do better in my job, I need more help with running a nonprofit, especially with long-term planning and raising money. If I could get more help with grant writing and other administrative responsibilities, I would have more time to work on developing programs and getting people involved in the community. I also want to make the team structure better so that everyone knows what their job is and the work is spread out more equitably.

Recognizing the members of the team

I want to thank the mentors and volunteers that always show up for our youth. Their devotion, enthusiasm, and patience are what make our workshops happen. A lot of them do more than what is asked of them. They check in on kids outside of scheduled activities, help families when they can, and bring good energy into the room even on tough days. They are the heart of Motivation 4 the Trenches, and their dedication is what keeps us going.

What I'm Most Proud Of

The thing I'm most proud of is how our work helps youngsters who feel like no one sees them. That's when I know we're doing something right: when a young person tells me they feel heard, encouraged, or driven after a program. I am also glad that this group has become a mirror of my own life. It's hard to try and find purpose in pain, but it has helped me stay focused and true to myself and support others who might be facing the same if not worse situations than me.

Things I Need to Do Better

I need to keep becoming better at the following things to make my portfolio stronger and get ready for future leadership roles:

Getting money and writing grants, better skills for speaking and giving presentations, keeping an eye on data and judging programs, how teams are put together and how they hand out tasks.

Long-term planning that is strategic taking classes, obtaining advice from a mentor, and administering the organization are all ways I plan to improve these talents.

Conclusion

This self-assessment has taught me how much I've grown as a leader and how much more things I need to learn about to become a person overall. My experiences, from growing up in DC to now mentoring young people, have changed how I think about being a leader, talking to people, and making a difference in the community. As the CEO of Motivation 4 the Trenches, I'm proud of how far we've come, but I'm even more excited about what's to come. The things I'm learning now, both at school and at work, will help me make my organization stronger and more stable so that it can keep helping the young people who need it most. I promise to keep growing, learning, and giving back to the places that helped shape me.