like they are eating alone because they have work to do, when in reality they are just trying to not look lonely.

At breakfast and lunch it is more likely that they are trying to finish up the homework that is due very soon. Regardless of why these people are doing homework, they can always be joined. They will say "yes" if asked if that seat is open. They enjoy the friendly face sitting across from them. They might not be full of conversation, but they will talk some. It takes courage to approach someone that you have never seen before and ask if you can sit with him/her. Both people feel much better if they are sitting with someone, even if they do not know each other and do not have very much to say. Friendly faces are very nice at meal times. The cafeteria in college is a great place to meet people.

In high school, the cafeteria was the only place to go for that half an hour of the school day. The high school cafeteria was not a very lonely place. There was always someone that you knew and with whom you could sit. In college the cafeteria seems to be much more lonely. There are more people in and out. More of the people travel in packs and sit on the edge of their chairs not interested in reaching out to that lone person looking for a sitting spot. The best way to conquer the loneliness is to be brave and ask to sit with that lone person or that trio. And remember that when you are eating at that table with a mass of people, there is someone who is sitting alone. Sit back in your chair. It would not hurt to invite that lone person to sit with your mass of people. They would enjoy being a part, and you might find that that person has something great to add to your mass of people.

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THE DEFINITION OF LEADERSHIP
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"So you want to join us, then?"
"No. I want to lead you."
from Robin Hood, Prince of Thieves
Leadership sometimes seems an almost mythical quality; a leader is viewed as someone separate from the rest of the group, but often no one is quite sure exactly why that person is set apart. And while everyone probably has some idea of what constitutes a good leader, an exact definition is hard to come by. The traits and actions of one leader may vastly differ from those of another, yet both will still be considered leaders. Leadership is very much a personal issue, both for the leader and the followers. Even so, at the heart of leading well are a few characteristics that remain constant, and these can be found in the core of every leader. These essential traits of the leader are a vision, perseverance, and faith in others.

It may seem strange that some of the characteristics most often associated with leaders do not appear in this definition. For instance, many people would consider charisma an essential for leaders. After all, leaders are usually fairly likable people. When a leader meets someone new, that person leaves with the impression that the person he or she just met is really quite a nice person. This is probably a common quality for a very practical reason: it is difficult to lead people if no one likes you. Another personality trait often seen in good leaders is that of bravery. William Wallace perhaps says it best in *Braveheart* when he tells Robert the Bruce that, "People don't follow titles. They follow courage." Bravery can take several forms. It can be the courage to risk one's life, as it is in Wallace's life, but maybe even more importantly, it can be the willingness to stick one's neck out with an unpopular or new idea and stick to one's guns on issues even in the face of criticism. The flip side, of course, is that a good leader, though willing and able to do this, must also be open enough to the views of others that if he deems his views flawed in the face of new arguments or evidence, he will concede to reason and change them. This goes hand in hand with the ability to compromise, since only by seeing the merits in the views of others can one make compromises that are beneficial to both parties involved. A likable personality, bravery, and the ability to compromise—all traits common to and often necessary for leaders, but nonetheless ones that do not touch on the heart of leadership. One may lack any, all, or none of these characteristics and still be a great leader. Without one of the three essentials, though, leadership is impossible.

A vision is the first essential qualification for a leader. Everyone needs a goal for which to strive, and this is especially true of the leader. He must define a goal and truly believe it can be achieved before it is possible to motivate others to reach for the same goal. This vision may be something as generous as building a medical clinic in a poor section of town or as unscrupulous as acquiring a beautiful wilderness area to strip mine it. It may be as simple as writing a book or as ambitious as landing a
Vision and conviction are all well and good, but any dreamer can have a vision and believe that it will happen. What distinguishes the leader from the dreamer is the dedication to reaching the goals necessary to attaining the vision. Finishing a difficult task requires a will steady enough to stick with the goal even at those times when it seems impossible. A leader’s will must be stronger than that of the average person, stronger even than that of an average person with a vision, for the leader needs to use his or her will to instill in others the desire to persevere when a task seems impossible. A leader understands that visions do not simply come true if we wish hard enough; their fulfillment requires a dedication few possess. So perseverance is a must for the leader.

So far the two traits of leadership discussed have both been somewhat solitary—it only takes one person to have a vision and the will to persevere through difficulty in pursuit of that vision. But a leader is nothing without others, and this forms the basis for the third essential quality, faith in others. One person can only do so much—if the leader’s vision is at all difficult to attain, he cannot accomplish it alone. Yet needing the help of others and being able to lead them well are two very different things. Without faith in the abilities of others the leader will force himself to take on more direct responsibility than one person should, and at the same time spend vast amounts of time trying to ensure that everyone else is doing his job correctly. Whereas, the leader with faith in his followers will take on only as much work as he is capable of doing and will trust the other members of the group to work on their own and accomplish their tasks without constant supervision. An additional benefit of this method of leading is that followers who feel their leader trusts them will like their jobs more and thus work better. Faith in others and the ability to trust, then, is the third and final essential of leadership.

A vision, perseverance, and faith in others—the essence of leadership. When re-evaluating my definition of leadership, I kept the two traits I originally used in the description but added a third, namely faith in others. After some consideration, I decided that the first two traits alone did not constitute a leader, as they did not require followers. Since any true leader must have followers, some type of relational characteristic would have to be considered. For some help, I looked at the five characteristics of leaders listed in James M. Kouze’s and Barry Z. Posner’s The Leadership Challenge: challenging the process, inspiring the shared
vision, enabling others to act, modeling the way, and encouraging to heart (9). The first of these I do not consider essential to a leader; he must be willing to change if necessary, but does not need to set out to “challenge the process.” The second and fourth guidelines are encompassed in the first two parts of my leadership definition: having a vision and having perseverance. This left the third and fifth parts of Kouze’s and Posner’s definition: the parts about relating to others. Although it would have been easy enough to include both in my revised definition, the two seemed too similar to not have something in common. After thinking about it awhile, I decided that having faith in others nicely covered the entire area of working well with followers. A leader with faith in his constituents will obviously enable them to act, and the very fact that their boss has faith in them and trusts them will encourage the followers. Thus my revised definition to me encompasses the necessary traits of a leader.

Having so determined my own definition of leadership, I examined how it applied to my own life. As soon as I began to do so, the third characteristic, faith in others, jumped out at me. While I have a definite vision for what I would like to accomplish over the next five years or so, and while I know I have the dedication necessary to make my dreams a reality, my ability to trust in others to help me with these dreams is sorely lacking. Throughout the leadership seminar, this is the area I have most noticed as a weak point in my leadership style, whether it be called “having faith in others” or enabling others to act. Over the course of the seven-week class, I have made a conscious effort to improve myself in this area, most notably on the debate team. Yet it is still difficult for me to completely put my faith in others, as I realized when our time to debate approached and I found myself checking up on everyone else almost every single day. They were all doing what they were supposed to be doing; I just could not bring myself to completely trust them. Granted, letting others take charge of parts of the overall project was a step forward from my usual method of doing everything myself or under my direct supervision, but even still it revealed a major flaw in my leading.

In an effort to fix this problem, then, I have outlined and begun to execute steps toward forcing myself to trust others more through work on my movie. First, the group writing the soundtrack has been given complete freedom in their writing; I simply gave them the script, told them some of my ideas, and then let them have full creative freedom for the music. Second, a co-producer will be added this summer so that not only will I not have full authority over the entire project, but I will be forced to trust another to make the right decisions, as I will not have control over this person. While this was a difficult decision for me to reach, as it meant I would no longer wield complete control over the movie, I ultimately determined it was necessary to allow another a critical role in
the running of the project because I saw myself attempting to do too much
and once again neglecting the importance of the group in completing a
large task. Finally, I have found another person to storyboard the movie,
and have told him he can do it however he sees fit, subject to my approval
of the final board. Although these may seem like small steps, and perhaps
they are, these three actions are large leaps forward for me. With luck,
through them I can and will move closer toward my vision of an ideal
leader and finally overcome my lack of faith to be the best leader I can be.

CULTURE SHOCK
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"Culture is the complex whole that includes knowledge, belief, art,
morals, customs, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by a
person as a member of a society. It is the total way of life of any society." Shock can be defined as a "violent impact or collision." Culture shock can be defined as "an impact, a state of distress or disorientation brought on by a sudden subjection to an unfamiliar culture." It is a feeling or a kind of panic that develops in people who are living in a different place or society where they are not familiar with what is happening around them.

Culture shock is the feeling of insecurity and fear that develops when someone is living outside his or her own environment. Sometimes it is very hard to adapt to being in a different society, with different customs, beliefs and ways of life. However, culture shock is not just a feeling of loneliness and panic that occurs in people living in an unfamiliar society; it can happen to people living within their own society. There are many different types of culture shock. For example, a rural person moving into an urban setting faces or experiences culture shock in much the same way as a person from the United States may experience it moving to Mexico. Almost everyone has experienced the feeling of being in a strange environment with different people. I have experienced culture shock many times in my life.

I remember the first time that I came to the United States by myself. At the beginning I thought that my life would be the same and