

Volunteering at LFC truly boosted my self-confidence, both through cooperation with other volunteers and through an acquired familiarity with computers. Talking to customers and trying to help rectify their problems, or collaborating with other people to refurbish a computer for someone else to enjoy really went a long way to hone my interpersonal skills. Additionally, it was very rewarding to gradually gain knowledge about and improve an ability, especially one as useful and widely applicable as technical skill. To know that you are capable of coming into a new situation as a complete beginner but developing into an adept is extremely fulfilling, and teaches you that you can learn and grow in any subject. In fact, the knowledge I gained at LFC has enabled me to build my own computer, which is something that I never would have even attempted otherwise.

When I first came started volunteering at LFC, I was very nervous and unsure of how to best help. I was especially concerned that I would fail to perform a task adequately or otherwise botch the job. I was so overwhelmed by the dauntingly vast manifold of responsibilities and roles I assumed I was supposed to fulfill that I eventually had to ask Christian to guide me through the process of working at a place like this. He graciously helped me to redefine what I mistakenly burdened myself with, telling me that all I needed to do was to be patient and kind. From that revelatory moment onward, I embraced this advice and simply laid out what I knew about a problem to whomever I was helping while trying my best to be kind and receptive to any further questions he or she might have. At the beginning, I had an unrealistic expectation of myself. Rather than strive to skillfully and perfectly answer every single question anyone ever asked me, or fix every single problem presented to me, it occurred to me that it was infinitely more important that I try to empathize with the customer and put him or her at ease. Humbleness turned out to be much more useful to me than the greatest degree of professionalism or workplace expertise.

In the broader context of my life after volunteering at LFC, following Christian's advice has done nothing but help me. I try to be sensitive and compassionate about other people's everyday problems, and just offer advice coming from my own experiences and knowledge, without worrying

about its absolute correctness. At LFC I learned that the technical problem in question will eventually become resolved, but what is more important in the long run than a flawless solution is working alongside people to provide moral support. In general, I try to exercise patience and kindness in all of my everyday interactions. Christian's advice was simple and unpretentious, but by incorporating it into my life, I am able to experience everything from a calmer and more collected perspective.

Thank you LFC,

*James*