After reading How to Win Friends and Influence People in the Digital Age, by Dale Carnegie, I have been able to take multiple facets of the book and reflect back on past experiences and begin to apply them to my academic and professional career now. To a degree, I believe most decent business students have a fundamental understanding of the lessons Carnegie talks about in his book, but he does a wonderful job of explaining the importance of those lessons. Although I took several lessons away from the book as a whole, one lesson in particular convicted and stuck with me more than any others.

Carnegie’s point that stuck out to me was “Surrendering the Credit.” As he recalled the story of one of his training students who believed all of the success of a project he was doing was attributed to him, I realized I was in a very similar position over the summer. Over the past two summers, two friends and I have started, grown, and run a small snow cone operation on Lake Austin. The experience as a whole has been terrific, but I have been able to relate to Carnegie’s training student in a very comparable manner. Throughout the initial growth phase of the company, such as establishing the LLC and fundraising on Kickstarter, I felt like I didn’t need my partners. I was confident that all that the business was should be accredited to me. That thought resonated into the daily business process, pushing me to become passive aggressive and like Carnegie’s student, to adopt a mindset that I always had to be right no matter what my partners and I argued over. As I read this section of Carnegie’s book, I realized I had been wrong the entire time. Although I may have been able to start the company myself, I had grown and run the entire business with the wrong mentality. As it says in the book, “…claiming the credit will never win you friends. It will also diminish your influence quicker than just about any action.” (Pg. 142) Instead of claiming the credit, I should have been surrendering and sharing the credit with my other business partners. Moving forward in my professional career, I better understand now that as a leader, the main focus must be on the people you are leading rather than yourself. Surrendering credit to others will get you miles further than taking credit for yourself. This book as a whole has presented many ideas worth following and taught me lessons that will help me reach success and avoid destruction in the future.