(1/2 page limit) State something you appreciated most about our Thompson Island experience, and reflect on what you learned about your own leadership characteristics.

My favorite part of the Thompson Island experience was getting to know everyone on a more personal level. I have always believed that you work much better with people that you enjoy being around and have had a good time with. The opportunity to socialize with my class at the BBQ and afterward was very welcome. I was able to learn a lot more about what really makes people tic. Although I will say that the bonding was probably made stronger by all of our activities during the day, which essentially gave us something to laugh at. We were able to look back at the climbing activity or the tree activity and laugh about something funny that someone did or said.

I think that getting everyone used to hanging out with each other in an informal setting is vital to creating a fully functional team or organization. I do often sometimes wonder why this is the case… My best guess so far is that people love to have fun and would much rather work with someone that they can have fun with. This is amplified by the fact that I believe that you can have fun with just about anyone; it just depends on what subject matter. And by socializing, you determine how you can relate to another person.

II. (1-2 page limit) Watch a movie/documentary about someone you deem a great leader. I have assembled a TPP Leadership DVD collection (please see the list below, kept in Ed’s office). You can pick from this list, or you are free to choose any film you think appropriate to complete the assignment. Please provide the full reference for any film you choose. You are encouraged to view the film with peers in ESD.801, but everyone must hand in their own assignment. A group of more than 5-6 students will diminish your individual learning experience.

Answer the following questions in a written, illustrated, graphic and narrated report.
1. Discuss a few qualities of leadership that were displayed in the film and by whom?
2. Select a specific scene(s) where Vision, Relating, Inventing, or Sensemaking were demonstrated by the character(s) in the film and explain the action/scene.

“Mellish: I’m just saying, this seems like an unnecessary risk considering our objective, sir.
Captain Miller: Our objective is to win the war. “ - Saving Private Ryan™

The film Saving Private Ryan has many instances of leadership displayed throughout the film, mostly from Captain Miller (Tom Hanks), but also a few from the other men in his unit. The film starts off with a strong display of leadership by the captain, as he leads his men up on a charge through Omaha beach. He manages to keep them going despite the fact that there are bullets raining down on them and their comrades are being killed right and left. He does this by keeping calm and by keeping focused on the mission, and staying positive. He never once allows his men to slip into the realization of how bad the situation actually is. This starts when he quickly continues to issue orders to his men while they are getting shot at, and giving a clear vision of how they are going to move up the beach. His men listen to him without question because he maintains his calm. He follows through with this vision with some incredible sensemaking as he quickly analyzed the situation and makes informed decisions that eventually lead his troops to take the german bunker.
Another instance of leadership, specifically inventing was when he uses the bayonet and gum to make a makeshift mirror to be able to see the German gun-station. This is a clear (almost obvious) example of invention, but one that probably saved the lives of several of his men.

The Captain later on shows incredible understanding of his men as he tries to prevent one of them from deserting the unit. The scene comes at a time when the unit had just lost a couple members through several disheartening firefights and tensions were running high. They culminated in a standoff between the First Seargent and a man who was prepared to leave the unit because he had had enough of war. Up until this point, the Captain had not told his men what he did before the war in order to maintain a sense of separation. He chose this point to let his men know that he was a teacher and that he had a family and had fears and that he wanted to get back to the war. He was brilliant in relating to his troops both in withholding the information in the beginning and in finally picking a good moment to reveal it. He maintained the respect of his troops while still keeping the necessary level of distance/professionalism in the relationship.

III. (<1/2 page) Write a ‘Leading Question’. Following examples from Thompson Island (Saturday morning activity and WF360 (www.wf360.com)).

If you were dumb (couldn’t speak) do you think you could be an effective leader?

IV. (<1/2 page) Observe Leadership in Action Locally on the MIT campus, in Cambridge, or Boston and write a short description of the Act and describe the leadership qualities you witnessed (i.e., compassion, listening, integrity, perseverance, motivation, courage, selflessness, etc.)

I watched a young man rile up a group of Venture Capitalists and ‘Big Shots’ at an entrepreneurship convention to care about encouraging college students to become entrepreneurs. This was important because it is something that they did not seem to care about at the beginning of the group meeting, and at the end, everyone was clapping and all excited. Some of the traits he used were empathy, listening, perseverance and a heavy dose of motivation. He displayed empathy by the fact that he understood their point of view, listening in that he paid attention to most of their concerns and legitimately addressed them. He also kept his cool and continued to fight on after many of the ‘senior’ people were shooting down his ideas. Finally, he had some indescribable quality to motivate all of these people, this is something that I couldn’t quite put my finger on how he did.