

**Describe a moment of failure and how you matured from it (250 words)**

My sophomore year of high school, I got caught cheating on a Spanish test. This was a pivotal moment in my academic career, as it taught me the power of accountability. My mother, who was filling in for the front desk lady, immediately marched me down to the Dean's office to confess my crime. As I explained what happened between sobs, I was shocked at the kindness and empathy my Dean showed me. Ultimately, I was not expelled, and was even given the chance to retake the exam. I am certain that I would not have been given that opportunity had I not been forced to speak with the Dean. That push from my mom, while absolutely terrifying, is what I needed to unlock a new aspect of maturity. While I have never cheated on an exam since, I have taken the practice of accountability into my everyday life. The ability to admit that you 1) did something wrong and 2) need help or guidance correcting that mistake is one that has helped me not only improve myself and my work but also create deeper relationships with my peers. Accountability makes you more human and creates psychological safety for others in the room. I have found that being the first to admit when I did something wrong has fostered an environment of openness and collaboration in all aspects of my life professionally or otherwise. I know I would not be as honest of a person as I am had I not cheated on that test. Ironic, right?