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## Leadership Case Studies

### Case Study #1

Taylor Crabtree, Age 16  
Founder, TayBear Company  
The Bear Necessities of Leadership

#### Introduction

Student. Philanthropist. Athlete. Entrepreneur. Leader. There are a million and one ways to describe sixteen year old Taylor Crabtree of Vista, California. At the age of seven, Taylor Crabtree started TayBear Company. Taylor had seen the effect of cancer on her grandmother and thought about the toll it was taking on kids her age. She began decorating and selling hair clips to raise money for teddy bears to give to these courageous children. Since then, she has sent teddy bears to over 20,000 kids hospitalized with cancer.

#### The Beginning

In October 1997, Taylor and her mom were making hair clips for her to wear to gymnastics. The hairclips were so beautiful that Taylor decided to sell the hairclips she made, and then use the money earned for a worthwhile cause. She would buy teddy bears for sick children fighting cancer. "I saw that there was a problem, and I saw that children with cancer were in hospital beds, and I couldn't imagine being like that, and I thought that they needed something to keep them occupied, to keep them happier," she says. What started as a small project has turned into a social enterprise. Taylor now has 1,600 volunteers helping her, and has shipped out thousands upon thousands of TayBears. This is only the beginning.

#### Setting Goals

Taylor understands the importance of thinking big and setting goals. She says: "My first goal for TayBear is to give teddy bears to children with cancer and chronic blood diseases all over the United States. The second goal for TayBear is to have lots of kids become part of my project of helping other kids." She hoped to buy 50 teddy bears when she started at 7 years old. She has far surpassed her original goal. With the help of her dedicated volunteers, Taylor has given away more than 20,000 TayBear teddy bears to Pediatric Hematology/Oncology Hospitals all over the United States.

#### Challenges

In running her business, Taylor has faced challenges along the way. When the factory that made her bears shut down, she needed to find an alternative. By taking initiative, Taylor was able to negotiate a deal with Build-A-Bear Workshop, which now partners with TayBear Company.

#### Defining Moments

Taylor often receives letters from the many people she has impacted. One of the most touching letters came from the father of Ryan, a 13-year-old cancer patient from Chicago. "I just want to let you know that at least one boy was made happy by the work you do," the letter said. Taylor visited Ryan as his condition worsened, and gave him a bear named Duffy. Ryan died just two weeks later, and was buried with