

C EXPECTATION VS REALITY: FOR CAPTAINS

There will be times in your life when the kindest, most generous thing you can do for someone is to share hard truths with them. If your friend or teammate's behavior is off, or they're putting themselves in a bad situation, speak up! But, do so from a place of love and understanding, rather than from a desire for personal gain.

You will observe things about your friends that the adults in their lives might not notice. When you care about someone, you pay attention to what they do and say. For example, if your friend is making self-deprecating comments or seems less confident than usual, let them know that you've noticed the behavior and you want to help. To do that, you need to understand what's going on, which means having a possibly uncomfortable conversation.

And make sure your conversation happens in person, not over text. The words you or your teammate use are only a small portion of the conversation as a whole. There's also body language, voice intonation, and facial expressions. You gain so much more information and the other person will experience a much better result if you are face-to-face while talking.

Sensitive subjects aren't fun to talk about, but it is often necessary. Here are a few communication tips:

- Make sure you're in a good environment for the conversation. Somewhere quiet and private.
- Be straightforward about what you noticed, and ask them to clarify if what you've seen is accurate to their experience.
- Pay attention to your body language. Face the other person, make eye contact (if they're comfortable with that), and respect their personal space.
- Listen. Don't think about what you want to say or what you're feeling right now. Focus on them and the words and physical cues they are giving you.

/// CAPTAINS' LOG ///**"LEADERS ALWAYS LEAD"**

Do you consider yourself a good listener? How about a good communicator? Why or why not?

Listening is a big part of communication, but it's not the only part. What else is important for good communication with other people?

There are ways to practice for uncomfortable conversations, such as getting used to telling someone there's something stuck in their teeth without feeling embarrassed for them. List 3 ways you can practice for difficult or uncomfortable conversations.

Think about a difficult conversation you had with a friend, teammate, or adult. Write down a few things you could have done to communicate more effectively.

Who do you turn to when you need to talk? What about that person makes them easy to talk to?