

C FAIL FORWARD: FOR CAPTAINS

We all fail sometimes. The important part is not whether you fail, but whether you accept and learn from that failure. Mistakes happen. At some point in your life, you're going to say the wrong thing to the wrong person or do the wrong thing at the wrong time. And that's okay as long as you take that experience, own it, and learn from it.

As a leader, you need to be humble enough to accept your mistakes and learn from them. You aren't always going to get it right. What's more important than being right is owning up to the times when you miss the mark.

You make sacrifices for your teammates because you care about them, and you want to lead them to be their best selves. You want to see them succeed and help them learn as you all work towards a greater goal. Your teammates are worth any cost to you because you care.

Part of caring about your teammates is admitting your mistakes to them. You might worry that they won't trust you anymore or will be disillusioned about your leadership skills if you admit to a mistake. But if you can be brave enough and vulnerable enough to accept your failures openly, you'll find that the opposite is actually true. The more you open up and admit your own failings, the more likely your teammates are to trust you.

The greatest leaders are authentic and willing to be vulnerable. Those traits make you more human, and demonstrating them to your teammates when you've made a potentially embarrassing mistake makes you more relatable and, simultaneously, more worthy of your leadership role.

Failure is not a person; it is an event. Just because you fail, that doesn't make you a failure. If you accept and learn from your failure in front of the people you lead, it can be turned into a success.

/// CAPTAINS' LOG ///

"LEADERS ALWAYS LEAD"

Do you think you're good at accepting and learning from failure? Give specific examples to support your answer.

What makes failure a potentially scary concept? What about it scares you?

Why is it particularly important for a leader to own up to his or her mistakes?

Think about a recent failure. What did you learn from it? How can that help you in the future?

Who would you trust more: a leader who lies about their failures or a leader who is open about failure? Why?