

INSTRUCTIONS & EXPECTATIONS

Strong leadership isn't about doing everything alone—it's about setting clear expectations and guiding a group toward success. When communication is clear, everyone knows their role, works efficiently, and collaborates with confidence. But when instructions are vague or leadership is absent, confusion takes over, leading to frustration and wasted effort. Through this activity, you'll see firsthand how clear leadership and communication shape team success.



Conversation Starter: Imagine you're giving directions to a friend who has never been to your house before. How would you explain it clearly so they don't get lost?

SHAPE SHIFT: A GROUP CHALLENGE

Instructions: This activity has three rounds, each following the same basic steps:

- Have the group stand in a circle and hold onto a large looped rope with both hands. They may slide their hands along it but cannot let go.
- Everyone closes their eyes or wears a blindfold.
- Call out a shape for the group to form using the rope—without looking. They can talk to each other to figure it out.
- Once they believe they've made the shape, they open their eyes and check.

KEY OBJECTIVES

- Understand the importance of clear communication and leadership in teamwork.
- Identify the challenges of working without clear direction and leadership.

FACILITATION TIPS

Communication isn't just about talking—it's about making sure your message is understood. Good leaders ensure clarity by asking, 'Does everyone understand?'

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- Large looped rope (circle - long enough for all participants to hold with 3+ feet in between)
- Optional: Blindfolds for each person
- Shape Challenge Cards (See Appendix)

Game Rounds:

Round 1: Simple Shapes (Triangle & Square) – No leader is assigned; participants must collaborate to form the shape.

Round 2: Trickier Shape (Crescent) – Secretly designate 1-2 people to open their eyes but they cannot tell anyone. Do Not give them any further instruction (no expectations). See if they take the opportunity to lead out.

Round 3: Complex Shape (Five-Pointed Star) – Again, discreetly select 1-2 different people. This time, instruct them to open their eyes and set the expectation that they actively lead the group, clearly guiding them in forming the correct shape.



REFLECTION

- When forming your shape, what helped you decide who to listen to?
- When there was no assigned leader, what challenges did the group face? How did you overcome them?
- How did having a leader with expectations and the ability to give clear instructions, impact your team's success?

APPLICATION

- How does clear communication help a group work more efficiently?
- How can we ensure everyone has the same expectations when planning a service project?
- Dive Deeper: What's more important in leadership—having a great plan or being able to clearly explain that plan to others? Why?

KEY TAKEAWAY: Great leaders don't just give orders—they create structure, provide direction, and empower others to succeed. When communication is clear and leadership is strong, groups work together with purpose, turning challenges into opportunities for success.

CHECK UNDERSTANDING

-Did participants experience how leadership structure affects teamwork? Did the discussion questions help them connect leadership and communication to real-world service projects?

