

A photograph of two climbers on a snowy mountain peak. One climber is in the foreground, wearing a red jacket and a blue and white striped beanie, facing away from the camera. The other climber is slightly behind and to the right, wearing a yellow jacket and a yellow and orange striped beanie, also facing away. In the foreground, a red tent is pitched on a rocky slope. The background shows a vast, snow-covered mountain range under a clear blue sky.

Welcome

2025 USA Mentor Training

Summit, Denver



We ARRE Mentors



- ARRE:
 - Appreciate
 - Respect
 - Responsibility
 - Excellence

Mission & Vision

- USA Swimming Mission & Vision
- Core Objectives
- Cultural Values
- Operating Principles





Vision Statement

To inspire and enable our members to achieve excellence in the sport of swimming and in life.

Mission Statement

USA Swimming is the National Governing Body for the sport of swimming. We administer competitive swimming in accordance with the Olympic & Amateur Sports Act. We provide programs and services for our members, supporters, affiliates and the interested public. We value these members of the swimming community, and the staff and volunteers who serve them. We are committed to excellence and the improvement of our sport. We are committed to providing a safe and positive environment for all members.

Core Objectives

- *BUILD the Base*
- *PROMOTE the Sport*
- *ACHIEVE Sustained
Competitive Success*

Cultural Values & Operating Principles

- **Leadership & Excellence**
- **Act in the best interests of the sport and our members.**
- **Service-oriented**
- **Plan, yet act intuitively**
- **Allocate our time and resources**
- **Hold ourselves and each other accountable with professionalism; respect.**
- **Positive “can do” attitude.**
- **Safe environments**
- **Diversity and Inclusion.**
- **Strive to learn and improve, with willingness to change.**



Every Meet, Every Deck, is Unique

- We are all volunteers
- Everyone wishes to perform well
- Everyone brings a special skill set to the deck
- People learn and communicate in differ manners
- Mentors want to ensure our mentee is successful at the next step
- Personality Test

Vision for Customer Care



- As an evaluator/mentor
 - Who do we serve
 - Think of "The Why"
 - Identify who are our customers

Evaluate the Evaluator

- Accountability
- Forum for honest feedback
- Expect the good with the bad
- Encourage the use
- Confidential

Evaluate the Evaluator N3iDR

What did you learn about the N2/N3 certification process that you didn't know before?

- I was reminded how great of a process this is. Very, very well done. There were a couple of officials who were not successful and it was educational for me to see how the national evaluators handled that situation

Overall, what would you say were the most beneficial aspects of the mentoring/evaluation process?

- The feedback, suggestions and openness of the evaluators. It is truly a collaborative environment on deck and their entire goal is to make the evaluatee better. I hate going thru the eval (nerves) but love the process and results. I am much better now than when I began.

Evaluate the Evaluator N3i Starter

Overall, what would you say were the most beneficial aspects of the mentoring/evaluation process?

- Receiving feedback interactively during the meet, and therefore being able to implement recommended changes in real time.

Were there any negative aspects of the mentoring/evaluation process that you would like to see addressed for the future?

- I can't think of any! Evaluations can be inherently stressful, and Susie did a great job of easing my nerves with a steady, authoritative and calming presence. Definitely one of the best evaluators I have worked with!

Is there anything else you would like to suggest for improving the mentoring/evaluation process and/or the National Certification program?

- Just to promote it to a greater degree among all officials, even those who have no aspirations to work higher level meets. It improves the overall standard of officiating at LSC meets as well.

Evaluate the Evaluator N3i DR

Were there any negative aspects of the mentoring/evaluation process that you would like to see addressed for the future?

- I wanted to have 3 things to work on in the future with ways to handle them--ie. calls/releasing athletes/seeking clarification and I did not have the opportunity to do this.

Evaluate the Evaluator N3 ST

Overall, what would you say were the most beneficial aspects of the mentoring/evaluation process?

- Knowing the expectations and working with great people

Evaluate the Evaluator N2 DR

Overall, what would you say were the most beneficial aspects of the mentoring/evaluation process?

- Not too much . Been around a long time.

Were there any negative aspects of the mentoring/evaluation process that you would like to see addressed for the future?

- The evaluator need to have a nice mentoring and not threatening attitude.

Is there anything else you would like to suggest for improving the mentoring/evaluation process and/or the National Certification program?

- I am submitting this because recently we have been hearing from officials what a negative experience . comments have been I don't want to ever be evaluated again and I might just stop officiate again.

Evaluate the Evaluator N2 Starter

Overall, what would you say were the most beneficial aspects of the mentoring/evaluation process?

- I think it's great to be able to talk through various scenarios that you either encounter during the meet/evaluation, or made up scenarios to ask how the mentor would handle them. John has such a vast knowledge base, and delivered information/guidance in a warm and inviting way versus coming off as a "know it all".

Evaluate the Evaluator N3i DR

Overall, what would you say were the most beneficial aspects of the mentoring/evaluation process?

- Josie took the time to talk about my future. And she asked me what I planned to do with my N3 certifications. The evaluation process has always been for me about being mentored so I could be better. I had never really considered working many National Decks. They both strongly encouraged me to continue to apply for higher level meets. Josie offered to help me with my journey if that is what I wanted. It was very inspirational and really made me think about the opportunities that I didn't think were there for me.

Evaluate the Evaluator N2 DR

Were there any negative aspects of the mentoring/evaluation process that you would like to see addressed for the future?

- There were a lot of deck teams. It was very difficult to get enough time to really learn because you only got a few starts and then the next person was up. I apply for evaluations to be mentored and learn . I wasn't really given anything new just told that what I was doing was good. It's nice to hear that you are doing everything the right way especially during an N2 eval you want to walk away with something you didn't know before being evaluated.

Evaluate the Evaluator N3i AR

What did you discuss about your overall evaluation with your mentor and at what point during the meet did that discussion take place?

Joe and I met at the beginning of the last day. He suggested that I work with several different leads to learn lots of systems before I go for my N3 Final evaluation.

Evaluate the Evaluator N3i AR

What did you discuss about your overall evaluation with your mentor and at what point during the meet did that discussion take place?

- Rick was doing my evaluation however Edward was on the admin team. The two of them worked together throughout the meet since the whole admin team were getting evaluations. Rick would meet with us in the mornings and often at the end of the day. Edward would mentor and teach throughout the day. This was by far the best experience that I have had being evaluated. They both taught us many things about admin that you will see on a national deck that we had not yet experienced at LSC meets or even sectionals. I am very thankful for this experience. I walked away from this evaluation with a clear picture of the whole process.

Evaluate the Evaluator N2 DR

Is there anything else you would like to suggest for improving the mentoring/evaluation process and/or the National Certification program?

- Maybe consider less people per meet so each person gets more time being mentored. The mentoring process is as important if not more important than the "evaluation" process. In many small LSC's there aren't a lot of opportunities to learn once you are certified. I understand that the evaluation process is important for advancement to national decks but the teaching/mentoring portion of the evaluation is just as important.

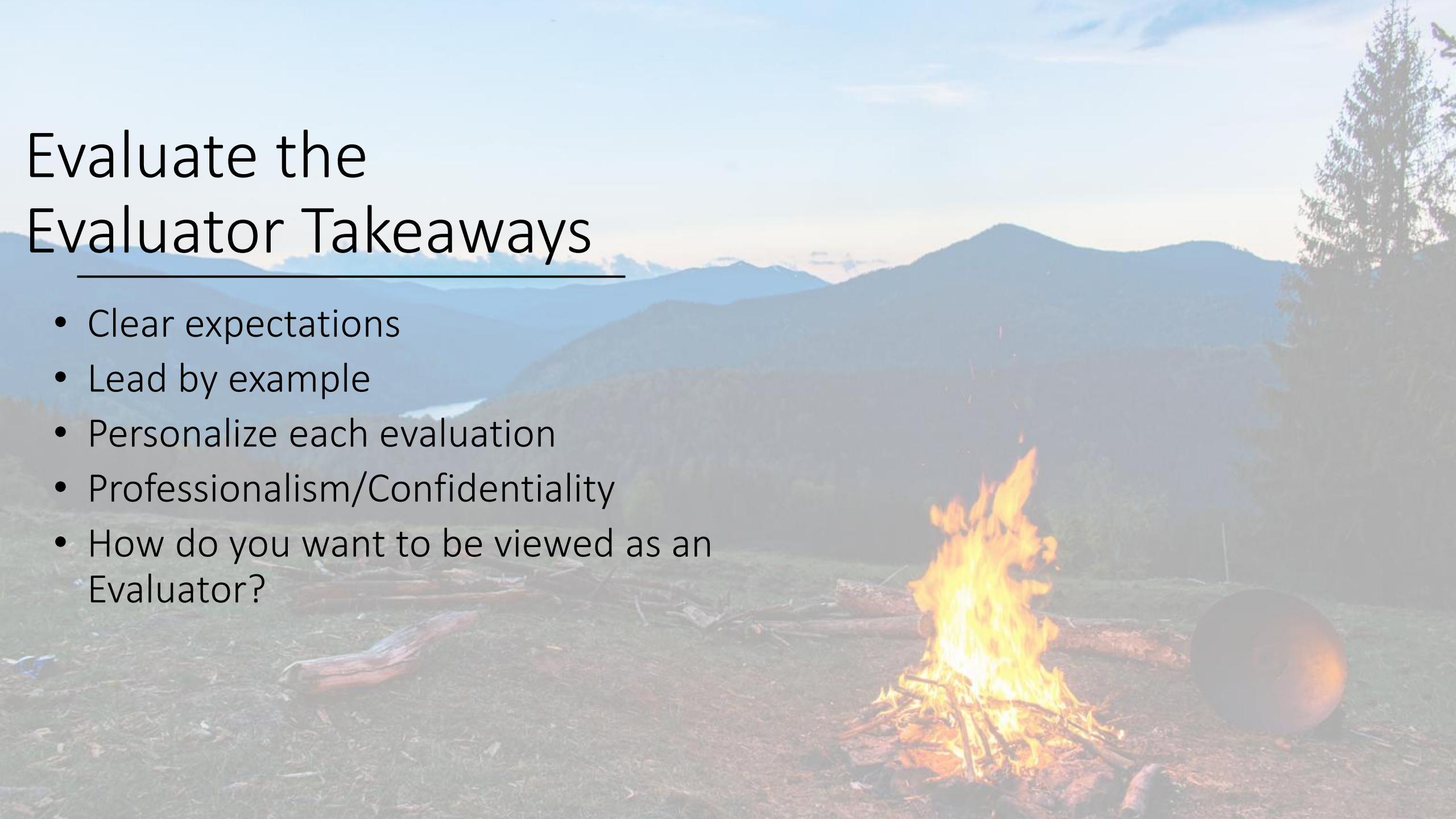
Evaluate the Evaluator N3 ST

Overall, what would you say were the most beneficial aspects of the mentoring/evaluation process?

- This was the first time that anyone took me aside and explained to me about National Decks and how to apply to work them. I had never considered working meets that my swimmers were entered in until this evaluation.

Evaluate the Evaluator Takeaways

- Clear expectations
- Lead by example
- Personalize each evaluation
- Professionalism/Confidentiality
- How do you want to be viewed as an Evaluator?



Thank you – Final Thoughts

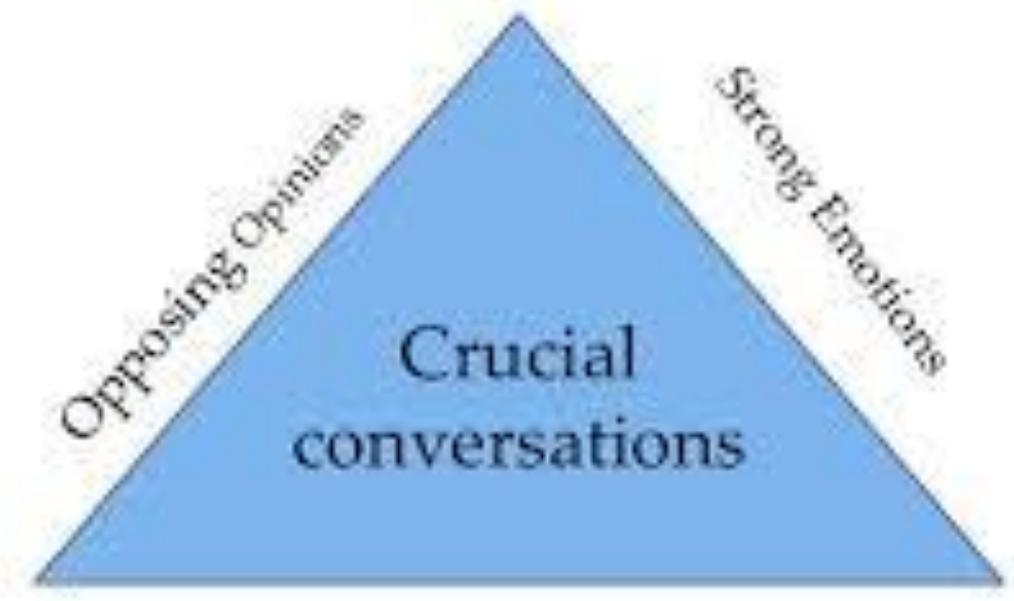
- "The function of leadership is to produce more leaders, not more followers." - Ralph Nader
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- To Do Today: "Help others grow and you'll surely grow yourself." - John C. Maxwell

Crucial Conversations



Crucial Conversation

- Opposing Opinions
- Strong Emotions
- High Stakes



Choices when faced with Crucial Conversation

- Avoid them
- Face them and handle poorly
- Face them and handle well



Barriers to Crucial Conversations

- Fear we will make matters worse
- Its what we've learned – Avoid uncomfortable tough conversations
- Change the subject
- Use tactics to dodge touchy issues



Avoid

- Rubberstamp
- Don't address the issues
- Leaves the mentee confused



Face & Handle Poorly

- Don't recognize warning signs
- Leaves mad and disgruntled



Face & Handle Well

- Start with heart
- Create Safety
- Pool of shared meaning
- Mutual Purpose
- Watch for signs of stress
- Understand your stories
- State your path to action
- Keep options open



Start with heart

- Remind yourself of why you are an evaluator
- Put your heart at peace
- What do I want for mentee
- What do I want for me
- What do I want for this relationship



Watch for Signs of Stress

- Anxiety
- Defensiveness/Angry Tone
- Words
- Physical signs
 - Arms crossed
- Acknowledge distress
- Stick to goal

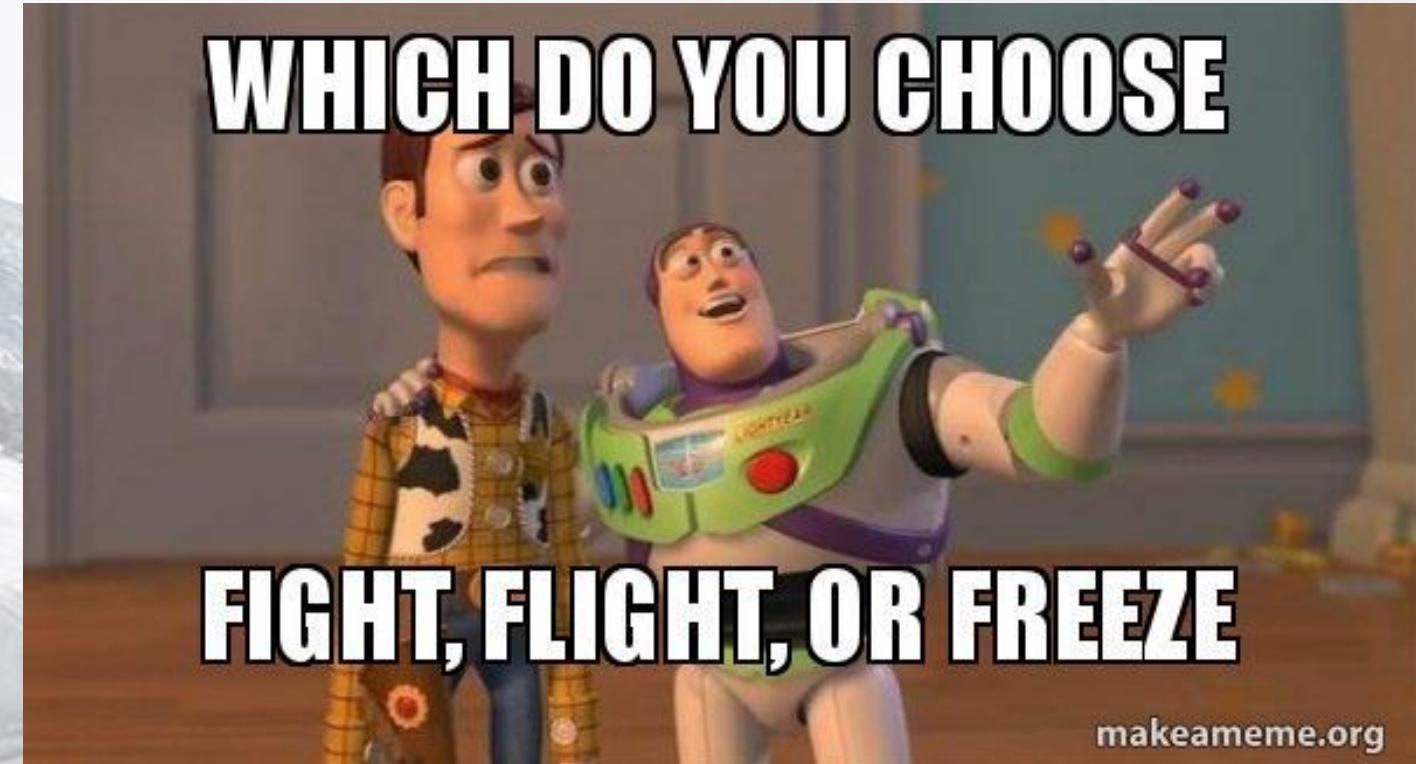


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Fight vs Flight

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JtSP7gJuRFE>

- What can I do to restore safety?
- They need to know that you care about them & their interests
- Show respect
- Check yourself
- We create the safe environment



Create Safety so problems can be solved

- Remember your goal
- Do not need to win
- Shared goals: both want a good official
- Safety allows them to relax and absorb
- Have a conversation



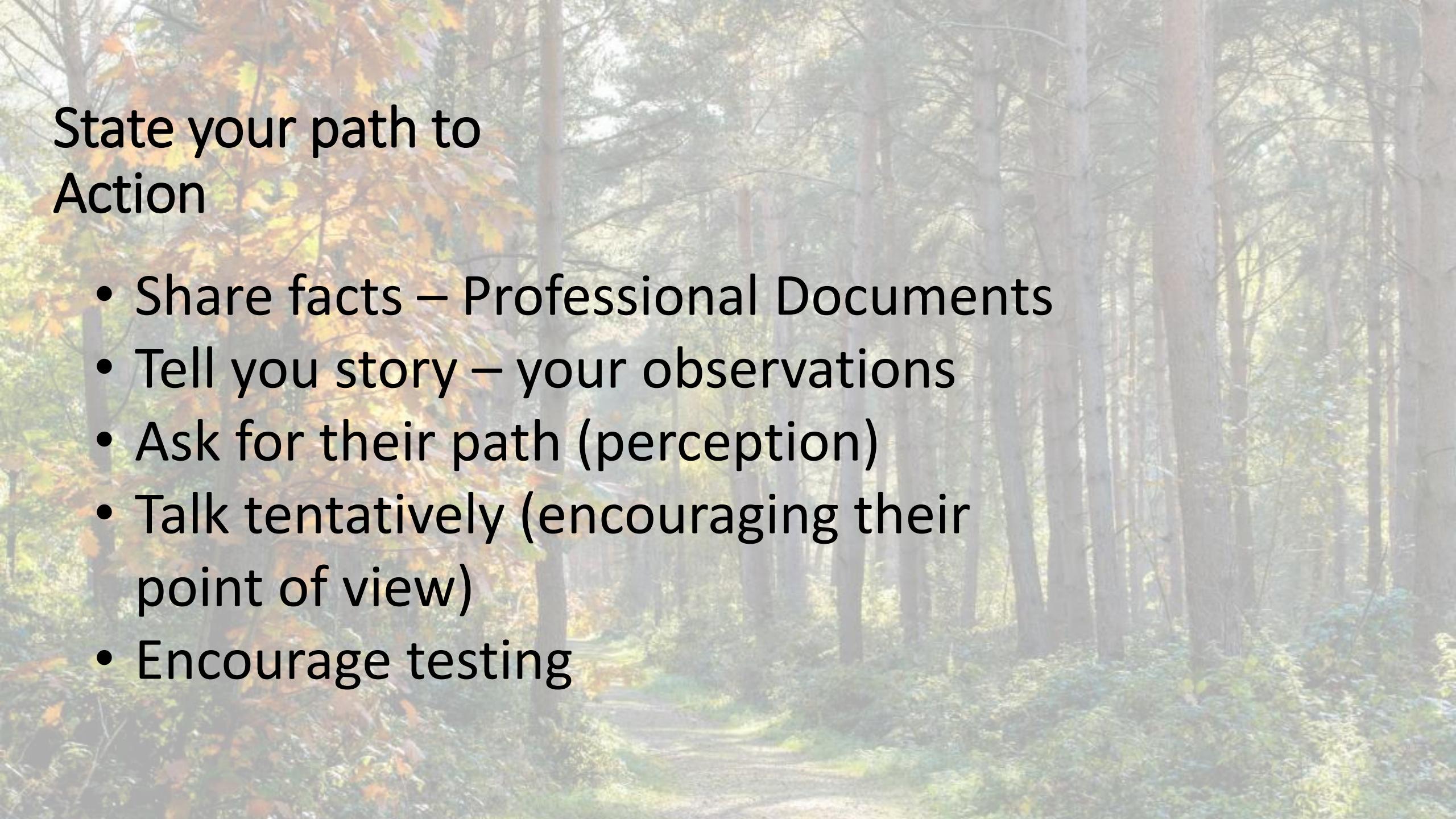
Mutual Purpose & Mutual Respect

- Commit to seek Mutual Purpose
- Recognize the purpose behind the strategy
- Invent a mutual purpose
- Brainstorm new ideas

Master your Stories

- Assumptions
- My role
- Replace defensiveness or assumptions with curiosity



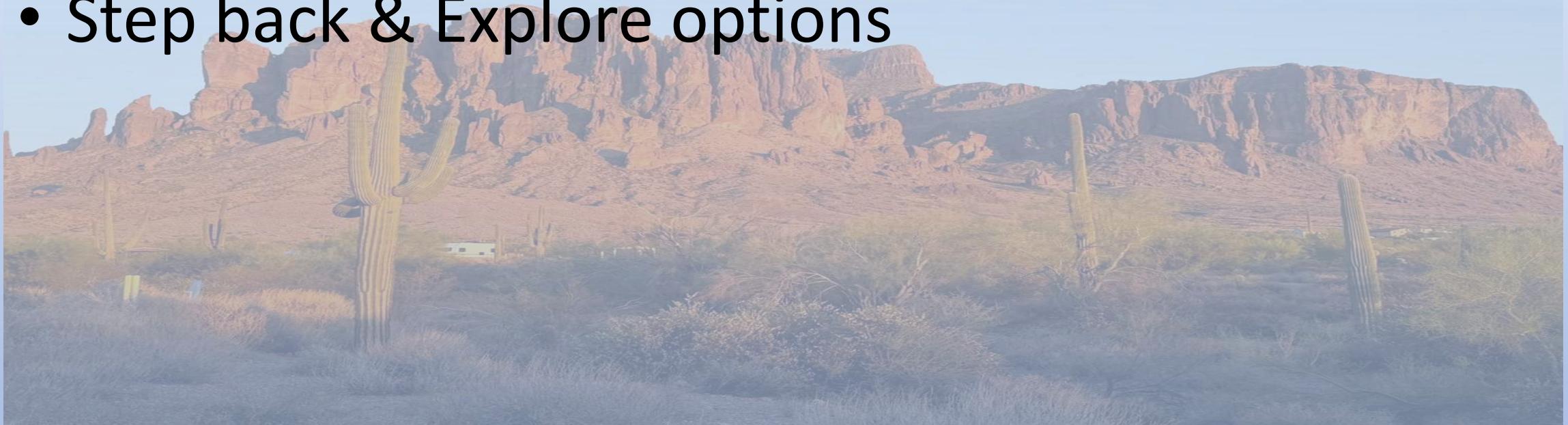


State your path to Action

- Share facts – Professional Documents
- Tell your story – your observations
- Ask for their path (perception)
- Talk tentatively (encouraging their point of view)
- Encourage testing

Keep Options Open

- Let go of Black & White thinking : “I have to give a Rubberstamp evaluation or be mean”
- Step back & Explore options

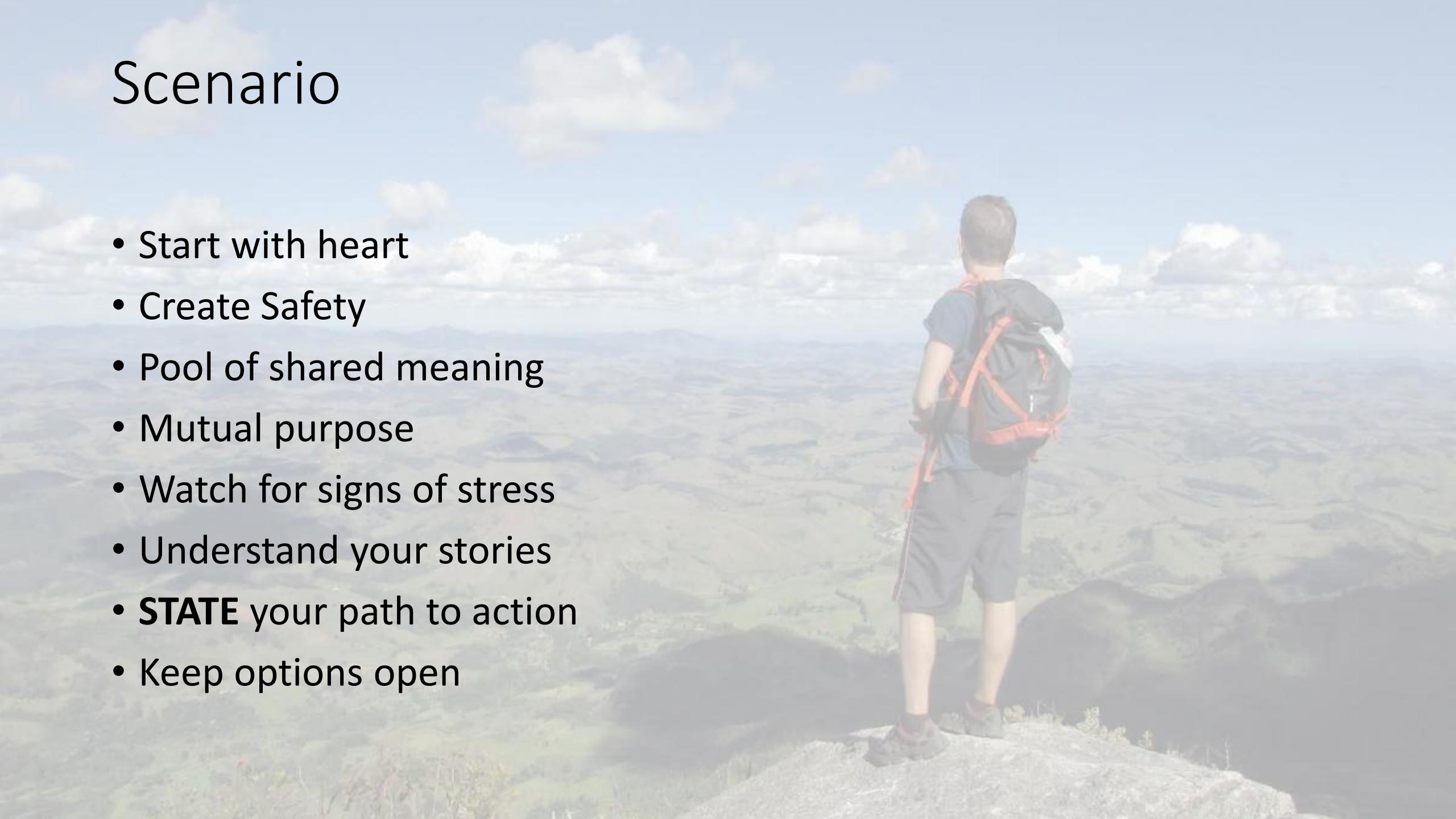


What Do you think

Once the meet and mentoring began, in what specific areas were you told you were performing well?	I wasn't. XXX provided very little if any positive feedback
5. What specific suggestions or tips were you provided to improve your performance or skills?	As is common in my LSC, we XXX told me not to do that anymore. That is not national deck protocol.
6. At what point during the meet did you have an opportunity to implement any of the tips during this meet? Example: beginning of your sessions in the position; middle of your assigned sessions; towards the end, etc. Please provide details.	Throughout my review, I did not receive feedback indicating that I should be doing anything different.
7. What did you discuss about your overall evaluation with your mentor and at what point during the meet did that discussion take place?	I tried several times on Sunday evening to get feedback. I was left feeling rather disheartened. I felt from the body language and tone, that while I may not have been doing anything incorrectly, I also did not think I was doing anything well.
9. Overall, what would you say were the most beneficial aspects of the mentoring/evaluation process?	For this evaluation, I did not take away any constructive observation or clear indication of what I should do differently. Because of the bewilderment I felt, I actually stopped the evaluation and did not return for a fourth session prompting XXX to write my evaluation as 'educational' rather than as an N3i
10. Were there any negative aspects of the mentoring/evaluation process that you would like to see addressed for the future?	Everyone at the meet, myself included, were excited to be mentored by this caliber official. By the time the meet was over, I can honestly say that myself and several other officials at the meet were left dumbfounded and confused by what took place. The reading my review, it sounded like I have never picked up a microphone prior to that meet. Truth be told, I nearly quit because I was left feeling as though I was doing a disservice to the swimmers. I was not a pleasant feeling.
11. Is there anything else you would like to suggest for improving the mentoring/evaluation process and/or the National Certification program?	This was my fourth National evaluation. Having previously completed N2 and N3 Stroke and Turn and N2 Starter. Each of those evaluations provide good feedback, both positive and negative and gave me construction, concrete things to work on or change. I knew exactly what to do differently. This evaluation was the complete opposite. After reading my review I was stumped. I let several other people read my review and every one of them said the same thing - "this doesn't say anything. There's nothing constructive. What are you supposed to do differently?"

Scenario

- Start with heart
- Create Safety
- Pool of shared meaning
- Mutual purpose
- Watch for signs of stress
- Understand your stories
- **STATE** your path to action
- Keep options open



Conclusion

- Start with heart
- Create Safety
- Pool of shared meaning
- Mutual Purpose
- Watch for signs of stress
- Understand your stories
- State your path to action
- Keep options open