

## Youth Leadership

# Tips for Communicating with Teachers

Talking to teachers can be scary for teens. What is the secret to being the student that teachers go out of their way to help? Good communication! A teacher was asked, “What can students do to communicate well with you?” Here is the response and some great communication tips.

- The most important thing is having a **positive attitude** and a **genuine desire to improve**. This makes it easier and more enjoyable for both you and your teacher—no one likes a grouch!
- **Be an active participant during class**. This means asking good questions, participating in discussions, and staying off electronics!
- **Frame questions in a non-accusatory tone**. Instead of asking a question like “Why did you take off points for that?” use something along the lines of “Can you explain what I need to improve for next time?”
- **Never confront or correct a teacher in front of other students**. Do so privately—before or after school. Try to avoid between classes when another class is coming in. A rushed atmosphere isn’t conducive to discussion.
- **Try to improve before there is an issue** and **write thank you notes to the teachers** who go above and beyond to help you out.
- **When in doubt, just be respectful**. Remember that teachers are human, too. They don’t know when you are going through a hard time, just like they sometimes go through rough patches themselves.
- **If something your teacher said or did bothered you, let them know** so that they can do what they can to fix it. Also tell them when you really liked a lesson, it gives them feedback and lets them know what works.

Adapted from the article *A Guide to Communicating Well with Your Teachers* by Madison Sheldrake, August 21, 2015.

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