



## Should I Say It?

### Overview

In this activity, students will gain an understanding of how to speak honestly, yet tactfully.

### Grades

6-12

### Activity Type

Small group  
Whole group

### Materials

"What Should You Do?", scenarios attached

### Duration

20 minutes

### Instructions

1. Group students together into small discussion teams of 3-4 students.
2. Tell students that they are going to examine different situations and determine whether it is appropriate to be completely open by saying exactly what is on their minds. Ask the teams to be prepared to share their thoughts with the class through a team representative that they must select.
3. Assign one of the following examples to each group (you can assign each example more than once or create additional scenarios directly addressing situations common in your school community):
  - Example 1: A friend has a new hairdo (or clothes, or something new about his or her appearance) and asks you what you think about it. You think it is unflattering.
  - Example 2: A good friend of yours is also your teammate on a sports team and really wants to make the first team with you, but you think he or she is not good enough. Should you say this to him or her?
  - Example 3: Karen tells you she has a crush on DeQuan and asks you not to tell anyone. Karen knows that you are good friends with Jason and asks you what she can do to get his attention. You know DeQuan is interested in someone else and thus you don't think Jason would be interested in Karen. Do you tell DeQuan about Karen's interest in him? Do you tell Karen about Jason's interest in Maria?
4. Allow students 5-10 minutes to discuss their scenario and agree on a single response, if they can.
5. Ask a team representative to share highlights from the group discussion.
  - Was there disagreement over how to respond?
6. After students share their thoughts and how they decided whether to be open about their thoughts and opinions or not, present students with each of following possibilities and then ask why they believe this might be a good idea or not. You can also pull in the processing questions listed below.
  - I say it just because it's true.
  - If I think it, I say it.
  - I try to avoid hurting the other person's feelings.
  - I say what I know will make the other person like me.
  - I say what will be helpful to the persons involved.

Further discuss:

- Is there more than one way to handle a situation?
- What are options you have when deciding how to respond?
- How do you decide which option to use?

7. Tell students that sometimes the solution isn't a choice between being completely honest and lying. There are ways to respond that are supportive and honest.
8. Share with students some possible responses that are tactfully honest:
  - Example 1: I liked your hair just the way you had it, but what do I know? Others may like it the way you have it now. The important thing is how you like it, right? No matter what you decide to do about your hair, I'm still going to think you're great!
  - Example 2: You've got what it takes to make the team. You may just need to spend some extra time learning some new skills that will get the coach's attention. If you like, I will be happy to work with you and share my ideas.
  - Example 3: (To Karen) Since I'm friends with both of you, I don't think it's a good idea for me to get into the middle. It puts me in a strange position. Why don't you just let Jason know that you're interested? If he's not interested in you, there are plenty of other guys who'd like to have your attention.
9. Close by explaining to students:

It is not always easy to be honest. And it is not always easy to know HOW to be honest and open. There are many factors to consider, including what actually happened, what you think and feel, and how the other people feel. Always seek to express yourself in a way that is helpful and supportive to all people involved.

## What Should You Do?

### Example 1:

A friend has a new hairdo (or clothes, or something new about his or her appearance) and asks you what you think about it. In truth, you think it is really unflattering. What should you say to him/her?

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### Example 2:

A good friend of yours is also your teammate on a sports team and really wants to make the first team with you, but you think he or she is not good enough. What should you say to him/her?

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### Example 3:

Karen tells you she has a crush on DeQuan and asks you not to tell anyone. Karen knows that you are good friends with DeQuan and asks you what she can do to get his attention. Since you already know Jason likes another girl, you don't think he would be interested in Maria. Do you tell DeQuan about Karen's interest in him? Do you tell Karen about DeQuan's interest in another girl? Explain how you would handle the situation.