

Expectations, Agreements, & Making Your Dreams Happen Through Communication

Expectation: something we want to happen or something we think will happen based on our individual beliefs about what's reasonable/probable.

Agreement: an expectation that is communicated to another party and that the other party explicitly promises to fulfill.

Expectation: "I thought you were going to call Tom to confirm the appointment! Why would you NOT do that?"

Agreement: "We're all set for the meeting next Tuesday. Can you send Tom a confirmation email 24-hours beforehand? Thanks!"

The problem with expectations is that most of us have different concepts of what's reasonable and probable.

If my concept of what's reasonable is the standard, you're going to fall short every single time.

If your concept of what's reasonable is the standard, I'm going to look like a bumbling idiot on my best day of the week.

When expectations clash, unnecessary disappointment ensues.

The solution: Transform your expectations into agreements.

Avoid making the assumption that other people are making the same assumptions as you.

If you know you're going to feel resentful because of an unmet expectation, translate your expectation into a request. Then proactively solicit the other party's agreement.

In order to be effective at this, you have to care more about creating the outcomes you want than about being on the winning side of an argument.

This isn't about the "right" way to communicate versus the "wrong" way to communicate. This is about experiencing the peace of mind that comes from taking ownership of the results that matter most to you.

If you care about your desires and dreams, why leave such a precious thing in the hands of someone else's ability to accurately predict what they need to do for you?

If you're thinking "I shouldn't have to make my expectations clear," I agree. You shouldn't have to.

The world would be a much easier place if we could all just count on each other to show up and deliver whenever needed without any prompting.

I'm just here to remind you that we don't live in that world. Unfortunately, we got dropped off in the other universe. The universe where good people forget things, overlook things, miscalculate things, underestimate things, and completely drop the ball on things. It happens.

If you want to improve your odds of success, don't just focus on what people should do. Focus on what they could do if they had better information.

It's not just the nice thing to do. It's the selfish thing to do. When you do that for them, you're really doing it for you.