



COMMUNICATION FOR SUPPORT

Situation, Background, Assessment, Recommendation (SBAR) is a communication framework that helps coaches, parents/caregivers, and student-athletes clearly and confidently express concerns, needs, and feedback. It supports effective conversations by keeping communication focused, organized, and solution-oriented.



SBAR IS HELPFUL FOR:

- Communicating about injuries or return-to-play decisions
- Giving feedback after practices or games
- Handling playing time discussions with athletes or caregivers
- Managing conflicts between teammates
- Requesting help balancing academics and athletics

Step	What it Means	Coach Example	Athlete Example
Situation	Name it clearly, briefly, and neutrally	I want to talk about your sideline behavior in recent games.	Coach, I wanted to talk about my playing time.
Background	Give context using patterns, not feelings	In each of the last three games, there were multiple moments where comments toward officials became loud and continued after calls.	I've averaged about 5–7 minutes the past three games, compared to around 15 earlier in the season, and I noticed I didn't play in the second half last game.
Assessment	Connect the behavior to the impact	I've observed how this distracts our team and doesn't reflect our program's expectations for behaviors.	It seems like I'm getting pulled when I'm on defense but I'm unsure, which is making me nervous when I am in the game.
Recommendation	Make a clear, doable ask focused on solutions	I recommend we keep sideline comments positive and respectful moving forward or there will have to be a conversation about consequences.	Can we check-in after our games so I can understand what skills I can improve and then try to earn back playing time?

After engaging in SBAR, build in a brief teach-back moment by asking, “What did we hear each other say?” This allows each person to reflect, clarify key points, and ensure alignment on how to move forward together.