



# Great teammate pledge

*An activity to encourage all student-athletes to be invested in being good sports and great teammates. This is an effective behavior management tool.*

## Introduction

The NICA online leaders' summit discusses using The Great Teammate Pledge as a way for teams to set expectations each season for practice and events while giving student-athletes the voice and choice in these expectations. Student-athletes generate a list of adjectives/characteristics to describe the ideal teammate, and this list is used to set expectations for behavior and responsibility during team practices and events. Complete this activity early in the practice season.

## Set up

This activity does not require supplies or props, but using physical reminders such as a piece of paper or fabric lends to kinesthetic learning and is an easy way to remind your student-athletes about the pledge they created together. It is highly encouraged to create a physical reminder of the pledge when you complete this activity. The following supply list is optional. Consider adding your own creativity to this activity in different ways.

### Supplies:

- Blank white handkerchief or flag, poster board, or canvas
- Colorful pens or permanent markers
- Scratch paper or device notes app for breakout groups
- Pencils or other writing utensils for breakout groups

## Facilitation

### Breakout groups

If you have a large group, it is best to facilitate this activity with smaller breakout groups to provide space for all your student-athletes to give input. Ride group sizes of approximately 8 participants works best. The group ride leader can be the recorder, and the group can choose a volunteer to share with the whole group.

## Activity

### Day 1

- Disperse groups away from one another and give them a set time to return
- Ask the group to answer the question, "What are the characteristics of a great teammate?"
- Have the recorder write or type up a list of 6-10 characteristics
- Provide the list to the head coach, who will distill the list into 6-10 important characteristics and record them on the poster board or flag before the next practice

### Day 2

- All team members sign the pledge (this can occur at the next practice)
- Seal the deal with a power clap or team ritual
- Refer to the Pledge often during the season and use it as part of team rituals and feedback

## Extensions

The Great Teammate Pledge is an activity that will reinforce positive behavior with your team. It provides ownership to those who participate and lays the foundation for what student-athletes can and should expect from one another and their coaches. There are activities that can reinforce the importance of this pledge. Here are some examples:

- Allow team captain or student-athletes who have been given character recognition to be the “flag bearer” and carry the flag with the pledge words written on it
- Recognize student-athletes who embody these characteristics on a regular basis, use a symbol such as a silly bike light, bell, or some other tangible item to pass along with this recognition (for example, a handlebar “duck”)
- Create an archive of great teammate pledges in a binder or folder and ceremoniously add to it at each end of season gathering
- If the pledge was written on a flag, cut it into pieces and share a piece with each student-athlete to serve as a reminder that they were a great teammate during the season