

Wearing Your "Game Face"

Do you shut down when you hear criticism? Or do you keep a neutral expression—a game face?

Your "game face" is any facial expression that conceals emotion. Sports stars often show their game face when they're feeling pain, but don't want to leave the field. Your game face is important. It's the face you wear to look positive, even when you're feeling negative.

Here are examples when you need to wear your game face:

- **Your boss gives you new responsibilities and also points out ways you need to improve.** Your boss expanded your job responsibilities because he thought you were capable of more. This is a compliment, however, you're expected to be mature enough to also accept guidance and criticism.
- **You have an idea for a new or different procedure.** Your boss shoots down your idea, and you are upset. You want your idea to be respected, and it's been rejected. Take this like a professional and move on.
- **You suggest an improvement to a team member and get a sarcastic response.** You start to lash out at the person. Do you really want this coworker to see how she got to you? She wins if you show your frustration.



Your goal when accepting criticism from a boss or team member should be to use the criticism to improve yourself. Even if the knot in your stomach expands with every word you hear, the other person won't know as long as you wear your game face. That makes you more powerful!

Action: Describe a time when you would have been better off at work, school, or home if you had not shown emotion and, instead, had worn a game face.

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