



# Gaslighting in Teams

## Your Guide to Respectful Communication

A 1930s play that was later turned into a psychological thriller, the movie 'Gaslight' tells the story of a young woman who thinks she has found true love until her new husband starts messing with her head. Little by little, he makes her doubt everything she sees and feels, convincing her and everyone around her that she's going crazy. Flickering gaslights, missing objects, and strange house sounds are all dismissed as tricks of her imagination, until she begins to uncover a sinister truth behind his deception.

The film gave birth to the term "gaslighting," which is now used to describe when someone manipulates another person into thinking they're imagining things by denying hurtful actions, downplaying their feelings, or twisting situations to make others believe it too.

At Whitpain United, we aim to build a culture of respect that extends beyond the game, equipping players with the skills to recognize the difference between healthy and toxic communication. Gaslighting can happen unintentionally, but it still impacts how we interact with others. So, to make it clearer, let's go through a few examples of how to communicate with respect and steer clear of gaslighting a teammate.

### Dismissing Emotions

Gaslighting: "You're completely overreacting."

Respectful: "I can tell this is really upsetting you, so let's pause and talk through it."

### Denying Reality

Gaslighting: "That never happened."

Respectful: "Let's talk through what happened, because we seem to remember things differently."

### Disregarding a Viewpoint

Gaslighting: "You're imagining things."

Respectful: "I didn't really notice that. Can you expand on it so I can understand better?"

### Attacking Someone's Sanity

Gaslighting: "You're crazy."

Respectful: "I promise I'm listening, but I don't quite understand yet."

## **Assigning Blame**

Gaslighting: "You always twist things."

Respectful: "Let's slow down and try to get on the same page."

## **Minimizing and Isolating**

Gaslighting: "No one else has a problem with this except you."

Respectful: "Let's try to find some common ground."

## **The Bottom Line**

Being a good leader means not only avoiding these traps yourself but also recognizing when a teammate might be gaslighting someone else and stepping in to help.

When we communicate with respect, we build a United team where everyone can thrive.