



▶ "ASSERTIVE YES, BUT I DON'T WANT TO BE REGARDED AS AGGRESSIVE OR PUSHY"



▶ USING THE PROVEN TECHNIQUES OF ASSERTIVENESS WITH CONFIDENCE



▶ HOW 'BEING ASSERTIVE' STARTS WITH RIGHTS & ENTITLEMENTS AND ENDS WITH BOOSTED SELF-ESTEEM

○ Knowledge | ○ Skills | ○ Understanding

Engaging Spirits®

Prompting REFLECTION and indicating ACTION

Being able to stand our ground in a professional and effective manner is an important skill at work, and outside work. We admire those who speak up and give their views. Similarly those who can resist manipulative behaviour demonstrate skills that benefit both the organization and their own self-esteem.



Being Assertive

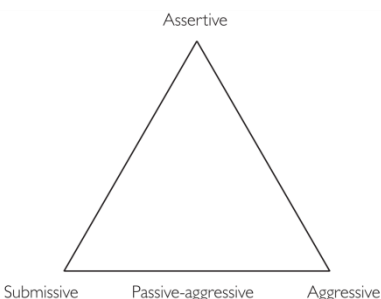
The performance of any organisation depends on the way people interact, and yet the simple act of communicating honestly, openly and confidently sometimes proves not to be quite so simple in practice. Most of us can recall situations where, perhaps due to unhelpful learned responses, we have reacted submissively and not stood our ground. Or, our inner desire to influence the situation may manifest itself in an unhelpful way e.g. aggression or sarcasm - behaviours which are unlikely bring the best out of those around us.

Being properly assertive is not just about asserting oneself; aggressive, arrogant and

selfish people can do that too. It means recognising and standing up for your own rights, as well as accepting that others have rights too. Each of our rights is balanced by a responsibility to observe others' rights.

Genuinely assertive people are open and honest contributors in what they say, in their non-verbal communication and in how their motives come across. Such colleagues are approachable and easy to work with – their open and assured manner makes it feel safe to raise even difficult topics.

Being assertive - invariably the right choice, - is rooted in observed rights, and involves good listening and tolerance.



Rising above unhelpful behaviours

Knowing we have the right tools and techniques is a great confidence-booster to being assertive; recognising the situations where a particular technique will help, and having the capability to deploy that technique, is a winning combination.

The strength of some of the techniques lies in their simplicity – few things are more disarming than the 'broken record' technique used when someone is on solid ground! Other tools are more subtle but no less effective, e.g. being able to distinguish between 'acknowledging' and 'agreeing with' someone. Two other techniques, the three-part sentence and pointing out a consequence, are excellent for moving-on a dialogue that's become bogged down. Overall, being assertive feels good and is more productive e.g. in inviting others to have their say when a discrepancy is pointed out.



How to start enjoying the personal benefits of 'Being Assertive'

Start to improve your self-esteem by standing up for yourself

Our behaviour affects the outcome in a given situation, and in turn the behaviours we can adopt are dependent on our capability and skills. And how adept we are at being assertive is greatly affected by our beliefs and values - for instance, whether we believe that it is worth standing up for ourselves. For many of us it is worth taking stock of what our inner dialogue is saying, and how aware we are of our rights (and the rights of others). We may find that what we are saying to ourselves (the inner dialogue) is not very helpful and

indeed outmoded. Replacing negative self-talk with a more realistic dialogue is a good place to start when working on our capacity to be assertive. Equally, to be properly assertive we need a good up to date awareness of what we're entitled to, as well as the things we hold true and are prepared to 'stand' for. Often these things will come to us easily when we take the time to think about it - it's just not necessarily something we tend to think through until prompted! We instinctively know when we've correctly identified our

rights and entitlements; the new awareness is often accompanied by feelings of empowerment, confidence and perhaps a sense of relief. We have brought our sense of self into sharper focus, and that always feels good. This, however, is but the start of the benefits we can realize through being assertive. As we become more assertive, with our improving capability fueled by a sound inner dialogue and awareness of rights, so our confidence and sense of self-esteem builds . . . paradoxically, because we have stood up for what we believe.

"Modesty is related to diffidence, diffidence is related to shyness, shyness is a synonym for timidity, timidity is a characteristic of the meek, the meek shall not inherit the Earth, they serve those who are confident and self assertive." Dean Koontz, Author

FURTHER READING:
"For your improvement"



FYI - an excellent reference resource for learners, managers and mentors - discusses 'Arrogant' traits in the 'Career Stoppers & Stoppers' section (p481 in the 4th edition). Recommended reading for those who are concerned that their assertiveness may be regarded as aggressive behaviour.

My reflections and indicated actions . . .

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