



Assertiveness

The "You win, I win" way



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About the Tutorial

Assertiveness is the quality of being self-assured along with being amiable. It is a mode of communication characterized by confidently affirming statements without need of proof.

Audience

This tutorial is designed primarily for young professionals who seek assistance in dealing with difficult co-workers at the workplace, and putting forth their thoughts and opinions in a non-aggressive manner.

Prerequisites

Before proceeding with this tutorial, you are expected to be honest and willing to recall past incidents, to look at them objectively and learn from simulation.

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1. OVERVIEW

Assertiveness is being able to express opinions, thoughts, and feelings clearly in a non-confrontational way. It is the ability to respect and exert our own rights without denying the rights and personal boundaries of others.

An assertive person has **near-complete control** over his life and he would not let aggressive people take advantage of him.

Characteristics of Assertive People

Assertive people tend to have the following characteristics:

- They are aware of their rights and feel free to exercise them.
- They express their feelings, thoughts, and opinions confidently.
- They know how to manage their anger and yet be rational about it.
- They have the ability to build amicable relationships with other people.
- They believe in friendships where both people have equal rights of opinion.

Example

Assertive people are open to negotiating any proposition without insisting on their version. For example, imagine this situation:

Rajat offers rides to his neighbor Nikhil, who is also his colleague, to office every day. Yet, Nikhil never offers to pay for gas. This makes Rajat feel taken advantage of. While an aggressive person will shout and a passive person will continue to sulk, Rajat – **being an assertive person** – speaks up:

I like to offer you ride, as we both go to the same place. Say, would it be okay with you if we were to take turns at paying for gas every week? Anyways, you would be spending more money and wasting more time by taking a bus to work every day.

This way, Rajat manages to **put his point across without hurting** his co-worker's feelings. He also gets the other person to realize what his thoughts were.

2. DEFINING ASSERTIVENESS

Assertiveness – Definition

Assertiveness is the ability to express your thoughts and feelings, and to put forth your opinions – even if contradicting – in such a way that they clearly state your point of view while respecting others' feelings and opinions.

- It makes you speak honestly and directly about your thoughts, feelings, and opinions **without offending the listener(s)**, or hurting their sentiments.
- It makes the other person more comfortable to have a conversation with you, as he feels that his opinion is also being given **equal importance**. This makes him more forthcoming and open to share his thoughts with you.
- It makes you confident to exercise more control over your life in difficult situations, rather than blindly following instructions and directions of other people.



An assertive person would normally display the following traits:

- Firm, yet pleasant voice
- Clear speech and sincerity
- Appropriate behavior at any given situation
- Cooperative and progressive nature

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