



BE UNSTOPPABLE

COACHING



Assertive Communication

Tool and Worksheet





Assertive Communication

The Art of Communicating Confidently and Respectfully

An important element of demonstrating high self-worth and confidence is through communication, both language and behaviour, especially during stressful or uncomfortable situations that can occur in one's personal and professional life. An individual with high self-esteem, high self-worth and confidence, is likely to communicate assertively, expressing their opinion, needs and desires in an empathic and firm manner, showing respect towards others. When one's level of significance is low, their language and behaviour tend to be demonstrated in a passive manner, putting themselves last, agreeing with others (even though they do not actually agree), being silent or simply giving up. The flip side of passive behaviour is aggression, demonstrated through criticism, sarcasm, blame or threats towards others. Aggressive individuals actually lack confidence, have low self-esteem and little or no respect for others, using 'aggression as a mask' to their low self-significance.

ASSERTIVE	PASSIVE	AGGRESSIVE
Enhances communication and uses active listening.	Anxious, inhibited and may be hurt or resentful.	Cuts off communication.
Confident, showing respect for themselves and others.	Low confidence, low self-esteem. Lacks self-respect.	Low confidence, low self-esteem, low respect for others.
Puts themselves as equal.	Puts themselves last.	Puts themselves first.
Speaks for self.	Speaks for no one.	Speaks for others.
Says: "I have the right to express thoughts, needs and feelings..."	Harsh inner critic. Uses minimal or no words.	Says: "You should ... You always ... You never ... You make me ..."
Uses "I" statements. I feel ... when ... because ...	Usually succumbs to submissive agreeance.	Uses criticism, sarcasm, blame and threats.
Negotiates, is authentic and gives choices. Win / Win	Gives up and thinks they have no choice. Lose / Win	Assumes control and gives no choice. Win / Lose

Assertive communication is a skill that can be developed by all people. Practicing this communication skill, coupled with strategies to increase self-confidence and self-worth, is important for individuals to lead themselves, to teach and enrich their children and families and to effectively manage and lead others in organisations or social teams.

A confident, assertive communicator expects to be treated with respect, to have their views heard, to express feelings, to manage priorities and decisions, to fearlessly make mistakes (to own them and learn from them), to say 'no' without feeling guilty, to ask for what they want and to protect their physical space. An assertive communicator is respectful in extends the same to others.

How Assertive Are You?

Read the following statements and indicate your level of comfort in communication.

1 = Not Comfortable 2 = Reasonably Comfortable 3 = Very Comfortable

Speaking in front of a group of people.	
Maintaining eye contact when speaking to someone.	
Asking questions and speaking up in meetings.	
Commenting immediately when someone interrupts you.	
Walking in and out of a room full of people.	
Receiving a refusal from someone when you have requested something.	
A significant person in your life does not approve of something you want or do.	
Stating your view to a person of authority.	
Confidently and competently using your authority without being impolite or bossy.	
Not apologising for something you think is right, even though others expect one.	
Asking for expected service when it is not delivered by others e.g. restaurant.	
Expressing anger when it is justified.	
Arguing with another person.	
Telling a person when you think they are manipulating you.	
Requesting borrowed items are returned to you.	
Acknowledging and agreeing with compliments given to you.	
Openly discussing criticism of you with another person.	
Telling someone that their actions are bothering you.	
Laughing off mistakes you have made when discussing them with others.	
Responding with humour when someone tries to put you down.	
Saying 'no' when you do not want to do something.	
Saying 'no' to a meeting request that you see as not a priority.	

Total Score

Points	Level of Assertiveness
Over 55	Very Assertive
46 to 55	Reasonably Assertive
36 to 45	Average Level Assertiveness
26 to 35	Assertiveness Needs to be Developed
Below 26	Low Assertiveness – May Cause Stress



Assertive Communication ... Reflection

What did you learn about yourself and your level of assertiveness?

What circumstances make you feel most uncomfortable to be assertive?

What would help you in these situations to be more confident and communicate assertively?

What skills would you like to develop to help you be a confident and assertive communicator?



Assertive Communication ... Action Goals

What action goals are you going set to help you increase your level assertiveness? Take into consideration what you have reflected on and the insights you have gained through this worksheet, to help you write goals and action steps below.

Remember that being assertive through communication and behaviour demonstrates high self-worth and confidence, especially during stressful or uncomfortable situations that can occur in one's personal and professional life. Assertiveness is a learnable skill.

GOALS

ACTION STEPS
