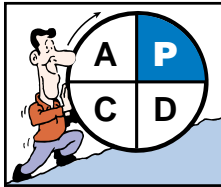


# Effective Assertiveness Skills



Getting more of what you want from life without trampling on the rights of others in the process is possible, especially when you learn to become more assertive. This One Page Coach® storyboard can help you develop the assertive skills you need. The process of communicating assertively is outlined in this four-stage model: PREPARE, ORGANIZE, ACT, and REVIEW. The illustration to the right and the information on this storyboard explain each of the stages. A system to help you become a more assertive person on a day to day basis appears on the reverse side.

## 1. PREPARE



Gather data and plan.

## 2. ORGANIZE



Develop skills.

## 3. ACT



Go for what you want.

## 4. REVIEW



Solve and evaluate.



### 1.

#### PREPARE

#### ► Define your problem situation.

- ◆ Familiarize yourself with the four styles of communication assertiveness, aggression, passivity and manipulation.
- ◆ Think about the communication problems you have had. Is this because the individual was aggressive, passive, or manipulative?
- ◆ Check your own style. Are you effectively assertive, or do you have other style tendencies?



#### ► Check the gap and the context.

- ◆ When you next meet a "problem" person, assess whether there might be a gap between what you know and what you need to know.
- ◆ Check the context: How are external power sources (rules, external experts, etc.) influencing the situation?



#### ► Build your confidence.

- ◆ Use stress-management skills and strategies.
- ◆ Create a "risk" list and begin to work through it.
- ◆ Know your assertive rights, and resolve that you will no longer allow these rights to be violated.



#### ► Prepare a script.

- ◆ Analyze past encounters with problem people. Were there recurring verbal/non-verbal patterns?
- ◆ Use the seven-step feedback sequence to develop your skills and help you anticipate how the encounter will go.
- ◆ Visualize yourself succeeding at your objectives and handling the encounter competently.



### 2.

#### ORGANISE

#### ► Rehearse.



- ◆ Use role plays to help you learn how to deal with future encounters, preferably with someone assisting you.
- ◆ Check to see that your body language does not contradict your words.
- ◆ Play the role of your opponent: Identify any strengths in their position, and any weaknesses in yours.



#### ► Set the scene.



- ◆ Arrange things so that you will not be interrupted during the meeting, encounter, or confrontation.
- ◆ Set aside appropriate time to process the problem.
- ◆ Where appropriate, arrange for others to observe or witness and provide feedback.

### 3.

#### ACT

#### ► Monitor the situation.

- ◆ Check your body language: Are you sending out the right assertive signals?
- ◆ Check your voice: Do you sound calm, yet authoritative?
- ◆ Remain cool at all times: Control stress and think on your feet.



#### ► Communicate assertively.

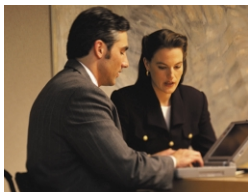
- ◆ Use "I" language, not "you" language.
- ◆ Use the feedback sequence ("When you . . .").
- ◆ Use appropriate assertiveness skills, and resist passive, aggressive, or manipulative plays.



### 4.

#### REVIEW

#### ► Formalize your agreement.



- ◆ Test for permanency of the solution. Is compromise really workable?
- ◆ Test that the solution is "win-win" for both sides, and that neither side loses face.
- ◆ Summarize and confirm agreements and solutions (verbally and in writing).

#### ► Evaluate your own performance.



- ◆ With hindsight, determine whether the experience was a complete success, a partial success, or a failure.
- ◆ If you could do it again; what might you do differently?
- ◆ Seek open feedback from others regarding your performance.

#### ► Learn and become stronger.



- ◆ Make the use of assertiveness skills part of all interactions with others.
- ◆ Try to become less reactive in dealing with others and become more pro-active—take charge of your life.
- ◆ Always try to act as a model of honest and direct communication.

# Assertiveness Skills: Checklist

## Talk:

About your experience  
About tactics used  
About better methods



How?

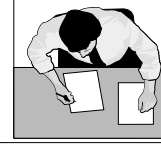
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## Analyze:

Your style  
Your method  
Your environment



How?

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## Feedback Sequence

- 1 When you . . . (do something) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 This happens \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 And I feel \_\_\_\_\_
- 4 Would you . . . (do something) \_\_\_\_\_
- 5 Because that way/this would mean that \_\_\_\_\_
- 6 I/You/they would feel \_\_\_\_\_
- 7 So, what do you think? \_\_\_\_\_

## Verbal strategies to use

Say no  
Dismiss and redirect  
Question and prompt awareness  
Use "fogging"  
Force a choice  
Use "broken record"  
Ask for specifics  
Find a workable compromise  
Threaten

## Review:

Solution fit  
Whether it was win/win  
Outcome quality



How?

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## Script:

Your message  
Your room to move  
Your actual words



How?

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## Evaluate:

Responses  
Your own  
Your consistency



How?

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## Show:

The right body language  
The right tone  
The right disposition



How?

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