

Assertive Communication



Assertive Communication: A communication style in which a person stands up for their own needs and wants, while also taking into consideration the needs and wants of others, without behaving passively or aggressively.

Traits of Assertive Communicators

- Clearly state needs and wants
- Eye contact
- Listens to others without interruption
- Appropriate speaking volume
- Steady tone of voice
- Confident body language

Assertiveness Tips

Respect yourself. Your needs, wants, and rights are as important as anyone else's. It's fine to express what you want, so long as you are respectful toward the rights of others.

Express your thoughts and feelings calmly. Giving the silent treatment, yelling, threatening, and shaming are all great examples of what not to do. Take responsibility for your emotions, and express them in a calm and factual manner. Try starting sentences with "I feel...".

Plan what you're going to say. Know your wants and needs, and how you can express them, before entering a conversation. Come up with specific sentences and words you can use.

Say "no" when you need to. You can't make everyone happy all the time. When you need to say "no", do so clearly, without lying about the reasons. Offer to help find another solution.

Examples of Assertive Communication

"I've been feeling frustrated about doing most of the chores around the house. I understand that you're busy, but I need help. How can we make this work?"

The speaker takes responsibility for their feelings without blaming, and clearly describes their needs.

"I won't be able to take you to the airport on Friday. I've had a long week, and I want to rest."

The speaker respects their own needs and wants by clearly saying "no".

"I'm having a hard time sleeping when your music is on. What if you use headphones, or I can help you move the speakers to another room."

The speaker describes their needs, while also considering the needs and wants of the other person.