

How to be assertive

Assertive: 'expressing your needs while allowing the other person to express theirs'

1. The key word to use is: 'I'

Try "I feel...", "I believe...", "I think...", "In my opinion..."
"You..." can sound like an attack.

2. Don't state your opinion or perception as the 'truth'.

Rather state it as something you believe or feel. The other person will be much more likely to listen to you without getting defensive.

3. Don't say "You should do this..." or "You ought to do that..." - it can be interpreted as aggressive.

Try saying "*I would like you to do this*" or "*I feel it would be a good idea if you.....*"

4. If someone is doing something that upsets you, try using this **3-part 'I'-statement:**

When you..... (tell them what they do – the facts)

I feel..... (tell them how you feel – your emotional reaction)

Because..... (tell them why you feel like that – your fear, belief or perception)

And I end up.....(tell them how you end up acting or behaving as a result)

Then you can make a straight request as to what you would like them to do instead.

For example: "**When you** ignore the security rules, **I feel** worried **because** I can't do my job properly, **and I end up** getting snappy with you. **Please would you** follow the procedures in future?"

5. Body language is important.

When you want to be assertive, use eye contact and have a relaxed, upright posture. Keep your voice even and normal and don't stand too close to the other person.

We hope you have found this material useful. If you have any questions on how to use it, we'd be happy to talk you through it.

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