
Developing assertiveness is a process

SPEECH AND VOICE

- Assertive:** "I" messages; honest statements that are direct and to the point. Well-modulated voice that is congruent with verbal message given. Smooth flowing speech pattern.
- Non-Assertive:** Lots of apologies and "ums," "ers," and "I means." "Beating around the bush" and not coming to the point. Soft "wimpy" voice.
- Aggressive:** "You" messages. "Loaded" words that start fights. Sarcastic or cocky speech. Tense, loud and demanding voice. Attacking.

EYES

- Assertive:** Open with direct, comfortable eye contact, but not staring.
- Non-Assertive:** Downcast or looking away.
- Aggressive:** Glaring, staring, cold.

POSTURE

- Assertive:** Relaxed, upright and "good" posture; straight on.
- Non-Assertive:** Excessive agreement and head-nodding; stooped; leaning for support.
- Aggressive:** Hands on hips; stiff or rigid; feet apart.

HANDS

- Assertive:** Gestures appropriate with verbal message; relaxed.
- Non-assertive:** Fidgety; picking at fingernails; fluttery; clenched tightly.
- Aggressive:** Finger pointing; pounding or thrashing; abrupt gestures; touching others.

EXAMPLES OF BEHAVIOR

- Assertive:** Giving compliments and accepting compliments; hugging and affirming others; saying no to unreasonable requests; controlling temper when angry; asking for what you want and need; initiating and stopping conversations.
- Non-assertive:** Saying yes when you want to say no; going along with others when you don't want to; avoiding others; peace at all costs; apologizing for something you didn't do.
- Aggressive:** Condescending; building self up while putting others down; yelling; put downs; name calling; interrupting; demanding; ignoring others; silent treatment; sarcasm; ordering others.

CHARACTERISTICS OF BEHAVIOR

- Assertive:** Honest, direct, expressive, self-enhancing, pro-active, appropriate.
- Non-Assertive:** Inhibited, indirect, emotionally dishonest, self-denying, reactive.
- Aggressive:** Self-enhancing at the expense of another, expressive, reactive, depreciates others, makes choices for others.