

Getting What You Want Assertiveness Guidance

If we know what we want and tell people what that is, then shouldn't we be able to get it? Not always.

The following exercise can help by exploring points within a workshop to understand how to reframe our request (modified from Williams, 2020):

- **Be inclusive:** using the pronoun “I” (or “we” and “us”) while being assertive can have the same powerful effect while reducing the likelihood of the other person feeling attacked.
- **Empathy and timing:** it is crucial when making a point, or pushing a request, that you consider the timing and needs (or position) of the other person(s). When you ask for something that takes effort for the listener to deliver, you must be sure they haven't got critical issues clouding their ability to accept.
- **Know your audience:** while you must understand what you are trying to convince others, you also need to consider who your audience is.
What information do they need? How are you going to present the idea?
For some audiences (or individuals), you will need to strike up an emotional connection, while for others, it is about cold facts and figures.
- **Actively listen:** if you are not listening, you may not be providing the information required or answering people's questions. Thus, even subtle non-verbal communications must be 'heard.'
When someone shows a lack of interest or is distracted, you may need to change tactics or reschedule for another time.
- **Asking questions:** showing curiosity can lessen resistance and create more dialogue, leading the other person to be more open to your demands.
- **Employing stories:** a good narrative can be a powerful tool. Proving your point with facts, context, and names, can make your point or request more concrete and of higher value. Not only that, it becomes memorable because it is easier to follow.

Explore and discuss each point in individual and group sessions.

Consider what you could do in future situations when you need to be more assertive.

References

- Williams, J. W. (2020). *Assertiveness Training: Stop People Pleasing, Feeling Guilty, and Caring for What Others Think* [Kindle DX version]. Retrieved from <https://www.amazon.com/Assertiveness-Training-Confident-Practical-Intelligence-ebook/dp/B08BXDGLL4/>

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