

Tough Love - amazing assertiveness tips

Being assertive means relating to other people on an equal basis, openly honestly and directly. It means standing up for your rights whilst, at the same time, remembering that the other person has equal rights.

Assertiveness does not mean winning all the time. It is about turning win/lose situations into win/win situations by reaching a workable agreement that doesn't compromise either party.

It can be difficult to say clearly and directly what you want because you risk having the other person refuse your request and this can, if you let it, feel like a rejection of you as a person.

The Assertive person:

- Protects their own rights and respects the rights of others.
- Achieves their goals without obstructive, destructive behaviour and considers others.
- Has self belief and has appropriate confidence in others.
- Is socially and emotionally expressive.
- Makes their own choices.

Assertiveness methods and techniques

- Know your facts and have them to hand.
- Anticipate other people's behaviour and prepare your responses.
- Prepare and use good open questions.
- Re-condition and practice your own new reactions to aggression.
- Have faith that your own abilities and style will ultimately work if you let them.
- Feel sympathy for bullies – they are the ones with the problem.

Bill of Rights

I have the right to

1. Be treated with respect.
2. Express my own feelings and opinions.
3. Be listened to and to be taken seriously.
4. Say no without feeling guilty.
5. Ask for what I want.
6. Ask for information.
7. Make mistakes.
8. Change my mind.
9. Say I don't understand.
10. Decline responsibility for other peoples' problems.
11. Deal with others without being dependent on them for approval.

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Try these assertiveness tips out

If someone besides your manager makes a request when you are busy try saying the following:

"I'm really not the most qualified person for the job"

"I can't, but let me give you the name of someone who can"

"I appreciate how you feel. And, this is how I feel."

"I've had a few things come up and I need to deal with those first"

"Can you give me 30 minutes?"

"What did you mean by that?"

Broken record, broken record, broken record

"I would like to show you some of our products"

"No thank you, I'm not interested"

"I really have a great range to offer you"

"That may be true, but I'm not interested at the moment"

"Is there someone else here who would be interested?"

"I don't want any of these products"

"Okay, would you take this brochure and think about it?"

"Yes, I will take a brochure"

"Thank you"

"You're welcome"

Breathe. It'll calm you down and give you power.

Don't apologise too much.

Take a lunch break.

Keep eye contact.

Stand up.

Watch your elbows.

Don't smile too much

KISS: keep it short and simple. Assertiveness fails when we try to say too much or complicate our argument.

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