

Assertiveness

Communicating assertively means clearly and calmly expressing what you want, think or feel, whilst not offending or denying the rights of others. Learning to communicate assertively doesn't guarantee you will have your needs met but it makes it more likely, and it can improve your relationships with other people.

<u>PASSIVE</u>	<u>ASSERTIVE</u>	<u>AGGRESSIVE</u>
Thinking your needs don't matter at all	Recognising your needs matter as much as anyone else's	Thinking that only your needs matter
Give in	Compromise	Take
Not talking, not being heard	Talking and listening	Talking over people
Trying to keep the peace	Making sure things are fair for you and others	Only looking out for yourself
Allowing yourself to be bullied	Standing up for yourself	Bullying others
Not saying what you think or saying anything	Express your point clearly and confidently	Can lead to shouting, aggression or violence
Damages relationship as others respect you less	Enhances relationship, others know where they stand	Damages relationship. People don't like aggression
Damages your self esteem	Builds your self esteem	Damages others' self esteem

Tips for communicating assertively

Use “I” statements – be clear and direct

“I would like you to give me a refund” or “I don’t want a drink”

Describe how another person’s behaviour makes you feel

This makes other people aware of the consequences of their actions. For example, “When you raise your voice I feel scared, I would like you to speak softly.” Or “When you keep asking if I want a drink, I feel pressurised, I would prefer you stop asking.”

Stick to your guns – use the broken record technique.

Think about what you want, prepare what you might say, then repeat as necessary, “I would like a refund ... I appreciate you’re busy but I would still like a refund” Or “I don’t want a drink, I hear you’d love me to have one with you, but I don’t want a drink”