

# **Communicating Assertively and Respectfully**

**Dr. Julie Olsen**

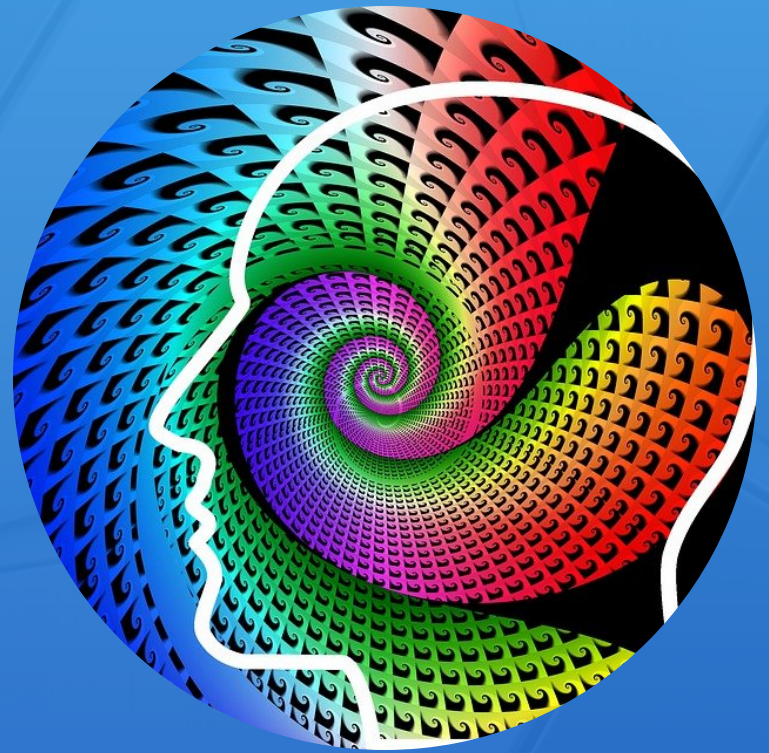


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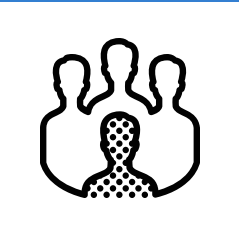
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# What is Assertiveness?

Respectfully  
communicating your  
thoughts, feelings,  
and opinions in a  
way that others hear  
you without  
discounting the  
thoughts, feelings, or  
opinions of others.



# Passive Behavior



## **Believes Their Rights Are Not Important**

The needs of others are more important, therefore they allow the needs of others to infringe on their rights.



## **Communicate Submissively**

Not likely to share their feelings or opinions. They are apologetic, speak softly, and don't like conflict. They may use phrases like I don't want to bother you, if it's not too much trouble, or use filler words.



## **Body Language**

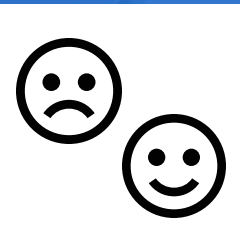
Nodding in agreement, inconsistent eye contact, hunched shoulders, or looking down.

# Passive Aggressive Behavior



## Defer Their Rights But Plan Revenge

May verbally agree and deny there is a problem. However, they may get irritated and mask the issue, while determining ways to get even.



## Mixed Communication

Have difficulty expressing their true feelings and may not recognize their anger. Their communication does not convey their true feelings. May speak under their breath.



## Body Language

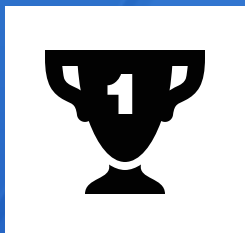
They try to mask their anger so any behavior changes may be subtle.

# Aggressive Behavior



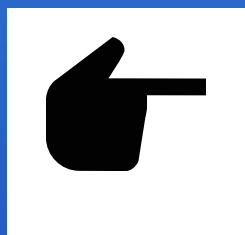
## Overrides the Rights of Others

Believes what they need is more important than the needs of others. Expects others to agree with their ideas and to meet their expectations.



## Communicates to Win

Expresses their thoughts in a intimidating manner and a loud tone. May be blunt, use sarcasm, or be condescending. Not afraid on conflict.



## Body Language

Sits confidently, upright, and head held high. Strong eye contact or staring, close physical distance, crossing arms, and may point fingers.

# Assertive Behavior



## Stands Up For Their Rights

Respect the rights for others while recognizing their own rights. They stand up for themselves while respecting beliefs and opinions of others.



## Communicates Directly

Shares information open and honestly. Their words are diplomatic, polite, and friendly, but clear. They express their feelings and opinions. When others are speaking, they don't interrupt.



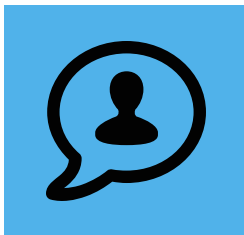
## Body Language

Relaxed posture, speak in a clear and steady voice, maintain balanced eye contact, open gestures, and stays engaged in the conversation.

# Being Assertive

## Basic Tips to Help With Assertive Communication

Assertive communication can enhance your self-esteem and help you gain the best outcome from a situation while improving your relationships and lowering your stress level.



### Express Your Needs

Use "I" statements to express what you need and be attentive to your body language and tone to ensure it aligns with your message.



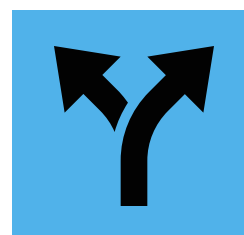
### Understand the Other Person's Needs

Acknowledge what the other person needs or wants.



### Describe the Situation

Clearly state the situation being addressed.



### Suggest Alternative Behavior

Articulate what you want or how you would like the behavior to be different in the future.



# Being Assertive in Multiple Situations

## 1) Making Simple Requests

Be direct and succinct regarding your request leaving little room for miscommunication.

## 2) Giving Feedback

Set the tone to be conversational and provide the intent of the feedback. Know what you want to accomplish and focus on the behavior that needs to be changed.

## 3) Responding to Criticism

Listen! Determine if the criticism is true and how it might impact your relationship and fix it. If it is partly true, accept what is true and discuss the elements that may not be true. If it is false, be respectful and share that you don't see it the same way and would like to talk it out.

## 4) Saying No

Ask if it is a reasonable request. Ask clarifying questions including timeframes before responding. If it is a request you need to decline, be brief and clear without providing an extensive explanation.

# References

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# THE AUTHOR

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Julie comes with a long list of certifications and experience. In addition to her certifications in human resources, she holds a Lean Six Sigma Green Belt and is certified to administer the Leadership Versatility Index (a 360 degree feedback tool), Development Dimensions International Facilitator Trained, a Just Culture Certified Instructor, TTI Success Insights Certified to deliver DiSC Behavioral Profiles and Driving Forces assessments. To compliment her education and training, Julie has extensive experience in assisting organizations with building strategy, utilizing their human capital more effectively, and has presented to audiences throughout the US and internationally.

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