

Communication Styles

FACILITATOR HANDOUT

There are three different types of communication styles:

1. Assertive
2. Aggressive
3. Passive

But what do we mean by these?

1 - Assertive

People often confuse assertiveness for always getting what you want. The assertiveness mantra is 'I'm okay, you're okay'. So this means not only getting your needs met but the needs of the other person too. It's about accepting everyone for their own merit - including yourself!

2 - Aggressive

Aggression is when you are focused on getting just your needs met and are not focused on the needs of the other person.

3 - Passive

This is when you are more focused on getting the needs of the other person met and not worried about your own!

Discussion



Can you think of any examples of these communication styles? Discuss the different communication styles handout. For examples given, get them to explore the physical presentation of the individual, including their tone, posture, non-verbal behaviour, speech etc. Use the handout as a prompt.

So what do you think your communication style is? Let's find out!

Activity – complete assertiveness quiz

Quiz results:

If your total is 60 or higher, you have a consistently assertive philosophy and probably handle most situations well

If your total is 45-60, you have a fairly assertive outlook. There are some situations in which you may be naturally assertive, but you should be able to increase your assertiveness through practice

If your total is 30-45, you seem to be assertive in some situations but your natural response is either non-assertive or aggressive. You may want to change some perceptions and practise new behaviours in order to handle things much more assertively in the future

If your total is 15-30, you have considerable difficulty being assertive. You need to practise and allow yourself time to grow and change. You can become much more comfortable in situations where asserting yourself is important

Different communication styles are a behaviour. This means you can learn to change or adapt your behaviour. You can also apply different behaviours to different situations.

For example, being aggressive is important if you are being attacked. You need to get your needs met and get out of the situation!

There may also be times when you choose to be more passive. In some situations, you may decide that your needs at a particular point are outweighed by the needs of others. For example, imagine you are going to the cinema with friends. Your friend really wants to see the latest Fast and Furious but you're not bothered. You would rather see the latest chick flick, but you go along with it as you are not really bothered either way.

Most of the time, being assertive is the best path. You get your needs met and the needs of the other person. The skills learnt in this module will help you to be more assertive.

