



BECOMING ASSERTIVE VS. AGGRESSIVE:

*How to Eliminate Passive, Aggressive,
and Passive-Aggressive Behaviors*

DAIRY GIRL NETWORK Forward Together NATIONAL CONFERENCE BREAKOUT SESSION

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BECOMING ASSERTIVE VS. AGGRESSIVE

“Assertiveness is saying what you mean, meaning what you say, and not being mean when you say it” - Meryl Runion

“Effective communication is 20% what you know, and 80% how you feel about what you know” - Jim Rohn



PASSIVE CHARACTERISTICS

Goals	Feelings	Behaviors
Avoid conflict	Fear of being rejected	Avoid giving opinions on issues or give opinion only if agree with others
Please and/or take care of others	Helplessness and frustration at lack of control over their lives	Inability to say no
	Resentment of all the demands placed on them by “friends” (“users”)	May try to keep peace
	Believe others’ needs are more important	Don’t say what they need or want
	Believe only value comes from caring for others	Put yourself down frequently and apologize when self is expressed
		Deny any disagreement
		“Do you think.. .?”

AGGRESSIVE CHARACTERISTICS

Goals	Feelings	Behaviors
Power and control of others at any expense to protect self from being vulnerable	Needs of self are more important and more justified than others Need the feeling of power and control in situations; Fear situations without it	Express feelings and wants as though any other view is unreasonable Dismiss, ignore, or insult the needs/wants/opinions of others
Knows what's right and needs to convince or coerce others OR control as a defense against feelings of deficiency	Sometimes feel guilt or self-hatred for hurting others Low self-esteem usually "If I control others, then I won't be harmed and I can get what I want."	Competitive, adversarial Demanding, expects to get their way "How could you think/that?!" "I'm in charge. Let's do it my way."

PASSIVE-AGGRESSIVE CHARACTERISTICS

Goals	Feelings	Behaviors
Get own way without having to take responsibility	Believe others are to blame for events that go wrong Feel anger at events that go wrong, but feel unworthy or unskilled in being able to take control of the situation Fear rejection and confrontation if direct with disagreement Resent demands of others. Feel pressure to perform but has expectation and fear of personal failure Low self-esteem; blames self	Deny authority by failing to meet expectations through "deniable" means—forgetting, being late, procrastinating, etc. Deny personal responsibility Use sarcasm Strategically express opinions indirectly to hurt the target but deny negative intent "I think Bob is completely wrong on this one, don't you?" "No, I didn't mean anything by it. What do you mean?"

ASSERTIVE CHARACTERISTICS

Goals	Feelings	Behaviors
Self-respect balanced with respect for others	Feels positive about self	Express needs, wants, and feelings directly and honestly
Express without need to “win”	Believe own needs are important but does consider their effect on others.	Don’t assume own views are automatically correct or that everyone else agrees
No one controls anyone else	Believes self is responsible	Allows others to hold views without dismissing or insulting them



ACTIVITY: “In order to get what I need, I...”

PASSIVE	ASSERTIVE	AGGRESSIVE
Don’t do anything	Focus on the issue	Scream
Overreact	Evaluate what I need	Demand
Suffer in silence	Evaluate what others need	Become sarcastic
Hint	Focus on solutions	Intimidate
Hope	Script out a request	Nag
Get defensive	Use a confident voice	Huff and sigh

ASSERTIVENESS PITFALLS

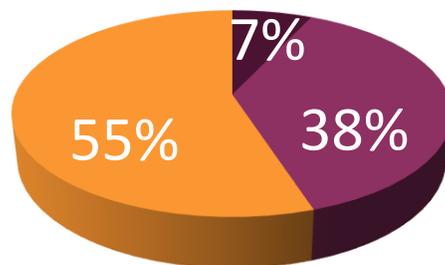
1. **Disclaimers:** A trait common to many speakers—but mostly women—is to precede what you say with apologies or explanations such as: “I may be wrong, but ...” and “I’m not really sure ...”
2. **Fillers:** Another negative trait is to pepper silences with fillers (that you are probably unaware of) such as: “Er,” “Uh,” “Ya know” or “Like.” (“I, like, want a raise.”)
3. **Justifiers:** Women often feel the need to justify their answers with long, convoluted responses.
4. **Tag questions:** “You want this done using the regular method, don’t you?”
5. **Verbal erasers:** “But...”, “However...”
6. **Long, confusing words/sentences:** Don’t try to impress others by using long, confusing words
7. **“Cute” words:** “Oopsy”, “Potty”, “Yeppers”
8. **Excessive and weak modifiers:** “very”, “really”, and “certainly”



10 STEPS OF ASSERTIVE COMMUNICATION

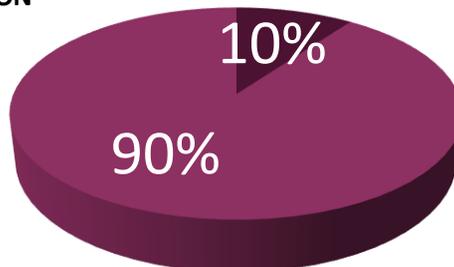
1. Face your fear
2. Control emotions
3. Don't let prejudgments affect action
4. Prepare in advance
5. Focus on facts and behavior
6. Use direct statements
7. Body language
8. Tone of voice
9. Be specific/clear
10. Be persuasive by focusing on them!

FACE TO FACE COMMUNICATION



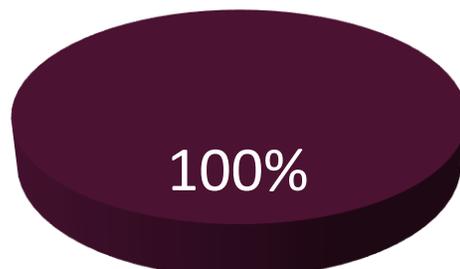
- Words
- Tone of Voice
- Body Language

PHONE COMMUNICATION



- Words
- Tone of Voice

WRITTEN COMMUNICATION



- Words



	PASSIVE	ASSERTIVE	AGGRESSIVE
FACE	Pleasant smile, peaceful	Smiling, restful	Teeth clenched, lips tight and white
EYES	Little eye contact, looking everywhere but at speaker	Appropriate amount of eye contact, relaxed observation	Overt staring, angry, confrontational, challenging
HANDS	Doodling, playing with pen	Hands in lap, still, purposeful	Fists clenched, shaking finger, pounding on tabletop
HEAD	Tilted to the side, chin on chest	Normal position, still, straight	Chin jutting out, stiff
POSTURE	Slumped down in chair, slightly rigid	Sitting/standing tall, feet on floor	Anxious, body tight, tense, feet apart
SITTING	Leaning forward tensely	Comfortable	Arms crossed tightly across chest, leaning tensely
BODY MOVEMENTS	Short, tight, hiding face behind hands,	Totally relaxed, no nervous mannerisms	Large wide movements, invading others' space

NONVERBAL BEHAVIOR	INTERPRETATION
Consistent eye contact	Rubbing the eyes
Hand to cheek	Touching, slightly rubbing nose
Head resting in hand, eyes downcast	Patting/playing with hair
Arms crossed on chest	Fist clinched
Excessive blinking	Hands on hips
Tapping or drumming fingers	Pinching bridge of nose, eyes closed
Open palm	Confident, honest
Doubt, disbelief	Evaluation, thinking
Rejection, doubt, lying	Boredom
Lack of self-confidence, insecurity	Defensive, cold or comfortable
Angry, stressed	Lying
Impatience	Impatience
Negative evaluation	Sincerity, openness

SAYING "NO"

Use the USA Method to assertively say "NO"!

U – Understanding statement

S – Situation statement

A – Action statement

A RECIPE FOR IMPROVEMENT: STOP, START, CONTINUE



What will you stop doing as a result of today's session? Why? What is the benefit?



What will you start doing as a result of today's session? Why? What is the benefit?



What will you continue doing as a result of today's session? Why? What is the benefit?