

ASSERTIVENESS – HOW ASSERTIVE ARE YOU? HOW CAN YOU BE MORE ASSERTIVE?

A FEW QUESTIONS TO PONDER

Think about these questions for a moment...

- What is your definition of assertiveness?
- What are your reasons for being more assertive?
- If you don't learn to be more assertive, what might you lose (or not do, or not achieve) as a result?
- What could happen if you say 'NO' or say what's on your mind? What is the worst thing that could happen? Could you handle it?
- What happens when you keep your opinions to yourself for fear of upsetting or starting an argument with others? Who is impacted most?

TIPS ON HOW TO BE MORE ASSERTIVE

- ✓ **Take targeted action to become assertive**
 - Learn the difference between being passive/assertive/aggressive.
 - Do a course in being assertive, read a book or check websites about assertiveness (i.e. <http://www.teamtechnology.co.uk/assertiveness/how-to-be-more-assertive.html>)
 - Find a coach who will support you to become assertive (I'd be happy to help you! Contact me for more information.)
- ✓ **Be aware of your actions, responses and thoughts.** Awareness is the first step. Once you are aware of something, you can then change it or do something about it.
- ✓ **Say what's on your mind. Learn to say 'NO'.** Share your feelings and opinions freely, it's your right. If you do not feel right doing something, then don't do it! No one has the right to make you do something you don't want.
- ✓ **Stop thinking what people will think of you if you are assertive.**
- ✓ **Focus on what you want, how you can make it work and do it!** Squash thoughts that focus on what can go wrong and why it may not work or any other discouraging thoughts.
- ✓ **"Being Direct" is a straightforward technique.** When you want something, ask for it and get straight to the point. When you are not direct, you frustrate other people by not saying what you want, and you run the risk of not having your needs met.
- ✓ **Use of "I feel statements" for help in expressing a feeling, or for an opinion "I believe" statements.** It gives you an easy framework for knowing how to come up with assertive statements.
- ✓ **Act according to this point of view:** "If we both express our views, we can then explore ways of both getting what we want." It is about reaching a "win/win" situation where you feel that you have expressed yourself and the other person also feels that they have been heard.
- ✓ **Model someone whom you admire for being assertive.** Study what they do, when, how and do it too.
- ✓ **Practise, practise, practise.** It takes time to learn to be assertive, and nobody gets it right all the time. Start with easy situations to gain the skills to master the more difficult ones.
- ✓ **Celebrate each success.** Give yourself a pat on the back for each time you are assertive. Each attempt will boost your confidence.

Being assertive is about expressing your point of view while at the same time respecting that others will have their own opinion.

- **As a result of going through the questions and tips, what are the things you plan to do differently? Write them down and take the first step. Move Now!**