Participant Guide

Effective, Assertive Communication
Improving Your Skills

© Concern
Overview

Our topic today is Effective, Assertive Communication. We will cover the various modes of communication and learn to develop or enhance open interpersonal styles for the betterment of our personal and professional relationships. Having good talking and listening skills can also reduce misunderstandings and facilitate creativity and problem solving.

Agenda

- What is Effective Communication?
- Communication Styles
- Techniques to Improve Communication Skills
- Non-verbal Communication and Communication Barriers

Seminar Length: Approximately 1 hour
Effective, Assertive Communication

Communication Process

- **Appropriate Channel**
  - clear and congruent verbal and non-verbal messages

- **Active Listening**
  - clear and congruent verbal and non-verbal feedback

---

**What is Effective Communication?**

Effective communication is being attentive

- Distinguishing between *listening* and *hearing*
- Entering the other’s *world*
- Not *assuming*

---

**What is Effective Communication?**

It also means communicating assertively

- Making relationships more *equal*
- Saying what you *feel*
- Being *straight forward* about what you mean
- Achieving *win-win*
EXERCISE:
Worksheet: How Well Do You Assert Yourself?

1. You choose and make decisions for others
2. You are brutally honest
3. You demand your own way
4. You feel righteous, superior, controlling – later possibly feeling guilt
5. You allow others to choose and make decisions for you
6. You are indirect and self-denying.
7. You feel anxious, ignored, helpless, manipulated, angry at yourself and/or others
8. Others feel guilty, or superior and frustrated with you
9. You manipulate others to choose your way
10. You tend towards indirectness with the air of being direct
11. If you don’t get your own way, you’ll make snide comments or pout and be a victim
12. Others feel confused and frustrated, not sure who you are or what to expect next
13. You choose and make decisions for you
14. You are sensitive and caring with your honesty
15. You are self-respecting, self-expressive and straightforward
16. You are willing to compromise and negotiate

Communication Style Key:

If most of your answers are in: 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1-4</th>
<th>Your primary style is:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5-8</td>
<td>Aggressive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9-12</td>
<td>Passive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13-16</td>
<td>Passive Aggressive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Assertive</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Basic Communication Styles

Passive
- I’m not okay

Aggressive
- You’re not okay

Passive Aggressive
- You’re not okay, but I will let you think you are

Assertive
- I’m okay and you’re okay

Characteristics of Assertive Individuals

- Stand up for rights and beliefs
- Convey sensitivity
- Understand other’s feelings
- Confront conflicting behavior

Techniques for Communicating More Effectively

- Be careful about asking questions that aren’t questions
- Watch your non-verbal communication, your tone, posture, and eye contact
- Use “I” language assertion
“I” Language Assertiveness

1. Express your feelings
2. Describe the behavior
3. Describe the effect on you
4. Give a statement of the desired change
5. State the consequences if the behavior does not change

Exercise – TRY IT

Please complete the following:

Try It!

I feel ___________________________ when you ___________________________

(feeling word)    (behavior)

because ___________________________

(effect on speaker)

I would like you to ___________________________

(statement of change)

If you do/don’t ___________________________

(statement of change)

I will/I may/I will ___________________________

(statement of consequence)
Components of Non-Verbal Communication

Sender/Receiver Disconnect

Two leading causes of communication breakdowns and misunderstandings
- Listening Barriers
- Contradictory messages

Solutions
- Discard bad listening habits
- Build effective listening skills
- Learn to read body language

Active Listening

**Effective Listening**
- Suspend judgment
- Reflect feelings
- Paraphrase main ideas
- Clarify with questions
- Make summarizing statements

**Barriers**
- Thinking of how you will respond
- Judging
- Loaded words
- Advice giving
- Quizzing
- Reassuring
Clarification Skills

A. Hearing
B. Clarifying and Confirming
C. Responding

Questions:
1. What’s a poor listening habit you want to let go of?
2. What is something you can do to make you a more effective listener?
3. Are you more aware of body language and what it might signal to others.
Benefits
Your employer cares about you as an employee and as a person who lives a life outside the workplace. We at Concern understand how balancing these roles can make your life a juggling act:

- Balancing work, home, and leisure
- Taking care of people who rely on you
- Dealing with the stress of modern life
- Handling loss and the unexpected

Call Concern’s toll-free number if you feel overwhelmed by the stressors in life. 800-344-4222

Mindfulness for Everyday Living
You have access to eM Life – an entire suite of evidence-based live and on-demand mindfulness solutions.

- It Can be accessed via the Concern Website: employees.concernhealth.com, or
- You can download and access via your mobile phone.
Thank you!
Questions? Comments?

Please complete the Survey Monkey
https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/3VHDNPS