

# ASSERTIVENESS



## QUICK EXPLANATION

Assertiveness is a communication skill that requires being clear about your thoughts, wants and needs while still considering the thoughts, wants and needs of others. Assertiveness can be something that students struggle with especially if you have low confidence. Assertiveness is a good skill to develop as you can continue to use it throughout your life. This wellbeing activity gives some tips about how to become more assertive.



## AIM

To help you better communicate with others.



## INSTRUCTIONS

If you struggle with saying what is on your mind, participating in group work or find it hard to say 'no' to people, go through the below tips to see if there is anything you can practice to improve your assertiveness.

- Honesty is often the best policy. Telling others how you honestly feel results in people having a clear understanding about your opinion. Remember to listen to their views and thoughts as well.
- Be clear and concise. Avoid statements or messages that can be misinterpreted.
- Have a gentle and level tone of voice. How you say something is as important as what you say. Speak at a normal conversation volume, rather than a shout or whisper, and make sure that you sound firm but not aggressive.
- Make sure your body language matches your words. Your listener will get mixed messages if you are speaking firmly while looking at the floor. Try to look the other person in the eye, stand tall, and relax your face.
- Try to avoid exaggerating and use facts, not opinions. For example: "You are 20 minutes late, and it is the third time this week" rather than "you are always late!"
- Use "I Statements" as much as possible, to tell the other person how you feel rather than be accusing. For example: "When you don't contribute to the work, I feel frustrated because the deadline is next week, but I don't want to do all of the work myself" rather than: "You're so lazy and never help".
- Come up with solutions. If there is an ongoing issue, it is a good idea to come with a few solutions to the problem so that it highlights that you still want to continue your work with the person. Also leave room for them to suggest solutions.
- Practice makes perfect. Assertiveness is a skill which requires you to practise in many different situations. And don't forget to praise yourself for your good efforts!



## RESOURCES