



Resilience

Module Two

A Promoting Excellence
Online Course

This is part of a series of online courses
available from Promoting Excellence
Leadership Consultants.



Promoting
Excellence

Resilience: Module 2 Handout on Assertiveness

Further steps and information to help with improving your assertiveness

N.B. Prepare - you need to know **what** to say and **how** to say it.

As you read the handout reflect on both your assertiveness and communication skills.

Highlight areas to work on.

What will you take away from this exercise?

Assertiveness – verbal techniques	Assertiveness – non-verbal techniques
<p>DO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare in advance • Ensure you have the person’s full attention • Be straightforward • Repeat the message as necessary • Begin statements with ‘I’ e.g. ‘I think’ • If you are interrupted, say ‘please let me finish’ • Let others express their opinions • Listen to others’ viewpoints • Keep an open mind • Try to find common ground, a compromise, or an alternative • Accept that others can also say no 	<p>DO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use positive body language • Lean forward and make eye contact • Keep your head, shoulders neck and arms relaxed • Use positive facial expressions to show interest
<p>DON’T</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be afraid to say NO, but explain your refusal, or offer a suitable alternative time / date, or whatever • Blame others • Apologise for your views • Interrupt people speaking 	<p>DON’T</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fidget • Look bored • Lose your temper, or get angry

Being Assertive: when giving feedback

- ✓ Positive feedback is more powerful than negative.
- ✓ Descriptive, evidence-based feedback is more helpful for improvement.
- ✓ Assertive feedback will empower people.
- ✓ Focus on behaviour not personalities.
- ✓ Do not make assumptions – explore reasons in a two-way conversation.

- ✓ Do it in person rather than by email. If you must email – reflect first, then re-read the email before sending it.

Handling criticism

- Listen carefully – and ask for an example or clarification.
- Avoid being aggressive – denying, sulking or saying nothing – accepting unfounded criticism.
- Reflect on the criticism – is it fair?
- React – stand up for yourself, be respectful, reject it, or accept it and work on it.

How to further develop your assertiveness

- Practise in low-risk situations.
- Treat others as you would expect to be treated yourself.
- Ask for feedback from a critical friend.
- Keep an open mind and consider others and factors that may be affecting them.
- Be sincere and respectful.
- Avoid absolutes – steer clear of words like ‘never’ and ‘always’.

Remaining positive

In a similar way to assertiveness, you can become far more productive and effective by thinking and being positive. Those who are resilient tend to think positively and are proactive rather than reactive when managing problematic situations.

Having a positive outlook means:

- challenging any negative thoughts as soon as they enter your head
- making sure that individuals who are negative and drain your energy are avoided – spend more time with individuals who are ‘upbeat’
- dealing with facts not with ‘what ifs’ – as imagining a situation can lead to negativity
- using positive language, look in the mirror and tell yourself “I will do”, “I can do”, “I am”.