

CONFIDENT COMMUNICATIONS

There are numerous elements in the composition of a confident and effective communicator. With my compliments the following is a brief overview of three of these communication elements.

1. Becoming Assertive
 2. Conquering Your Presentation Nerves
 3. Effective Decision Making
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1. BECOMING ASSERTIVE

Assertive people who use their personal influencing skills are deemed to be happier, more in control and better able to get what they want out of their career and life itself. The reverse of assertiveness includes passive and aggressive behaviour.

You are being passive if you find yourself always deferring to the needs and desires of other people.

Aggressive behaviour manifests itself if you are short with others or resent people for taking advantage of you. Neither passive nor aggressive behaviour is good for you.

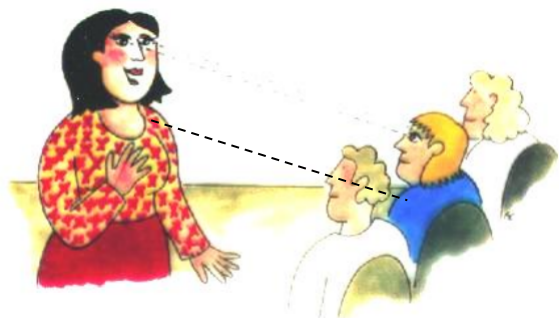
To become assertive a person must habitually practice three distinct abilities:

- The ability to discuss
- The ability to argue
- The ability to negotiate

However these three abilities are not enough to understand just what it is to be assertive. You also need to take on board certain rules of the communication model:

Rule 1: Understand that you cannot not communicate.

All of your actions, reactions, gestures, facial expressions, speech, clothing and toiletries send out a message on your behalf. It is up to you to ensure that the correct and accurate message is being transmitted.



Rule 2: Understand and be able to apply your own personal power. Develop positive self-respect, practice being able to break away from destructive character habits. Imagine yourself on a pedestal and then remind yourself who you are, where you have come from and where you are going.

Rule 3: Make and maintain eye contact. Using your eyes to suggest interest and attention to another person can help you initiate that sense of “connection” that will help the other person “decide that they want to help you.”

Learn to become assertive as an alternative response when communicating with others. Use assertiveness as a communication tool to work towards ensuring positive outcomes.

When being assertive, remember to:

- Discuss with knowledge
- Argue with passion
- Negotiate with skill

2. CONQUERING YOUR PRESENTATION NERVES

Take some time to calm yourself from the inside.

Nervousness causes physiological reactions which are mostly attributed to the increase of adrenaline in your system. You can counteract these effects with a few simple techniques:

1. Practice deep breathing - Adrenalin causes you to breathe shallowly.

By breathing deeply your brain will get the oxygen it needs and the slower pace will trick your body into believing you are calmer. It also helps with voice quivers, which can occur when your breathing is irregular.



2. Drink water - Adrenalin can cause a dry mouth, which in turn leads to getting tongue-tied. Have a glass of room-temperature water handy - cold water may make your throat constrict. Take sips occasionally, especially when you want to emphasise a point.
3. Smile - This is a natural relaxant that sends positive chemicals through your body.



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4. Use visualisation techniques - Imagine that you are delivering your presentation to an audience that is interested, enthused, smiling, and reacting positively. Cement this positive image in your mind and recall it right before you are ready to begin.
5. Press and massage your forehead - To energise the front of the brain and speech centre.
6. Just before you start talking, pause, make eye contact and smile - This last moment of peace is very relaxing and gives you time to adjust to now having become the centre of attention.
7. Speak more slowly than you would in a conversation and leave longer pauses between sentences - This slower pace calms you down and it will also make you easier to hear, especially in a large space.
8. Move around during your presentation - This will expend some of your nervous energy and keep your audience engaged.
9. STAY (Stop Thinking About Yourself) - Remember that your audience is there to get learn something from you and it is your role to communicate it to them.

3.EFFECTIVE DECISION MAKING

Making a simple decision is hard enough at the best of times. Making an informed decision is difficult and the consequences can often be unforeseen.

Before making any decision, consider the following ten steps as your model for success:

1. What is my over-riding objective?
2. Can I list and prioritise my objectives?
3. What actions need to be taken by myself or others?
4. Who will help me achieve my success?
5. Should I brainstorm to develop substitute alternatives?
6. Is there a beginning, middle and an end to this specific plan?
7. What will the cost be to me both financially and personally?
8. What are the milestones?
9. How will I know when I am successful?
10. Can I evaluate the decision for additional or possible consequences?





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Once you have made your decision, begin implementation immediately. As implementation proceeds, build in evaluation and analysis as a complementary process to your decision making.

Then practice, practice and practice your decision making skills. If you are not making mistakes from decisions made; and learning from those mistakes, you are not trying hard enough!

If you would like what you have read and would like more information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

I look forward to hearing from you.

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