

Talk Assertively

Review the following strategies to understand *how* using your words impacts whether you sound assertive:

1. **Basic Assertion:** use clear and uncomplicated statements to confirm what you need or want.

You receive a phone call in the evening when you are leaving your house to meet friends. You could reply:

Great to hear from you, but I'm now heading out. Can I give you a call tomorrow?

2. **Empathy:** show that you are aware of the other person's situation while asserting your rights.

I realize that you are busy, but I need to meet with you tomorrow to discuss the project's issues.

Empathy can be a useful way of engaging with someone when a conversation involves confrontation or you are not comfortable with asking.

3. **Escalation:** a crucial skill for more challenging and confrontational engagements.

While remaining calm and controlled, there are times when it may be necessary to become increasingly assertive. For example, when the person you are dealing with ignores your needs or your rights.

Escalation is typically used as a last resort when basic assertion and empathy have failed.

4. **"I" or "Me":** after you have made it clear what the other person has done, then voice your concern.

Use simple statements and "I" or "Me" to maintain control of your side of the conversation.

I am unhappy with the new timescales, they do not take into account X.

Say how this has made you feel or affected you instead of starting with a more accusing "You" statement. It sounds less argumentative or aggressive and is less easy to deny.

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