



## COMMUNICATION SKILLS

# ASSERTIVE, PASSIVE, AND AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR

The difference among assertive, passive, and aggressive behavior are more easily understood by contrasting them, however, it should be noted that each of them involves a RANGE of behaviors. Assertive behavior, like other behavior, will vary according to the situation and the feelings involved.

	<u>PASSIVE</u>	<u>ASSERTIVE</u>	<u>AGGRESSIVE</u>
<b>VOICE</b>			
<b>FACIAL EXPRESSION</b>			
<b>YOUR FEELINGS</b>			
<b>THE OTHER PERSON'S FEELINGS</b>			
<b>GOAL OF THE BEHAVIOR</b>			

*Communicating Effectively*

## Practicing Assertiveness Skills

For each situation below, write a passive, assertive, and an aggressive response.

You stayed up late finishing your take home test. At the beginning of class, your friend walks up, tells you they couldn't finish their test and asks to copy yours. This offends you because you put so much effort into your work and you're concerned about being accused of academic integrity.

Passive: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Assertive: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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Aggressive: \_\_\_\_\_

You walk by a group of students using offensive slurs directed at another student.

Passive: \_\_\_\_\_

Assertive: \_\_\_\_\_

Aggressive: \_\_\_\_\_

You're thinking about going to a small liberal arts college. Your parents want you to go to their alma matter, Stanford.

Passive: \_\_\_\_\_

Assertive: \_\_\_\_\_

Aggressive: \_\_\_\_\_

Your brother/sister has borrowed your favorite sweater without your permission.

Passive: \_\_\_\_\_

Assertive: \_\_\_\_\_

Aggressive: \_\_\_\_\_

You get a B- on your essay in English. You think you deserve an A.

Passive: \_\_\_\_\_

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Assertive: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Aggressive: \_\_\_\_\_

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## “I” Statement

- An “I-Statement” is a statement that starts with “I” and explains how something makes **you** feel.
- A “You-Statement” is a statement that starts with “You” and **blames** another person for how you are feeling.

An example of an “I-Statement” is as follows:

**I MESSAGE:**

- ② I feel (state your feelings), when (state the undesired behavior you wish to stop), because (state why you feel the why you do) and (state your future expectations and or future consequences).

For example, your friend calls you a bad name.

**I MESSAGE:**

- ② I feel (sad), when (someone calls me names), because (it makes me feel disliked) and (I need to be treated with more respect).

Example: \_\_\_\_\_

I feel:

\_\_\_\_\_

(Be specific about your emotions. You can use more than one word.) **When**

**you:**

\_\_\_\_\_

(Give details of how your friend has acted or what he or she has done.)

**Because**

\_\_\_\_\_

(Why do you think you feel this way?) **and**

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\_\_\_\_\_ (What  
would you like instead/ to change?)

Now, put the four parts together and write it as one sentence:

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## I-Statement: WORKSHEET

Several potential conflict situations are described below. Indicate how you might handle each situation, first using a "YOU" message, and then using an "I" message. Which is likely to get the best results?

CONFLICT SITUATION	"YOU" MESSAGE	"I" MESSAGE
Your teacher is upset because you often neglect to do your homework.		
Your friend promises to return your headphones to you. After a reminder, she again forgets it.		
You have made a suggestion. A classmate counters with a snide remark. You feel put down.		
A team-mate is dominating the ballgame. You resent this.		
Two of your friends want you to skip class. You are frustrated by the teasing when you tell them no.		

## "I" Statement Handout

I feel \_\_\_\_\_ (Insert feeling word)

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when (tell what caused the feeling).

I would like (tell what you want to happen instead).

## 10 ways to have a better conversation

Watch the TED Talk “10 Ways to Have a Better Conversation” - <https://goo.gl/Kk5qzJ>

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_
9. \_\_\_\_\_
10. \_\_\_\_\_

After watching the video, reflect on which ones you do when engaging in a conversation and place a check mark in the box next to the ones you need to improve on

1. Which of the tips above, might be the easiest for you to change? Why
  
2. Which of the tips above might be the hardest for you to change? Why

Practice your skills

Have a conversation tonight with someone, family member, friend, teammate etc. In that conversation attempt to follow the tips above. Reflect on your conversation below, how did it go? Were you able to follow all 10 tips? What challenges did you face?

