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**Intellectual Output 1**



**The Language of Negotiations for Engineering Students**

**A guidebook for English learners with theoretical and diverse hands-on activities focusing on innovative cross-cultural communication practice for engineering schools and technical universities. The course embraces diplomatic language, bargaining, active listening, self-assertion practice, and much more. It is based on authentic sources.**

**IO1: LANGUAGE OF NEGOTIATIONS**

**Written by MAŁGORZATA TOMAL**

**SJO AGH UST, KRAKÓW**

***SECTION SEVEN***

***SELF-ASSERTION: THEORETICAL INPUT***

**STUDENTS**

**I. OBJECTIVES – HOW YOU WILL BENEFIT FROM THE “SELF-ASSERTION” SECTIONS:**

ONCE YOU HAVE COMPLETED ALL TASKS CONTAINED IN THE NEXT TWO LESSONS YOU SHOULD:

* *Expand your knowledge of assertive, non-assertive and aggressive behaviour*
* *Be able to distinguish between these types of behaviour and how they are reflected in the language*
* *Expand your language capacity related to assertion*

**II. WARM UP QUESTIONS**

1. How would you define self-assertion? Why is it considered a crucial life skill?

2. What could be other types of behaviour that could be classified as not assertive?

3. How different would be the discourse markers (features characterizing the language) and attitudes representing them?

Read the following two sections to check if you were right.

**III. DID YOU KNOW?**

**Assertion** training has gained increasing recognition in the last decades. Its aim is to teach people how to express themselves more effectively, honestly and appropriately.

The level of assertiveness demonstrated in any human community varies, depending on the times, technological development, traditions, social and cultural factors, and many others. For example, over the last years global public discussions have been held about controversial topics, such as drug addiction, sexual harassment, rape, abortion or euthanasia, which were considered taboo until very recently. Contemporary Westerners are much more outspoken and direct when expressing personal views and choosing their lifestyles than their grandparents were.

After WWII assertiveness has been increasingly singled out as a behavioural skill taught by many personal development experts and therapists, being viewed as one of the crucial human capacities on the way to happiness and success.

**IV. READING. Read the text in pairs: one of you reads Part One, the other – Part Two. Then recap the gist of each part to each other and share your views. Together add a little paragraph, in section “From you……………….”, expressing your own views on the matter.**

**PART ONE**

Assertiveness is the quality of being *self-assured* and *confident* without being *aggressive*. In the field of [psychology](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Psychology) and [psychotherapy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Psychotherapy), it is a skill that can be learned and a mode of communication. [Dorland's Medical Dictionary](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dorland%27s_Medical_Dictionary) defines assertiveness as:

“a form of behaviour characterized by a confident declaration or *affirmation* of a statement without need of proof; this *affirms* the person's rights or point of view without either aggressively *threatening* the rights of another (assuming a position of *dominance*) or *submissively* permitting another to *ignore or deny one's rights* or point of view.”

It is considered a critical life skill and recommended for children to develop. While not currently taught in schools, assertiveness is a communication skill that can be taught and effectively learnt.

Assertiveness is a method of *critical thinking* where an individual *speaks up in defence of their views* or in light of erroneous information. Assertive people are able to be *outspoken* and *analyse* *information* and point out areas of information lacking substance, details or evidence. Assertiveness *supports creative thinking* and *effective communication*.

***From you …………………………………………………………………***

**PART TWO**

Psychologists have identified three major types of behaviour:

1. ASSERTIVE BEHAVIOUR – expressing your feelings, needs, legitimate rights or opinions *clearly, honestly, inoffensively and directly* without being aggressive to others and without *infringing* on their rights. Assertive behaviour is not designed primarily to enable a person to gain what they want.

Once the skill of assertive communication is mastered, the probability of achieving one’s goals without *denying the rights of others* is increased.

***From you ……………………………..***

2. NON-ASSERTIVE BEHAVIOUR – failing to successfully express one’s needs, opinions or feelings, or expressing them too *indirectly or implicitly*. For instance, a non-assertive person will accept activities not at all to their taste or will fail to ask a favour even when absolutely needed. “I suppose we could go to the swimming pool if you insist”, or “I wish I knew someone who could help me carry these bags” represent indirect or implicit statements, typically used by *shy* persons. Their interlocutors are expected to read the speaker’s mind and flawlessly infer what they mean. However, this kind of communication can be easily misread, leaving the speaker unhappy, and feeling misunderstood.

***From you …………………………………..***

3. AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOUR – expressing your feelings or opinions in a *punishing, threatening, demanding, manipulative or hostile manner*, without or with *little consideration* of the feelings or rights of the other person. The person who behaves aggressively often *assumes no responsibility* for the consequences of their action.

Common expressions used by aggressively behaving people might be: “You’d better lend me $5!”, or “You are coming with me whether you like it or not!”

***From you ………………………………….***

**V. ACTIVITIES.**

**A. COMPLETE THE TABLE UNDER THE APPROPRIATE HEADINGS. DRAW ON THE TEXT IN THE PREVIOUS ACTIVITIES AND ADD YOUR OWN IDEAS**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| FEATURE | NON-ASSERTIVEBEHAVIOUR | ASSERTIVE BEHAVIOUR | AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOUR |
| NOUN OR NOMINAL PHRASE | SUBMISSION | CONSENSUS | DOMINANCE |
| VERB OR VERBAL PHRASE | SUGGEST | REACH A COMPROMISE / CONSENSUS | INFRINGE ON SB’S RIGHTS |
| ADJECTIVE | SHY | DECIDED / DECISIVE | WILFULMANIPULATIVE |
| PHRASE / DISCOURSE MARKER | I SUPPOSE I COULD | LET’S… SHALL WE? | YOU’D BETTER… OR I’LL |

**B. ASSERTIVENESS AT WORK.**

**1. IN GROUPS OF FOUR COMPLETE THE LIST OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE WORKPLACE. COMPARE IT WITH ANOTHER GROUP AND SELECT THE TOP SIX.**

* **The right to hold your own views**
* **The right to……………..**
* **The right to…………………**
* **The right to …………………..**
* **The right to……………….**
* **The right to ………………..**
* **The right to …………………**
* **The right to ……………………**

**2. WHICH RIGHTS ARE BEING CONTRAVENED (BREACHED)?**

1) “I don’t want to hear any of your smart remarks! When I want to hear your opinion, I’ll ask for it!

2) “Your feelings? What do I care what you feel about it? Just get on with your job!”

3) “Just get out of here! People are working here!”

4) “What do you mean you can’t work late tonight? Didn’t you say you would be available 24/7 at the job interview?”

5) “You have forgotten you bring this document to the meeting again! We will not tolerate mistakes anymore!”

6) “The company cannot afford to offer pay raises to everyone!”

**VI. BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES**

1. Activities III and IV:

Written on the basis of <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Assertiveness> Accessed on 11 September 2020

2. Activity V:

Some ideas were inspired by:

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The Business 2.0 C1 Advanced Student’s Book, John Allison, Rachel Appleby and Edward Chazal, Unit 4 p.54, MACMILLAN 2017

***SECTION SIX***

***SELF-ASSERTION: THEORETICAL INPUT***

**TEACHER’S**

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***From you ……………………………..***

2. NON-ASSERTIVE BEHAVIOUR – failing to successfully express one’s needs, opinions or feelings, or expressing them too *indirectly or implicitly*. For instance, a non-assertive person will accept activities not at all to their taste or will fail to ask a favour even when absolutely needed. “I suppose we could go to the swimming pool if you insist”, or “I wish I knew someone who could help me carry these bags” represent indirect or implicit statements, typically used by *shy* persons. Their interlocutors are expected to read the speaker’s mind and flawlessly infer what they mean. However, this kind of communication can be easily misread, leaving the speaker unhappy, and feeling misunderstood.

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Common expressions used by aggressively behaving people might be: “You’d better lend me $5!”, or “You are coming with me whether you like it or not!”

***From you ………………………………….***

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|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| FEATURE | NON-ASSERTIVEBEHAVIOUR | ASSERTIVE BEHAVIOUR | AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOUR |
| NOUN OR NOMINAL PHRASE | SUBMISSION***WIN-LOSE SITUATION******LOSE-LOSE SITUATION*** | CONSENSUS***NEGOTIATION******WIN-WIN SITUATION******INOFFENSIVE COMMUNICATION******SINCERITY******HONESTY*** | DOMINANCE***AN IMPACT / INFLUENCE******WIN-LOSE SITUATION******LOSE-LOSE SITUATION******MANIPULATION******OFFENSIVE COMMUNICATION*** |
| VERB OR VERBAL PHRASE | SUGGEST***IMPLY******GIVE IN******BEAT ABOUT THE BUSH******CONCEAL YOUR FEELINGS******COME ROUND******BE TALKED INTO******BE PERSUADED*** | REACH A COMPROMISE / CONSENSUS***NEGOTIATE******BE OPEN TO NEGOTIATION / DISCUSSION******DEBATE******LISTEN ACTIVELY******STAND YOUR GROUND******PUT YOUR FOOT DOWN******RECOGNIZE YOUR VALUE******CONTROL YOUR EMOTIONS******EXPRESS YOUR VIEWS AND FEELINGS CLEARLY AND HONESTLY******SPEAK UP******ACKNOWLEDGE YOUR OPPONENT’S POSITION******DEFUSE CONFLICT*** | INFRINGE ON SB’S RIGHTS***DOMINATE******TO IMPACT / INFLUENCE******TO SUBORDINATE******MANIPULATE******EXERT INFLUENCE******FIGHT******SHOUT******YELL******IMPOSE******INFLICT******BLAME******RANT*** ***RAGE******THREATEN******SPARK CONFLICT******FESTER A PROBLEM*** |
| ADJECTIVE | SHY***BASHFUL******HESITANT******RESERVED******WITHDRAWN******INDIRECT******IMPLICIT******IMPLIED******SUBMISSIVE******POWERLESS******UNDECIDED******SELF-CONSCIOUS******MILD******MEEK******EASILY PERSUADED******IMPRESSIONABLE*** | DECIDED / DECISIVE***FIRM******SELF-ASSURED******SELF-CONFIDENT******DIRECT******OUTSPOKEN******EXPLICIT******CLEAR******ARTICULATE******HONEST******SINCERE******NON-JUDGEMENTAL******LEVEL-HEADED******COOL-HEADED******RATIONAL******SENSIBLE******CONSIDERATE******TACTFUL******IN CONTROL*** | WILFULMANIPULATIVE***RUDE******ARROGANT******IMPUDENT******INSOLENT******DESPOTIC******DOMINANT******DOMINEERING******DOGMATIC******FORCEFUL******STUBBORN******TACTLESS******FORCEFUL******RELENTLESS******UNRELENTING******INFLUENTIAL*** |
| PHRASE / DISCOURSE MARKER | I SUPPOSE I COULD***YOU MIGHT BE RIGHT******I AGREE*** | LET’S… SHALL WE?***WHY DON’T WE…******HOW ABOUT*** | YOU’D BETTER… OR I’LL***YOU HAVE TO*** |

**B. ASSERTIVENESS AT WORK.**

***Tip for the Teacher: after 5 minutes of Students doing Activity B1. draw up one common list of rights on the blackboard to be used for Activity B2.***

**1. IN GROUPS OF FOUR COMPLETE THE LIST OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE WORKPLACE. COMPARE IT WITH ANOTHER GROUP AND SELECT THE TOP SIX.**

* **The right to hold your own views**
* ***The right to be heard out***
* ***The right to your own needs, wants and feelings and to a free, assertive expression of these***
* ***The right to be appreciated and respected***
* ***The right to refuse a request without feeling uncomfortable***
* ***The right to be wrong, as no one is infallible***
* ***The right to be different from what conventional norms say (without infringing on anybody else’s rights)***
* ***The right to have your rights respected and your position acknowledged…***

**2. WHICH RIGHTS ARE BEING CONTRAVENED?**

1) “I don’t want to hear any of your smart remarks! When I want to hear your opinion, I’ll ask for it!

2) “Your feelings? What do I care what you feel about it? Just get on with your job!”

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