MODULE OVERVIEW

Assertiveness: Stand firm, stay respectful

Adaptive module | ~20 min

Almost all employees think they are assertive (88% in a recent study), yet over half admit missing opportunities by not asserting themselves. This module builds healthy self-assertion from the three attitudes that lead to a dead end—manipulation, avoidance, and aggression—each recognizable by its typical phrases and each with a way out. It adds two useful clarifications: walking away is not running away, and expressing anger is not attacking.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

01 Recognize the three dead-end attitudes by their typical phrases: the rascal's manipulation, the doormat's avoidance, and the hedgehog's aggression.

02 Practice assertiveness: speak in the first person ("I"), state your needs clearly, and look for win-win solutions.

03 Distinguish walking away from running away, and healthy anger that sets limits from aggression.

04 Get out of each dead end (play fair, dare to assert yourself, ease your stress) and stay assertive even with AI.

WHO IT'S FOR

Anyone who wants to express their needs and disagreements clearly, with respect for everyone.

- **Prerequisite:** none

HOW THE MODULE WORKS

Self-paced, with practice tailored to each learner.

1. **Self-assessment**: on 9 dimensions, to gauge current habits and guide the practice.
2. **Expert video**: 10 minutes, with 3 pauses for reflection.
3. **Practice scenarios**: the first 2 chosen from the self-assessment, then 16 optional ones. Every answer gets feedback: what it leads to, and one way to improve.
4. **Dated commitment**: one action to try, written by the learner or picked from the suggestions.
5. **Memo to download**: key takeaways, questions, commitment, personal notes and checklists.

ASSESSMENT AND COMPLETION

Pass mark: 80%

The score takes into account your answers to the practice scenarios, your commitment and, where relevant, any additional learning activities. Passing requires a commitment and a score of at least 80%.

METHODS & MODELS

- Rascal / doormat / hedgehog model (manipulation / avoidance / aggression) – in the tradition of approaches such as Thomas Gordon's
- "I" statements – a classic assertiveness technique (close to Nonviolent Communication)
- Win-win – Afthonios method

SOURCES & REFERENCES

- Acuity Training (survey of 500 employees) – 88% rate themselves as assertive, but 55% admit they have missed opportunities by not asserting themselves
- "Rascal / doormat / hedgehog" metaphor (manipulation / avoidance / aggression) – in the tradition of Thomas Gordon's work
- Academic studies on assertiveness (nurses and managers) – link between self-assertion and lower burnout
- Eiko Suzuki et al., "Relationship between assertiveness and burnout among nurse managers", Japan Journal of Nursing Science (2009, 172 nurse managers): the higher the assertiveness, the lower the burnout – the risk falls by 26% for every 10 points of assertiveness

- Module created by Afthonios.com.
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