



WHAT COMMUNICATION STYLE ARE YOU?

Name:

Directions: Select the answer that describes how you communicate most often.

P = Passive, AG = Aggressive, P/A = Passive Aggressive, and AS = Assertive

1. My friends would call me:
P: ☐ shy
AG: ☐ loud
P/A: ☐ sarcastic
AS: ☐ confident
2. I usually:
P: ☐ don't share my opinions even though I have them.
AG: ☐ share my opinions in a demanding way.
P/A: ☐ have opinions but don't share them and then become angry towards everyone involved.
AS: ☐ have opinions and share them with others while being open and respectful to the opinions of others.
3. I feel:
P: ☐ that the opinions of others matter more than my own.
AG: ☐ that my opinions matter more than the opinions of others.
P/A: ☐ that I will follow the opinions and ideas of others but talk badly about them behind their backs.
AS: ☐ that my needs are important and so are the needs of others.
4. When walking into a crowded room:
P: ☐ I want to hide my face.
AG: ☐ I don't mind pushing my way through the crowd.
P/A: ☐ I may push someone out of my way and then blame it on someone else.
AS: ☐ I smile and say "hi" to others and respect other people's space.
5. I often:
P: ☐ ignore problems.
AG: ☐ cause problems.
P/A: ☐ hide problems.
AS: ☐ solve problems.

Scoring:

PASSIVE	AGGRESSIVE	PASSIVE/AGGRESSIVE	ASSERTIVE
P = 	AG = 	P/A = 	AS =

Many people mistakenly confuse aggressiveness with assertiveness, which is not true. Aggressiveness is behaving in a hostile way. Assertiveness is standing up for your right to be treated fairly and/or advocating for yourself in a clear, direct, and honest way that is positive and proactive. It is expressing your opinions, needs, and feelings, without ignoring or hurting the opinions, needs, and feelings of others. Assertiveness is actually one of the most positive skill sets you can use and develop for lifelong success.

Why Does It Matter?

Every day, we're in situations where being assertive can help us — like asking someone for help, approaching a boss with a question, or doing well on a job interview.

An assertive communication style can help us do the things we want to do. But it goes further than that: Being assertive shows we respect ourselves and other people we communicate with. People who speak assertively send the message that they believe in themselves. They're not too timid and they're not too pushy. They know that their feelings and ideas matter. [They're confident.](#)

People who are assertive tend to make friends more easily. They communicate in a way that respects other people's needs as well as their own. They tend to be better at working out conflicts and disagreements. When using assertive communication, as the saying goes “You gotta give respect, to get respect.”

NOW LET’S PRACTICE: How should you communicate in each situation below?

Select the Assertive Communication method from the choices and see if you can identify the other methods of communication as your read through the choices.

- 1. In a meeting:
 - A. I’m too afraid to raise my hand even though I know the answer.
 - B. I shout the answer because I always know them and no one else ever does.
 - C. I know the answer but never participate and then get angry at other people who do.
 - D. I raise my hand when I know the answer and give others the opportunity to do the same.
- 2. I am:
 - A. bossy and intimidating towards others.
 - B. afraid to state what I really feel because I don’t want others to judge me.
 - C. understanding of my limits and I don’t allow anyone to push me beyond them.
 - D. two-faced: I come across as pleasant and friendly, but actually I am very angry and resentful.
- 3. You got a called out in a meeting and you’re not sure why. What do you do?
 - A. You ask the boss to talk after the meeting. You respectfully explain your confusion about what happened and ask what you can do differently next time.
 - B. You get angry at the boss and shout how horrible he/she is.
 - C. You don’t say anything but you talk badly about the boss behind his/her back.
 - D. You don’t say anything. It’s not a big deal.
- 4. Someone cuts in front of you in line...
 - A. Say nothing, but glare at them and "accidentally" push them a little.
 - B. Say nothing and do nothing.
 - C. Assume they didn't know you were in line; gently explain that you waiting before them.
 - D. Yell at them and shout for them to return to their place.
- 5. Someone accused you of being something that you are not...
 - A. You believe what they say and feel badly about yourself.
 - B. You accuse them of being something else right back.
 - C. You walk away and then write them a mean, anonymous note.
 - D. You gently tell them that you don’t appreciate, nor deserve, being accused of that and walk away.

Continue using the Assertive Communication method, answer these next set of questions. Write in your actual response to the situation in the space provided:

- 6. You go into work only to discover that your manager booked you for a shift on a day that you requested off.

- 7. You are at a restaurant and order a steak well done. It arrives rare.

- 8. You need to do some yard work and want help from someone else in the house.

9. There was a presentation for one of your company’s clients on a day that you were absent. You were legitimately sick. The boss tells you that someone on your team presented on behalf of the company and as such, got the account. They now lead the sales team which was a goal you had.

10. A friend wants to go watch a movie, however you want to go see something different.

After completing the worksheet, I challenge you to sit and reflect on how you identified that an ‘Assertive Communication styled’ person would respond in each situation and compare this response to how you would generally respond.

Write down the situations where there would be discrepancies.
Identify what other elements of communication could have affected these discrepancies.