

10 WAYS TO be Assertive

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POCKET READERS

10 WAYS TO - Series Overview

The 10 WAYS TO series provides advice, skills, and strategies to the readers for successfully negotiating different aspects of life. Each book suggests 10 clear, useful ways to the reader. The reader is encouraged to critically reflect on the reading material and their own lives in order to make any changes that would benefit them. The series includes the following.

- 10 ways to achieve work-life balance
- 10 ways to be more productive
- 10 ways to manage money
- 10 ways to be successful in love
- 10 ways to be assertive
- 10 ways to be smart online
- 10 ways to be environmentally friendly
- 10 ways to be healthy
- 10 ways to work in a team
- 10 ways to organize a trip

More titles will appear in the series at a later date.

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Introduction

Think of people who can *directly* tell others what they think. They only take on work they want to do. They *calmly* talk with other people. They are *confident*. People listen carefully when they talk. They *speak up* when they think something needs to change. They also *respect* how other people feel. So, other people like to work with them. These kinds of people are *assertive*.

For some people, being assertive feels *natural*. For the rest of us, being assertive is difficult. However, learning to be more assertive can make your life a lot better. You will have less *stress*. You can say what you feel without making other people angry or sad. You won't

agree to jobs you don't want to do. Your *relationships* with other people will improve. You can enjoy your time at work or school more. You will be happier with your life.

Learning to be assertive will take time. It will take *effort*. You will need to practice. However, as time goes by, it will become more natural.

Now, stop and think for a moment about your life. Think about what it would be like if you were more assertive. How would your life change if you could speak up for yourself more? What if you could calmly and directly tell others how you feel? Let's look at ten ways that you can do this:

1. Make a list of good things that will happen if you are assertive

We might feel *scared* to be more assertive at first. Sometimes, it is easier to just stay quiet. It is easier to not say anything. However, not saying anything may make us unhappy. Staying quiet may not make things better.

Why do you want to be more assertive? Make a list of reasons. List small reasons and big reasons. Don't just write, "I want to be more assertive with my boss." Don't just write, "I want to be more assertive with my family and friends." Write exactly what you want to happen. For example, "I want to tell my boss I can't do work on the weekend, so I can have more free time." Or,

“I want to ask my mother to stop asking me when I’m going to get married. It always makes me feel bad.” Or, “I want to ask my friends to listen to me. Sometimes, I want them to do what I want to do – not what they want to do.”

Don’t show this list to anyone. Keep it somewhere you can easily look at it. Read it often. This list will help you to remember why you want to try to be more assertive.

2. Think about times when you wanted to be more assertive

Remember a time when you wanted to be more assertive. Think about how you felt at that time. Think about what you said (or what you didn't say). Think about why you weren't more assertive.

Did you not know what to say? Was this the problem? Then, try thinking ahead about what to say if this happens again. Even better, write down what you will say. Did you feel nervous? Was this the problem? Then, you will need to learn ways to keep calm. Did you feel shy? If so, you will need to make efforts to **overcome** being shy. For example, learn to focus on

other people. Don't think about your feelings of shyness.

Were you scared to speak up? Why were you scared? Sometimes, we feel scared to try something new. We always do the same thing. We do it even if it doesn't make us happy. We imagine something bad will happen if we speak up. However, most of the time the bad things we imagine do not happen. Maybe, something good will happen if you speak up. Maybe, you will get what you want. Maybe, things will change for the better.

Reflection Questions

1. Can you remember the 10 ways to be assertive? Test yourself. If you forget any, go back, and read them again.
2. Do you do any of the 10 ways to be assertive in your life? If so, which ones do you do?
3. How could you use any of the 10 ways to be assertive in your life?
4. What do you think you will do differently in your life after reading this book?
5. Can you think of other ways to be assertive?

Vocabulary in Context

1. Directly

- Some people can **directly** tell others what they think. They simply say it.
- The airplane went **directly** to Paris. It did not stop in any other city on the way.
- You should tell your mother **directly** what happened. Don't wait for someone else to tell her.

2. Calmly

- Some people can **calmly** tell others what they think. They do not get angry or nervous.
- Please **calm** down. You are too excited.
- She took a deep breath, sat down, and **calmly** told us what happened.

3. Confident

- If you plan and practice something a lot, you will feel more **confident**. You will know what to do.
- The tennis player was very **confident**. She knew she could win the game.
- He is very **confident** at parties. He can talk to everyone and feel relaxed.

Vocabulary List

Directly:	(Adverb) to go straight without changing direction, moving away or stopping.
Calmly:	(Adverb) doing something without showing anger, nervousness, or other strong feelings. Calm (Adjective) not showing or feeling anger, nervousness or strong feelings. Calm (Verb) is to make someone or something calm.
Confident:	(Adjective) feeling positive; feeling that you can do something.
Speak up:	(Phrasal Verb) to say what you are thinking, even if it is different from what others are saying.
Respect:	(Verb) to think about other people's feelings.
Assertive:	(Adjective) having a confident personality.
Natural:	(Adjective) acting in a way that is easy and relaxed. Not acting a way that has been learned.
Relationships:	(Noun) being connected to another person.
Effort:	(Noun) hard work done to achieve a goal.
Scared:	(Adjective) to feel afraid. Scary (Adjective) is something that makes you feel scared.