

Expressing “I”

Being assertive is standing up for what you want and need without feeling the need to freeze, take flight, fight, or fold. In essence, this is being kind to yourself.

One of the most powerful methods of becoming assertive is practicing “I” statements. Try to avoid “you” statements. When you state, “I am hurt,” it conveys responsibility for your own feelings and will give the other person information about how you are reacting and feeling about their behavior.

Saying, “YOU hurt my feelings” is accusing the other person. They might feel a need to defend themselves. “I” messages are important because they make us responsible for our own thoughts, behaviors, and feelings. Stick to the specific point or task when offering advice and giving constructive feedback.

A kind approach would be to discuss the tasks and avoid attacking the person.

“I” messages	“YOU” messages
~ “I feel intimidated right now”	~ “You always intimidate me.”
~ “I get frustrated when...”	~ “You frustrate me.”
~ “I am angry when I can’t finish a sentence...”	~ “You never let me get a word in.”
~ “I felt hurt when...”	~ “You hurt my feelings.”




Assertive statements never lay blame on anyone or thing and are never attacking. Assertive statements are meant to be as objective as possible. Assertive statements are a kinder approach to handling difficult or conflict situations, rather than being passive or aggressive.

Practice three times this week using “I” statements and don’t forget to record how you felt changing your approach.

The Culture Group

Building Teams

Practicing "I"

The Process	My Assertiveness Statement
<p>1. I Think <i>Your perspective on the situation</i></p> 	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>2. I Feel <i>Your feelings about the situation</i></p> 	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>3. I Want <i>Your wants regarding the situation</i></p> 	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

Resource: *Compendium12* by Olivia McIvor