

## DEAR MAN

The acronym **DEAR MAN** outlines a strategy for communicating effectively. This strategy will help you express your wants and needs in a way that is respectful to yourself and others. Using DEAR MAN will increase the likelihood of positive outcomes from your interactions.

### Describe

Clearly and concisely describe the *facts* of the situation, without any judgment.

*"You have asked me to work late 3 days this week."*

### Express

Use "I" statements to express your emotions.

*"I feel overwhelmed by the extra work I've been given."*

### Assert

Clearly state what you want or need. Be specific when giving instructions or making requests.

*"I need to resume my regular 40-hour work week."*

### Reinforce

Reward the other person if they respond well to you.

*Smiling, saying "thank you", and other kind gestures work well as reinforcement.*

### Mindfulness

Being mindful of your goal means not getting sidetracked or distracted by other issues.

*"I would like to resolve the overtime issue before talking about the upcoming project."*

### Appear confident

Use body language to show confidence, even if you don't feel it.

*Stand up straight, make appropriate eye contact, speak clearly, and avoid fidgeting.*

### Negotiate

Know the limits of what you are willing to accept, but be willing to compromise within them.

*"I'll finish the extra work this week, but I won't be able to manage the same amount of work next week."*

# DEAR MAN

**Instructions:** Choose a specific interpersonal challenge you are dealing with, or that you have dealt with in the past. Answer the prompt for each step to create a plan for communicating about the issue.

**Describe:** What are the *facts* of the situation? Do not include opinions or interpretations.


**Express:** Write an "I" statement to express your feelings: "I feel \_\_\_\_ when \_\_\_\_."


**Assert:** How will you tell someone what you need? Respond with the specific language you will use.


**Reinforce:** How will you reward the other person for responding well to you?


**Mindfulness:** What is the goal of your interaction? What other topics might distract from the goal?


**Appear confident:** Describe the posture, eye contact, and tone of voice you will use.


**Negotiate:** What are the limits of what you are willing to accept?
