



Top 5 Ways to Be Assertive and Confident

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Self-help books fly off the shelves of bookstores. They're the most common books on request at libraries. From business people to housewives, people are looking for ways to improve their lives, and ***the most sought after self-help books are those on how to be assertive and confident.***

During job interviews, potential employers look for essential qualities in prospective employees. Assertiveness and confidence are high on the list. People we admire in the business world are often seen as confident and assertive.

To achieve goals in life, these are two valuable character traits. While some people seem to be born assertive and confident, the rest of us can learn these coveted characteristics.

Here are the top 5 ways to become assertive and confident:

- 1. Overcome shyness.** Shyness can range from healthy to overwhelming and debilitating. Shyness is not the same as having low self-esteem. Many shy people have a very positive image of themselves, but they lack assertiveness and confidence. ***If you're shy, you can practice these techniques to overcome your shyness:***
 - **Visualization.** Positively visualize situations and circumstances before experiencing them. This will give you a better "what if" scenario, and help you be better prepared for any variation.
 - **Practice speaking.** People who are shy often dislike the sound of their own voices. Practicing speeches in front of a mirror or with trusted friends will help you gain the confidence you need.

- **Reinforce the positive.** This is a way of thinking yourself out of being shy. By using affirmations to assert your positive characteristics, you can convince yourself that you *are* brilliant and worthy of great things. After all, sometimes the hardest person to convince is *you!*

2. Learn the difference between being aggressive and assertive. People respond better to an assertive person rather than an aggressive person.

- Aggressive people are seen as bullies who approach a problem with harsh criticism. They would say someone is doing a project "all wrong," for example.
- An assertive person, on the other hand, approaches the same situation with concerns and ideas to improve the project.
- Your goal should be to approach people with positive attitudes and solutions to problems. If you respect others and treat them as you want to be treated, you'll have the same courtesy returned to you.

3. Become informed. One of the best methods of being assertive and confident is to know your subject matter. ***No matter what the situation is, the more you know, the more confident you'll be.***

- It doesn't matter if it's a job interview or a presentation to your peers, knowing what you're speaking about will give you that aura of confidence you desire.
- Be prepared for potential questions on your subject matter. A good idea is to have a trusted coworker help you identify common questions and answers. You will gain confidence in front of others when you first brainstorm and practice with someone you are comfortable with.

4. Speak up. Speak with confidence ***even if you don't feel confident.*** Practice speaking this way. The more you practice the more it will become second nature.

5. Model your behavior after people you admire. Chances are the people you admire have the assertiveness and confidence you're looking for in your own life.

- Observe how they do things.
- Pay attention to what they say and how they say it.
- Watch their body language.

Studying people who have the traits you crave is one of the best ways to create those very same traits in yourself.

Learning to be confident and assertive can enable you to achieve your goals with ease, whatever they may be. Practicing these and other methods will put you on the right track to success.

First and foremost, you must believe in yourself and your abilities. Keep in mind that some of our greatest leaders didn't start out assertive and confident. George Washington was too shy to talk to people growing up. He changed his ways, and so can you!