



How to Be Assertive Without Being Rude or Controlling

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Assertiveness is an important skill that can make your life more enjoyable, but, unfortunately, it's also vastly misconstrued. Sometimes it's difficult to be assertive, or make your beliefs known, while still maintaining peace and understanding.

Assertive people often come off as rude or controlling. This is because generally people don't like to be told what to do or how to do it. ***The trick is in learning how to stand up for yourself without making others feel imposed upon.*** This is a skill you *can* develop with a little know-how and practice.

Try using the following tips in order to properly assert yourself:

- 1. Choose your words carefully.** This is especially important if you're going to assert yourself in situations where you were previously passive. ***Think about the different ways that your words can be interpreted.*** Write them down and read them back to yourself if that helps.
 - Remember that there's a fine line between being assertive and being aggressive.
- 2. Develop good listening skills.** Being assertive takes some great communication skills. Remember that communication has two sides - speaking *and* listening. Truly listening will help you clearly understand the situation at hand. When you follow up with thoughtful and assertive speech, others are more likely to value your opinion.
- 3. Avoid taking things personally.** Since being assertive can be touchy, ***sometimes you'll do everything right and still end up rubbing someone the wrong way.*** Learn how to brush off comments that don't matter.

4. **Be humble.** You can combat resistance to your assertiveness by being humble. Avoid bragging about yourself, even if it's in a joking manner.
5. **Show confidence.** People enjoy being led by people who ooze confidence. If you're going to be assertive and take charge, show the confidence to back it up. People will sense your lack of confidence if it isn't truly there, so give yourself permission to feel *good* about yourself and your accomplishments.
6. **Handle negative issues quickly.** If problems arise, jump on them immediately. It's a part of being assertive. ***Handle issues with kindness and respect*** and people will remember you for it. If you let problems linger or treat them in a negative manner, people will remember that too.
7. **Deal with feelings of superiority.** You're only human, so perhaps you *do* feel superior in a situation where you're being assertive. If so, be careful to avoid acting rudely.
8. **Apologize for mistakes.** When you're being assertive, you're no doubt in the spotlight. When you make a mistake in the spotlight, everyone knows about it. Act appropriately and apologize, and people will respect you for owning up to it.

Remember that the skill of assertiveness is something that develops over time. It may be overwhelming to try to make drastic changes overnight. Ease yourself into it and test the waters. It's always best to think with clarity and make your changes slowly.

With a gradual change, others will be more likely to accept your new assertiveness. Before you know it, you'll have their respect for the new, improved you!