



# Assertiveness & Influencing Ebook - **SAMPLE PAGES**



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*"A pessimist sees the difficulty in every opportunity; an optimist sees the opportunity in every difficulty."*  
**SIR WINSTON CHURCHILL**

## Symbols in this Self Development Course

The pack contains clear instructions, and symbols have been used to represent various activities:



Learning Objectives (section or whole pack)



A paper exercise or activity for you to complete



An on job activity at work



Consult line manager, your work team or a colleague



End of Section Quiz

"The average man finds life very uninteresting as it is. And I think that the reason why, is that he is always waiting for something to happen to him instead of setting to work to make things happen."

**AA MILNE**

# Section One:

# Defining Your Personal Style

Welcome to the first section of your self study course.



## Section Objectives

At the end of this section, you will be able to:

- Define your personal behavioural style in business dealings with others
- Define situations at work where you would like to get more of an outcome for yourself

Before you get into the course itself, it may be useful for you to get a handle on your **personal style** – the way you deal with business situations at work. The following Exercise will help you establish how you come across to others at work.



## Exercise

The result of this exercise relies on you being **honest** when answering the questions below – it's not how you would like to come across, it's how you **actually** behave, what you **actually** do.

## Instructions

Listed below are 25 descriptions of ways that people behave in business situations– be it one to one conversations on the job, or group meetings, such as daily briefings. Consider the statements overleaf, and tick the appropriate box on the scoring sheet, as to whether you **ALWAYS** do this, **OFTEN** do, **OCCASIONALLY** do, **SELDOM** do, or **NEVER** do it.. Remember – **be honest!**

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Do you agree with the results of the analysis? If not, why not?

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Whether you answered Q3 with a **YES** or a **NO**, there is a fundamental issue about how you have undertaken the questionnaire. It's **your** opinion of **your** behaviour. You may feel you know how you come across to others, but what counts is how your communication actually comes across. In other words, how do others judge you.



**Exercise**

Now ask your line manager or Mentor to complete the last exercise, with them assessing you this time. Photocopy the scoring sheet and ask your line manager to complete the questionnaire on you – about **your** behaviour. Compare your findings. What development needs do you now have?

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Compare and contrast the two sets of results. Discuss any differences with your line manager. They may be able to help you understand any differences by giving you examples of behaviour to support the ratings.

What were the areas you agreed on?

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**"No one can make you feel inferior without your consent."  
ELEANOR ROOSEVELT**

Before we cover the section content, let's just take time out to emphasise one point about learning a new skill such as Assertiveness. Try this simple activity ....



### **Activity**

Fold your arms in front of you. Now unfold them, and re-fold, but in a different way.

How does it feel?

Uncomfortable? Awkward? Doesn't feel right? Before long you will probably re-fold your arms back to the position you feel comfortable with.

The message from the activity is that to do something differently, you need to **practice** and **persevere**, otherwise you go back to your old ways.

This certainly applies to any type of training where you are picking up new skills. In assertiveness, the pack will show you various assertive techniques. However you will need to Practice! Practice! Practice!

**Practice** the techniques

**Practice** the words which you feel comfortable using

**Practice** by yourself

**Practice** in front of a full length mirror (to get the body language right)

**Practice** in front of a trusted colleague/friend/other half (so that they can give you feedback)

Don't worry if it is awkward at the start ..... everyone goes through this phase initially.

**Perseverance is the key!**

In the next exercise, you are going to be put into a situation outside of work. Something that you may have encountered before – either yourself, observed others in this situation or you know of someone who has been in a similar situation.



### **Exercise**

Imagine that you are driving down the back streets of your local town. You are by yourself. It is a Saturday afternoon in January, and you are going shopping. You are looking for a parking spot.

After about 15 minutes of looking, you find yourself driving down a narrow, residential street with cars parked either side. Suddenly, in front of you, a parking



### So What Do They Think of You?

Choose two or three trusted colleagues at work or friends at home. (include your line manager if you want). People who will give you honest feed back, and you respect their opinion.

Show them the qualities of the three types of behaviours and the typical quotes, which we have covered over the last few pages. Ask them to give you some feedback as to how you come across to others:

- Do you use similar words in the quotes?
- Do you have a dominant style in their view?
- Can they give you examples to exemplify?
- Is there any sort of pattern to these behaviours? For example, are there any particular situations where you display a certain type of behaviour?
- Does your style affect them in any way? If so, in what way?
- Do they have any ideas on alternative approaches for you?

You may want to feedback to them the results of the previous exercise.

### Feedback: Colleague 1

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"If one person says that you are a horse, smile at them.  
If two people say that you are a horse, give it some thought.  
If three people say you are a horse, go out and buy a saddle."

**PROVERB**

Your answers may include:

## 1. Culture

In some countries, bartering is the order of the day. When we go on holiday to Egypt or Portugal, we expect to barter to bring the price down – many of us wouldn't dream of paying the first price quoted. However, do we do it in the U.K.? Probably not very often - car sales and house purchase excepted! We tend to pay the price on the ticket without being assertive to haggle.

In restaurants the Brits have a tendency to put up with more than possibly the Americans or Germans might. Warm soup is tolerated without complaint.

Queuing in bus stops tend to be orderly – if someone pushes in the queue, annoyance is expressed internally, without external complaint.

## 2. Gender

Historically, women are geared up from childhood towards fairly passive/assertive activities, as opposed to men who tend to move towards assertive/aggressive pastimes. Girls are encouraged to be gentle, share, not to argue, kiss and make up. Boys are encouraged to be tough, strong, not to cry, and you 'go and hit him back':-

### Consider your past!

- Girls help mummy in kitchen, boys help daddy fix car (power, dirt)
- Boys play with Action Man (Bang! Bang! Kill! Kill!), girls with Barbie dolls
- Boys role play Doctor, Girls role play Nurses
- Aggression in Spectator sports such as football, compared to net ball (Have you ever seen a riot at a netball match?!)
- Where did you sit in the Physics lesson. As a teenager – girls tend to go to the back, boys at front, as it tends to be perceived as a boy's subject

### **“What men really want is a curvy model with the top down (and they don't mean Claudia)**

Men get more emotional over football, money and cars than they do over women because only women stand up to them, a survey revealed today.

Men find it easier to show happiness, sorrow, anger or pleasure behind the wheel or cheering on their team. A car, after all, cannot argue and footballers do not reveal their innermost emotions in return.

Women do – and that makes men feel they are losing control, according to psychologist, Dr David Lewis.

More than 3 in 10 men say they were at their most emotional at a football match, while for 36% it was in their car. Only one in five showed their feelings most in the home and a mere 6% of men said they vented their emotions most while in love.

Asked to choose between a Valentine's Day gift of a new car or a night out with Claudia Schiffer, most plumped for the sleek body of ..... a new car. Almost half wanted a curvy model, preferably with the top down ... and one third wanted the German superstar.

Dr Lewis said "Men think it is sissy to show too much emotion in romantic situations, so they lock away their true feelings. That is their way of staying in control. They do feel comfortable about getting emotional over cars and soccer which can't show emotions back"

**London Evening Standard**

SITUATION	YOUR RESPONSE	AGG, PASS or ASSERT
1. It is 5.30pm and one of your staff is just putting on his coat and making his way towards the office door. You ask him to hang on for a minute, so that you can discuss a matter of some concern with him	<i>"I've got to go ... can we discuss it tomorrow – first thing"</i>	
2. You are interviewing for a job in the department, and ask one of your staff to show the candidate around.	<i>"I'm afraid that I don't know very much about Head Office myself but if you really want me to take them around, I suppose I can"</i>	
3. A customer rings your showroom to complain about being given incorrect information on the product specification	<i>"I'd like to help but I don't know the background. What if I get the person who did talk to you, to ring you back in a few minutes time?"</i>	
4. Another customer rings up to complain about the non delivery of his system	<i>"They haven't arrived? Are you sure? ..... it's not my job to handle delivery queries"</i>	
5. The date is set for the next meeting. You are keen to attend but the proposed date accepted by everybody else means you cannot attend. The Chairman says "Is that ok for everyone?"	<i>"Well, all right, as it's convenient to everyone else"</i>	
6. A colleague asks you for a lift home. It's inconvenient to you, as you are already late and the drive will take you out of your way	<i>"I'm about 20 minutes late so I won't be able to take you home. If it helps I can drop you off at the nearest bus stop"</i>	
7. You're having trouble getting started on a report. You cannot see a logical starting point	<i>"I'm pretty useless at writing reports. I can't really see how to even start it. I must be getting old"</i>	
8. A team member interrupts you when you are making an important call	<i>"I'd like to finish this phone call, then I'll be happy to answer your question"</i>	
9. You are on your way to a meeting. A colleague asks you "What time will you be back in the office?"	<i>"When you see me walk in"</i>	

# What have I learnt in Section Two?



By now, you should be able to:

- ❖ Understand what is meant by passive, assertive and aggressive behaviour
- ❖ Appreciate the benefits of assertive behaviour
- ❖ Receive feedback on your particular style
- ❖ Appreciate the importance of reading situations correctly
- ❖ Define the situations encountered at work which being more assertive may help
- ❖ Recognise the 3 different types of behaviour at work

## Section 2: Summary Quiz



### How well have you mastered these skills?

Try this quiz to find out. Suggested answers follow the quiz.

These questions have been designed to allow you to see how much you have learnt. If there any points you are unsure about, refer back to the relevant section and then try the questions again.

a) How would you recognise **assertive** behaviour - give **three** traits

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b) How would you recognise **passive** behaviour - give **three** traits

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## Preparing to Market Oneself

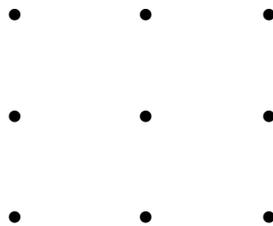


### Activity

(Have pencil and rubber handy for this activity).

Below you will see 9 dots arranged in a regular fashion. Your task is to:

**Join all the dots using no more than 4 straight lines without taking your pencil off the paper or re-tracing a line.**



Turn over for a possible solution .....

**"I enjoy choosing the path that others don't."  
JAMES DYSON**