

Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union



Partner's logo



# **ASSERTIVENESS, EXPRESSING NEEDS, COPING WITH STRESS, AND OTHER EMOTIONS**

**Elaborated by Meridaunia**



# COURSE DESCRIPTION

Assertiveness and assertive communication are essential skills in today's world. This module aims to give students a clear understanding of assertive communication and how and when to apply different techniques according to everyday life scenarios. By the end of this module, the student will be fully equipped to identify assertive communication in others and enjoy the benefits of this communication approach. The contents cover a range of key transversal competencies, including conflict management in both work and non-work environments. Participants will learn active listening techniques and how to manage emotions by reducing stress levels. The module also covers relational aspects, teaching students how to handle different techniques of interpersonal communication. Finally, the module guides participants in developing an individual development plan. This plan helps participants to identify their strengths and weaknesses and create a roadmap for personal growth. Overall, it is designed to equip participants with essential skills to thrive in both personal and professional settings.





# TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. LASSERTIVENESS AND ASSERTIVE COMMUNICATION
2. ASSERTIVE COMMUNICATION TECHNIQUES - KEY TRANSVERSAL COMPETENCES
3. RELATIONAL ASPECTS
4. THE INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN



# ASSERTIVENESS AND ASSERTIVE COMMUNICATION



Assertiveness is:

- a powerful communication style that involves expressing oneself in a clear, confident, and respectful manner;
- a skill that enables individuals to stand up for themselves while also respecting the needs and rights of others.

At its core, assertive communication involves using direct and straightforward language to express one's needs, wants, and opinions while actively listening to others and acknowledging their perspectives.





This approach sets it apart from aggressive communication, which can be disrespectful and dismissive of others, and passive communication, which can lead to a lack of assertiveness and an inability to advocate for oneself. By practising assertive communication, individuals can increase their self-esteem, build stronger relationships, and improve their overall quality of life.

Some of the common definitions of assertiveness are:

"Assertiveness is the ability to express yourself effectively and stand up for your point of view, while also respecting the rights and beliefs of others." (Mayo Clinic)

"Assertiveness is the ability to ask for what you want, say no to what you don't want, and negotiate for what you need, in a way that respects yourself and others." (Harvard Business Review)

"Assertiveness is the ability to communicate your thoughts, feelings, and needs in a direct, honest, and appropriate way, without violating the rights of others or allowing them to violate yours."  
(Psychology Today)

Areas of application of assertiveness are:

1. **Personal relationships:** Assertiveness can help individuals communicate their needs, wants, and feelings to their partners, family members, and friends in a clear and respectful way. It can also help to set healthy boundaries and improve conflict resolution skills in personal relationships.
2. **Professional relationships.** Assertiveness can be an effective tool to communicate effectively with colleagues, managers, and clients in the workplace. It can help individuals negotiate better terms and stand up for themselves when necessary.
3. **Public speaking.** Assertiveness can be a valuable skill when it comes to expressing oneself confidently and effectively in public speaking engagements or when presenting ideas to a group.
4. **Health and wellness.** Assertiveness can help individuals communicate effectively with their healthcare providers, advocate for their own health needs, and make informed decisions about their healthcare.
5. **Self-esteem and confidence.** By communicating their needs and wants assertively, individuals can gain a greater sense of control over their lives and their relationships.

# COMMUNICATION STYLES AND THE BENEFITS OF ASSERTIVE COMMUNICATION



## ASSERTIVE

expressing oneself in a clear, direct, and respectful manner. It involves advocating for one's needs and wants while also considering the needs and wants of others. Assertive communicators use "I" statements to convey their thoughts and feelings, take ownership of their behavior, and actively listen to others. This communication style is widely regarded as the most effective and healthy because it encourages honest and open dialogue while preserving positive relationships.



## PASSIVE

indirect and apologetic expression, often avoiding conflict altogether. People who communicate passively may find it challenging to assert their own needs and desires, often prioritizing the needs and desires of others above their own. They may use vague language and apologize excessively, finding it difficult to refuse requests or demands. This communication style can create problems, leading to feelings of resentment and frustration and hindering personal growth and goal attainment.



## AGGRESSIVE

harmful style of expression that completely disregards the needs and rights of others. It involves using intimidating or hostile language, making personal attacks, and trying to dominate or control others. This approach can severely damage relationships, leading to conflict and hostility.



VIDIECKY PARLAMENT  
NA SLOVENSKU



GrowthCoop  
empowering people



NEW EDU



Stowarzyszenie  
ARID



ABELEKUSTE U ŠKOLNIČKI  
2006



EduConsulting, z.ú.



GAL MERIDAUNIA

Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union



# ASSERTIVE COMMUNICATION TECHNIQUES



## KEY TRANSVERSAL COMPETENCES



- EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION:  
AXIOMS AND LEVELS OF COMMUNICATION
- ACTIVE LISTENING
- MANAGING EMOTIONS
- CONFLICT MANAGEMENT





# EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION: AXIOMS AND LEVELS OF COMMUNICATION



Axioms (basic principles) of effective communication:

Communication is a two-way process. It is important to actively listen to the other person's perspective and respond in a way that demonstrates understanding and respect.

Communication is contextual. It is important to be aware of the cultural, social, and environmental factors that can influence communication.

Communication is subjective. It is important to take into account the other person's perspective and adapt the message as needed.

Communication involves both verbal and nonverbal cues. It is important to be aware of and use both verbal and nonverbal cues to convey the intended message.

# ACTIVE LISTENING

Active listening is a powerful communication technique that involves more than just hearing the words of the speaker. It requires your complete attention, both physically and mentally.

To become an active listener, here are some key components to keep in mind:

- **Focus on the speaker:** Avoid distractions and give the speaker your undivided attention. Face them, maintain eye contact, and actively process their message.
- **Demonstrate your engagement:** Use nonverbal cues like nodding, smiling, or making appropriate facial expressions to show that you are actively listening.
- **Clarify and summarize:** Paraphrase or summarize the speaker's message to ensure that you have fully understood their perspective.
- **Avoid interrupting or jumping to conclusions:** Allow the speaker to finish their thoughts and express themselves fully. Don't assume that you know what they are going to say.
- 
- **Respond appropriately:** After the speaker has finished, respond in a way that demonstrates that you have understood the message. This might involve asking follow-up questions, expressing empathy or support, or offering your own perspective.



# MANAGING EMOTIONS

Effective emotion management involves a multi-step process that includes recognizing, understanding, and regulating one's own emotions, as well as responding appropriately to the emotions of others.

## Practical strategies

- **Develop self-awareness:** Start by becoming aware of your own emotions and how they affect your thoughts, behaviours, and interactions with others.
- **Identify triggers:** Identify the situations, people, or thoughts that trigger strong emotions in you.
- **Reframe negative thoughts:** Challenge negative thoughts and reframe them in a more positive or balanced way.
- **Practice relaxation techniques:** Engage in activities that help you relax and reduce stress, such as deep breathing, meditation, or exercise.
- **Seek support:** Talk to trusted friends, family members, or mental health professionals about your emotions and seek their support and guidance.
- **Communicate effectively:** Use effective communication techniques, such as active listening and assertive communication, to express your emotions in a constructive and respectful way.
- **Use problem-solving skills:** Use problem-solving skills to identify solutions to difficult situations that may be causing negative emotions.

# CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

In any communication, conflicts are bound to arise from differences in beliefs, values, needs, or expectations. However, conflict doesn't have to be a negative experience. In fact, effective conflict management involves recognizing and addressing conflicts in a constructive and respectful way.

Some strategies:

- **Remain calm:** Avoid reacting impulsively or aggressively to conflicts. Instead, take a few deep breaths and try to remain calm and composed.
- **Listen actively:** Practice active listening techniques to fully understand the other person's perspective. Show empathy and acknowledge their feelings and concerns.
- **Communicate assertively:** Use assertive communication techniques. Avoid blaming, criticizing, or attacking the other person.
- **Identify common goals:** Focus on finding a mutually beneficial solution rather than "winning" the argument.





# CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

- **Explore alternative solutions:** Instead of sticking to one solution, it's important to brainstorm different options. This allows you to explore their potential benefits and drawbacks, and find the best possible outcome for all parties involved. Be open to compromise and negotiation to ensure a fair resolution.
- **Take a break:** If the conflict becomes too heated or emotional, taking a break can be beneficial. It allows both parties to cool down, reflect on the situation and approach the discussion with a fresh perspective.
- **Seek mediation:** If you find it difficult to resolve the conflict through direct communication, seeking the help of a neutral third party can be a great option. A mediator or counsellor can help facilitate a discussion and find a solution that works for everyone. Don't be afraid to ask for help when needed.



# RELATIONAL ASPECTS

- Commitment
- Trust
- Respect
- Conflict





# COMMITTMENT

Commitment is a crucial aspect of any relationship, as it reflects a willingness to invest time, effort, and resources into it also includes the concepts of trust, conflict and respect.

Ways in which commitment can impact relational dynamics:

- **Trust and security:** Commitment can foster a sense of trust and security in a relationship.
- **Communication and conflict resolution:** more willing to engage in open and honest communication
- **Shared Goals and Values:** When two people are committed to each other, they are more likely to work towards common objectives
- **Stability and Longevity:** When people are committed, they are more likely to weather the ups and downs of life and work through



# DEVELOPMENT PLAN

An individual development plan (IDP) is a powerful tool that helps individuals identify their strengths, interests, and career aspirations. It provides a clear roadmap for achieving personal and professional growth by outlining specific objectives and strategies for achieving them. With an IDP, individuals can take charge of their career development and gain a competitive edge in the job market.







## Ways to Identify Your Areas of Improvement:

1. **Self-Reflection:** Take some time to reflect on your strengths and weaknesses. Think about the activities you enjoy doing and those that you find challenging. Look back at past experiences and determine areas where you could have done better.

2. **Seek Feedback:** Get feedback from others like mentors, colleagues, or supervisors. Ask them for specific feedback on your performance and areas where you could improve.

3. **Use Self-Assessment Tools** such as personality tests, skills assessments, and 360-degree feedback surveys.

4. **Consider Your Career Goals:** Identify your career goals and examine the skills and knowledge you need to achieve them. This can help you recognize areas where you may need to improve.

5. **Participation in Training and Development Programs:** Engage yourself in training and development programs to acquire new skills and enhance the existing ones. This will help you develop and grow as a professional.



# **PROJECT WOBIS INFO**

**Enhancement of  
Rural Women's Associations  
as a Chance for  
Growth of Women  
Entrepreneurship**

**WEB PAGE  
[www.wobis2022.eu](http://www.wobis2022.eu)**

**FACEBOOK PAGE  
WOBIS**

# WOBIS