

Communication Styles

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In this report, we will delve into the analysis of three distinct communication styles. We will explore the passive communication style, along with the assertive and aggressive styles. Our discussion will focus on the most appropriate situations for utilizing each communication style. This analysis is crucial as it provides a comprehensive understanding of the different approaches to communication. This report will provide valuable insights into when to apply each communication style effectively.

Passive Communication

Jennifer Herrity describes passive communicators as quiet and reserved. They often appear indifferent during debates and seldom take a firm stance or assert themselves. (Herrity, 2023) They have difficulty sharing their needs or expressing their feelings, making it hard to gauge when they are uncomfortable or require assistance with a crucial project. (Zamora, 2024) Some common traits of passive communicators include an inability to say no, poor posture, an easy-going attitude, a lack of eye contact, a soft voice, an apologetic demeanor, and fidgeting.

The passive communication style is most appropriate when preserving relationships is more important than the issue at hand or when the power dynamics are such that speaking up could lead to negative consequences. For example, in a meeting with senior management, a high-ranking executive proposes an idea that is not optimal but not significantly harmful. A worker might remain silent or agree with the proposal because challenging the idea might create unnecessary tension or conflict, especially if the executive is known for not welcoming disagreement. The passive communication style can also help avoid negative attention. An employee might want to avoid drawing

negative attention or appearing aggressive in front of senior management. Finally, an employee might believe that the idea will be revised or reconsidered in the future, so they opt for a passive approach now, planning to voice their concerns at a more opportune time. In this scenario, being passive allows a worker to maintain a positive rapport with colleagues and superiors while avoiding potential backlash. (Wellheal, 2023)

Aggressive Communication

In her article *Aggressive Communication: Examples and How to Handle It*, Elizabeth Scott, PhD, explains that an aggressive communication style involves expressing your feelings, needs, and rights without considering others' feelings or rights. It's a confrontational approach, often characterized by phrases like "It's my way or the highway," "You never do anything right," or "I'm right, and you're wrong." Such interactions can damage relationships and leave hurt feelings in their wake. (Scott, 2023)

An example of the aggressive communication style could be criticizing someone openly in front of others, often in a demeaning tone. For instance, saying, "This report is completely inadequate; how could you think this was acceptable?" There are not many scenarios in which this communication style would be appropriate. Assertiveness should be used instead of aggressive communication because it can express feelings without hurting others.

Assertive Communication

The assertive communication style is where individuals express their feelings, needs, and opinions directly while maintaining respect for others. Assertive individuals

confidently communicate their skills, abilities, and goals without being pushy. (Indeed, 2023) It's the happy medium between aggression and passivity. Assertiveness involves standing up for what you value without causing harm or humiliation to others. Being assertive means stating your opinions clearly, anticipating potential pushbacks, and being prepared to compromise when necessary. An assertive communicator recognizes and communicates their limits and does not tolerate verbal abuse or manipulation from others. Finally, assertiveness includes maintaining direct eye contact, confident posture, and controlling tone of voice and body language. (Lonczak, 2024)

Here is a scenario in which this communication style would be most appropriate. In a team where promotions and project assignments are often based on seniority, a junior colleague, who consistently performs well, hasn't been given the opportunity to lead a project. Assertive communication can be effective in self-reflection. First, the junior colleague reflects on their observations and gathers evidence and ensures they are well-prepared to discuss the issue. The junior colleague arranges a private meeting with the supervisor or team lead and expresses the concern assertively: "I've consistently delivered excellent work, but I haven't been given a chance to lead a project. I believe I deserve equal opportunities." The junior colleague clearly states their position: "I think it's essential to recognize talent and provide equal growth opportunities based on merit." Then the junior colleague proposes solutions, for example, "Could we consider assigning me to lead a project? It would benefit both my development and the team." Finally, the JC opens to the supervisor's perspective, listening actively and responding thoughtfully.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this report has provided a comprehensive understanding of three distinct communication styles: passive, assertive, and aggressive. We have explored the most appropriate situations for utilizing each communication style and offered practical insights into when to apply each communication style effectively. This analysis aims to identify the most suitable communication style for various workplace interactions.

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