



'Get the message': assertive conversations

Programme overview

It's one thing communicating confidently when things are going well... and quite another when there's a tricky situation to handle. This programme develops your inner confidence in all sorts of situations - from delivering tough messages to having courageous conversations. 'Be more assertive' can seem like good advice... but how do we do this, and can we be assertive and still have positive working relationships? We explore how to be assertive in everyday situations: managing performance, saying 'no' when appropriate, speaking up on tricky subjects, holding people to their responsibilities - and keeping your organisation's agreed values and behaviours.

Impact and outcomes

You'll see the impact of this training through clearer, more effective working relationships across the organisation. Confident performance management can enable individuals and teams to succeed and achieve increased productivity. Using assertive communication in project management and cross-team relationships at all levels can help improve efficiency and motivation - leading to better bottom-line results.

What methods do we use?

Our desire is to create an environment that enables your people to generate optimum learning mindsets: curiosity, openness and

readiness for change. We're committed to making their learning safe, challenging, inspiring and memorable. We'll keep 'lecture and theory' to a minimum and encourage maximum interaction.

We want participants to experience real personal confidence in challenging situations. This means covering all the assertiveness fundamentals. And it means deeply rooting people's learning so they're authentically 'being' confident rather than 'appearing' confident.

Our unique approach uses communication specialists from diverse fields to embed the new skills and behaviours, allowing participants to practice each element thoroughly.

Learning objectives

We'll work with you to set tailored learning objectives for the skills and behaviour you'd like to see. As a starting point, here are some fundamentals that participants will be confident in by the end of the programme:

- Managing nerves and discomfort when bringing up tricky subjects
- Setting a clear purpose and intention for the conversation and sticking to it
- Using positive and specific language
- Asking for clarity around difficult topics
- Saying 'no' when appropriate
- Keeping a conversation on track while responding with openness and empathy
- Closing conversations by gaining agreement and commitment.

Content and delivery

We'll create a bespoke programme tailored to the outcomes you want, the needs of the people involved and the culture of the organisation. As we progress we'll ask for your feedback and input, then we can hone the structure, content and delivery methods so you're getting the results you need.

What do we cover?

Here's an overview of some of the content we'd expect to cover. For each element we'll address knowledge, skills and behaviour - integrating the learning through plenty of practice.

- Using the frame of attention / intention
- Building rapport and creating openness
- Separating observation from evaluation
- Communicating emotions professionally
- Creating empathy
- Expressing in positive, specific language
- Differentiating between requests and demands
- Handling tears and grief
- Exploring the beliefs that give us permission to be confident
- Using body-language and body-learning to create a congruent, strong message.

Our unique experiential programme

Participants integrate what they've learnt more quickly, so they can hit the ground running when they're back in the office. Here are some ways we make the learning stick :

Real-time practice

We use actors to portray real scenarios created from examples you supply. This compelling interactive experience enables participants to

see - live - what works and what doesn't. Here are two ways in which we do this:

- Participants 'redirect' scenarios to draw out and understand the learning points
- Participants embed what they've learnt by practicing techniques themselves, with actors in-role to create workplace situations.

In our experience it's the live practice that really makes the difference in building skills. Using professional actors briefed on their roles makes the practice unthreatening for participants, and as close to the real thing as possible.

Courageous communication - Meisner technique

The Meisner technique is a method used by professional actors to develop authentic communication in response to other people. We use exercises to enable participants to read and acknowledge their own and others' behavioural patterns. This decreases nerves and increases observation skills, emotional intelligence and rapport. It encourages the ability to adapt to the moment, leading to new behaviours and more effective working relationships.

Body language & body learning

We use simple, physical learning to enable participants to feel how confidence rooted in the body can support their communication. In dance, the 'leader' has responsibility to give a purposeful message without overpowering their partner. We use tango as an analogy for assertive and connected communication. Participants will use some easy exercises to understand more about their personal communication style, and work directly to embody their confidence.