



**Don't fall into
the “helper”
trap;
Getting into**

OBJECTIVES OF THE PPT



- 01** Why it is important not to fall into the helper's trap
- 02** The importance of being assertive at work
- 03** Knowing how to set limits at work
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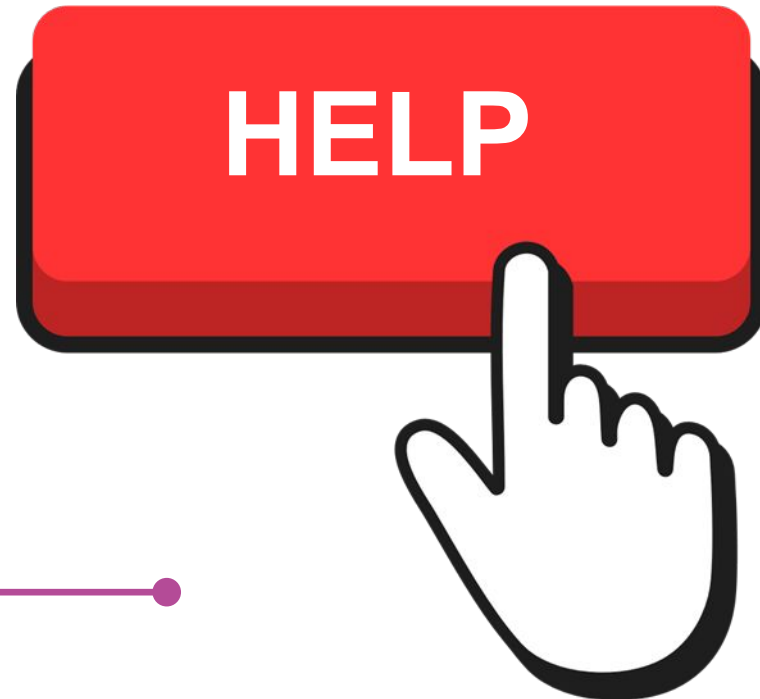


THE IMPORTANCE OF **ASSERTIVENESS** TO AVOID FALLING INTO THE HELPER'S TRAP



Dealing with a lot of demands of help can be a daunting experience and having the courage to be assertive in such circumstances is not easy for some people. It must always be acknowledged that everyone has the right not to fulfil a demand of help.

When rejecting a demand of help, it is important to explain that it is the demand that is being rejected and not the person.



People often feel that others have a right to their time and effort. You have a right to say "no" without having to justify yourself.

Having rejected a demand, it is important to keep to that decision. If you crumble under pressure, others will learn you can be swayed so be firm.

You do of course have the right to change your mind if circumstances change



THE IMPORTANCE OF **ASSERTIVENESS** TO AVOID FALLING INTO THE HELPER'S TRAP

Being assertive means being able to stand up for your own or other people's rights in a calm and positive way, without being either aggressive, or passively accepting 'wrong'.

Assertive individuals are able to get their point across without upsetting others, or becoming upset themselves

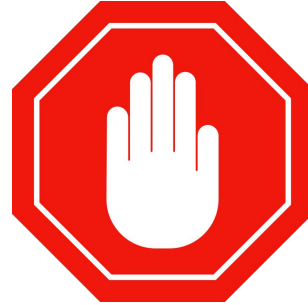
Assertiveness is quietly, non-aggressively, but firmly exerting those rights, one of which is to refuse demands that you consider to be unreasonable, or which you are unable to meet.

At the same time, you also need to recognise the rights of others to make requests of you, and receive a polite response





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Responding in a passive or non-assertive way tends to mean compliance with the wishes of others and can undermine individual rights and self-confidence.

Many people adopt a passive response because they have a strong need to be liked by others.

Such people do not regard themselves as equals because they place greater weight on the rights, wishes and feelings of others. Being passive results in failure to communicate thoughts or feelings and results in people doing things they really do not want to do in the hope that they might please others. This also means that they allow others to take responsibility, to lead and make decisions for them



THE IMPORTANCE OF **ASSERTIVENESS** TO AVOID FALLING INTO THE HELPER'S TRAP

A classic passive response is offered by those who say 'yes' to requests when they actually want to say 'no'. Assertiveness is very important at work.

If you become known as a person who cannot say no, you will be loaded up with tasks by your colleagues and managers



When you respond passively, you present yourself in a less positive light or put yourself down in some way. If you constantly be little yourself in this way, you will come to feel inferior to others. While the underlying causes of passive behaviour are often poor self-confidence and self-esteem, in itself it can further reduce feelings of self-worth, creating a vicious circle



THE IMPORTANCE OF **ASSERTIVENESS** TO AVOID FALLING INTO THE HELPER'S TRAP

It is important to remember that any interaction is always a two-way process and therefore your reactions may differ, depending upon your relationship with the other person in the communication.

You may for example find it easier to be assertive to your partner than to your boss or vice versa. However, whether it is easy or not, **an assertive response is always going to be better for you and for your relationship with the other person.**





Why People Are Not Assertive



When people are not assertive they can suffer from a loss of confidence and self-esteem, which is more likely to make them less assertive in the future. It is therefore important to break the cycle and learn to be more assertive, whilst at the same time respecting the views and opinions of other people. We all have a right to express our feelings, values and opinions



Why People Are **Not Assertive**

There are many reasons why people may act and respond **in a non-assertive way**

Low Self-Esteem and Self-Confidence



Roles

Personality Traits



Stress

Past Experience





Why People Are Not Assertive

1

Low Self-Esteem and Self-Confidence

Feelings of **low self-esteem or self-worth** often lead to individuals dealing with other people in a passive way.

By not asserting their rights, expressing their feelings or stating clearly what they want, those with low self-esteem or self-confidence may invite others to treat them in the same way.

Low self-esteem is reinforced in a vicious circle of **passive response and reduced self-confidence**

2

Roles

Certain roles are associated with non-assertive behaviour, for example low status work roles or the traditional role of women. Stereotypically, women are seen as passive, while men are expected to be more aggressive.

There can be great pressure on people to conform to the roles that are placed upon them. You may be less likely to be assertive to your boss at work than you would be to a colleague or co-worker who you considered to be at an equal or lower level than you in the organisation



Why People Are Not Assertive

3 Past Experience

Many people learn to respond in a non-assertive way through experience or through modelling their behaviour on that of parents or other role models. Learnt behaviour can be difficult to unlearn and the help of a counsellor may be needed

4 Stress

When people are stressed they often feel like they have little or no control over the events their lives.

People who are stressed or anxious can often resort to passive or aggressive behaviour when expressing their thoughts and feelings

5 Personality Traits

Some people believe they are either passive or aggressive by nature, in other words that they were born with certain traits and that there is little they can do to change their form of response.

This is very nearly always an incorrect assumption since everybody can learn to be more assertive even if their natural tendencies are passive or aggressive



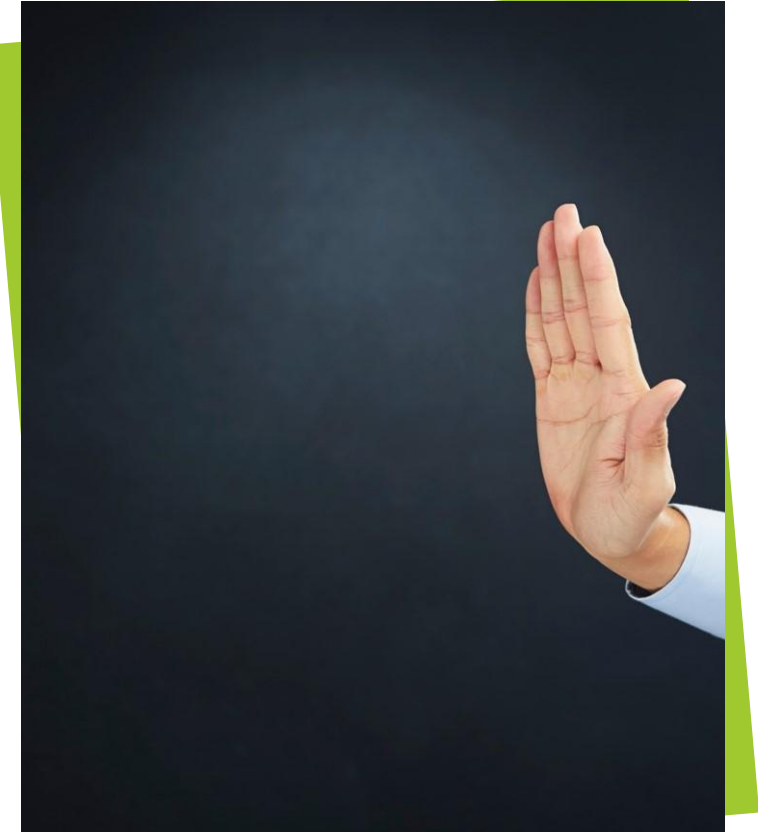
Benefits of assertiveness in the workplace to avoid falling into the helper's trap



On most occasions we spend more time with our work colleagues than with our family and friends, so **establishing a healthy relationship with them is vital for the good development of our work and our well-being within the company.**



Within this social relationship established in the workplace, **assertiveness plays a very important role.** Achieving a balance between passivity, where others violate our rights, and aggressiveness, where we are the ones who do not respect the rights of others, is the ideal that we seek to achieve with an assertive attitude.





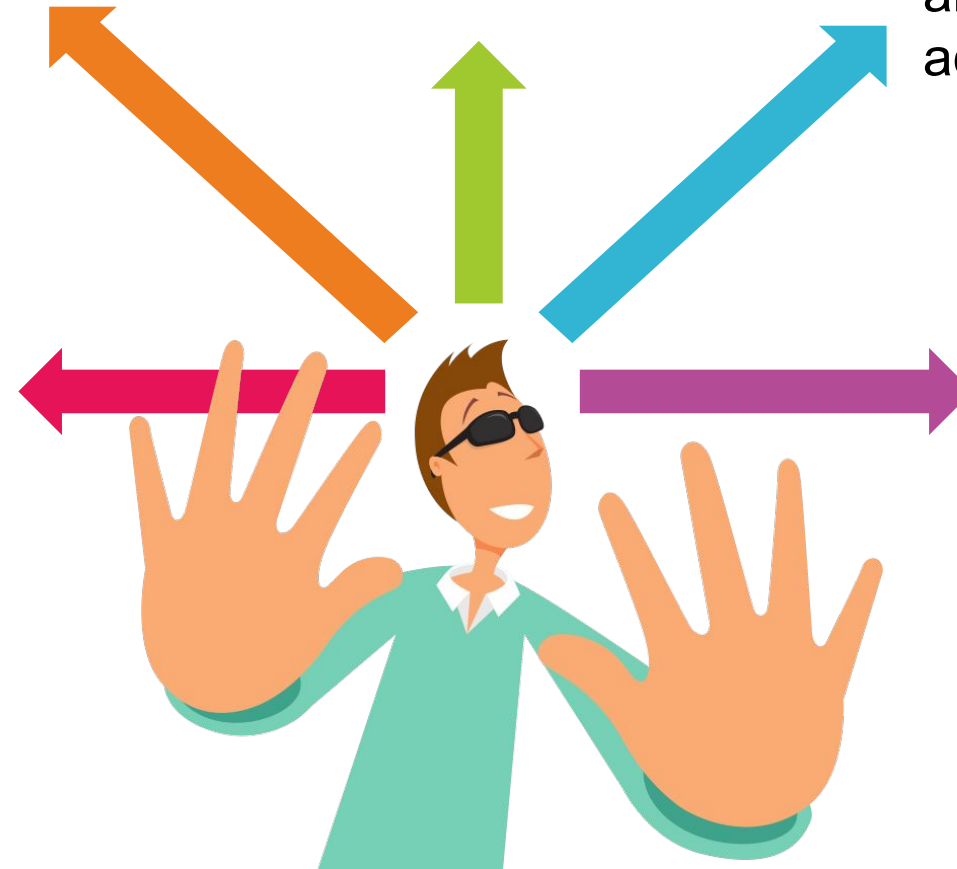
Benefits of assertiveness in the workplace to avoid falling into the helper's trap

Feeling respected and free to express opinions naturally leads to lower stress levels

It's allows for more creativity and increases work motivation.

Workers overcome their limitations, have an easier time achieving their goals

All these benefits translate into a very positive increase in productivity for the company



Workers are more influential in their immediate environment, which contributes to the creation of a human group that works towards goals and improves the participation of all its members



Communication strategies for saying NO and avoid to fall into the helper trap



Detect problematic situations

It is important to reflect and detect those situations in which we have said "yes" when we would have preferred to say "no", or situations in which we feel we should have set limits. In what context does this happen to us? With whom? Are there people with whom it does not happen to us, and people with whom it happens to us more often? Take note of situations you have experienced where you have found it difficult to say no, examining with whom and in what context.

Analyse the thoughts and emotions that make us say yes

when we want to say no: What thoughts come to our mind at those moments? How do we feel? What do we say to ourselves? At this point it is important to detect irrational ideas and rationalise them.

Analysing the intentionality of the other and the expectations we assume

It is about reflecting on the situations in which we find it difficult to say no, and analysing the intentions that we presuppose in the other person. What kind of relationship do I have with them? do I think they are trying to manipulate me or do I feel trust? why does this person want me to say yes, what is in it for them? and for me. As in the previous section, it is important to detect whether my preconception is realistic and rational.





01 Elemental Assertiveness

This is about explaining our position in a simple, direct way, giving a brief explanation of why we are saying NO (but without going on too long)

02 Empathic assertiveness

Putting ourselves first in the other person's point of view, validating their arguments and how they feel, and then presenting our point of view.

03 Assertive procrastination

It's useful when we feel overwhelmed or very anxious about the situation and cannot decide clearly. In this case it is better to postpone our response until we feel calmer and can decide clearly.

04 The fog bank

This strategy can be useful in the face of insistence, when we have already tried another strategy, or when the person is pressuring us in a very explicit way. It is about giving a part of reason to the other person's argument but sticking to our position

05 Assertive agreement technique

This technique is useful when we fear that our refusal may give rise to erroneous interpretations of our intentions, our personality, when the other person judges us accordingly, or when there is an attempt at emotional blackmail. It is about stating our refusal, making it clear that it has nothing to do with being a good or bad person, cowardly or brave, willing or unwilling, etc.

Say No, **despite insistence**

One of the most common problems when it comes to saying No is how to react to the insistence and to stand firm in our refusal. For this we can use the techniques of "broken record" and "processing change":

The broken record technique: this simply consists of standing firm by repeating our point of view over and over again in a calm tone in the face of the other person's insistence.

Technique for processing change: This technique consists of shifting the focus of attention to what is happening, as if we were looking at the conversation from the outside. In the case of insistence, we could respond, for example: "You've been insisting for a while, but I'm not going to change my mind, seriously", "We've been going on about this for a while now, I've already told you No, let's not keep going over it".



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