

Assertion Self Analysis

To test your assertiveness there are some typical situations below. Be completely honest with yourself and write down how you would naturally react in each situation. After reading each question write your choice a, b, or c by each number.

1. You are in a restaurant and order a steak medium-rare, but it is served to you well-done. You would:
 - a) Accept it without comment because you sometimes like it well-done anyway.
 - b) Angriily refuse the steak and insist on seeing the manager to complain about the poor service.
 - c) Call the waiter and indicate you ordered your steak medium-rare and would like another steak cooked to your requirements.
2. You are a customer waiting in queue to be served in your busy lunch hour. Suddenly, a frail old lady steps in line ahead of you and claims that she is in a hurry. You would:
 - a. Let her stay in front of you since she is already in line and it would be rude to speak out.
 - b. Pull her out of line and, in a loud and angry manner make her go to the back.
 - c. Calmly indicate to her that you are also in a hurry and have queued, then point out where it begins.
3. After walking out of a store where you purchased some items you discover you were short-changed by \$5. You would:
 - a. Let it go since you are already out of the store and have no proof you were short-changed. After all it's only \$5.
 - b. Go to the manager and argue that you were cheated by the assistant, then demand the proper change.
 - c. Return to the clerk and inform him/her of the error.
4. You are in a group discussion at work which includes your boss. A colleague asks you a question about your work, but you don't know the answer. You would:
 - a. Give your colleague a false, but plausible answer so your boss will think you are on top of things.
 - b. Do not answer, but attack your colleague by asking a question you know he/she could not answer.
 - c. Indicate to your colleague you are unsure just now, but offer to give him/her the information later.
5. You are in the middle of watching your favourite television program when your partner comes in and asks you for a non urgent favour which could mean missing the rest of the show. You would:
 - a. Do the favour as quickly as possible, then return to the program to finish watching what is left of it.
 - b. Say "No way, I'm not missing this. You should have asked me earlier", then finish watching your program.
 - c. Ask if it can wait until the program is over and, if so, do it then.
6. A friend drops into your office to say hello and catch up on the latest office gossip, but is staying too long, preventing you from finishing an important project. Your friend is unaware that he is interrupting your work. You would:
 - a. Let him stay because you don't want to upset him. Then you would finish your work at home that evening.
 - b. Tell the person to stop bothering you and to get out.
 - c. Explain your need to finish your work and request he/she visit another time.

SCORE INTERPRETATION KEY - In general, there are three broad styles of interpersonal behaviour. These are: a) Passive, b) Aggressive, and c) Assertive.

The "a" choices are representative of the Passive style. The more "a" choices, the more passive you are.

The "b" choices are representative of the Aggressive style. The more "b" choices, the more aggressive you are.

The "c" choices are representative of the Assertive style. The more "c" choices you made, the more assertive you are.

a) The Passive style of interpersonal behaviour is characterised by inaction and indecision. People using this style tend to be easy to get along with and pleasant, but unwilling to stand up for their rights, for fear of offending others. They are usually uncomfortable expressing anger and usually deny or suppress this feeling should it occur. As a result, resentment can easily build under the surface producing stress and tension. People often get frustrated with passive people because they won't make decisions.

b) The Aggressive style is characterised by intrusiveness. People who use this style tend to go after what they want, but are unconcerned about how this will affect others. Their angry, dominating manner tends to alienate people who, in time, may seek to oppose them. Aggressive individuals are usually suspicious of others and are often on the look out for infractions or violations of their rights. The Aggressive style produces stress and prohibits the development of close, trusting, and caring interpersonal relationships.

c) The Assertive style is characterised by both fairness and strength. Assertive individuals are able to stand up for their rights, whilst remaining sensitive to the rights of others. People who choose this style are usually relaxed and easy going, but are honest about their feelings. This is the best style for minimising stress and maintaining long-standing intimate relationships.

Assertiveness is an essential skill in the modern working environment. Benefits include better time management, increased self esteem, positively managing conflict and negotiating effectively. Assertion results in creative problem solving which produces the best results for all parties concerned. Look at the "c" answers again. If you move your everyday behaviour closer to the "c" style of response, you will likely experience an increase in feelings of self-esteem and a decrease in feelings of stress.