



Communication Style

The style of communication a person uses can greatly influence the outcome of an interaction with others. Examine the four styles and choose the one which you feel is the healthiest and most effective.

Passive Communication is when a person speaks quietly, avoids eye contact or slumps his posture. He may agree to something he doesn't feel comfortable doing or back down from confrontation.

Passive-Aggressive Communication is when a person is passive and agreeable in face-to-face situations, but aggressive when the other person is no longer present. He may tell his roommate he is not angry about an argument they shared, and then smash the headlight out of his roommate's car later that night.

Assertive Communication is clear, direct and shows respect for self and others. An assertive communicator makes eye contact, appears relaxed, and speaks firmly from his own viewpoint.

Aggressive Communication is when a person yells at others, clenches his jaw or fists, and points at the flaws in others. This sometimes escalates into violence.



The following are examples of a couple of Communication Style models.

COMMUNICATION STYLES TABLE (from GST Telecom, formally Call America)

❖ **4 Different Personality Types: Expresser, Driver, Relater & Analytical.**

❖ **How to Recognize Each, What They Ask, Dislikes, Reacts to, Improves with, Must be Allowed to, For Best Results.**

FACTORS:	EXPRESSER	DRIVER	RELATER	ANALYTICAL
How to Recognize:	They get excited.	They like their own way; decisive & strong viewpoints.	They like positive attention, to be helpful & to be regarded warmly.	They seek a lot of data, ask many questions, behave methodically & systematically.
Tends to Ask:	Who? (the personal dominant question)	What (the results oriented question.)	Why? (the personal non-goal question.)	How? (the technical analytical question.)
What They Dislike:	Boring explanations/wasting time with too many facts.	Someone wasting their time trying to decide for them.	Rejection, treated impersonally, uncaring & unfeeling attitudes.	making an error, being unprepared, spontaneity.
Reacts to Pressure and Tension By:	"Selling" their ideas or argumentative.	Taking charge taking more control.	Becoming silent, withdraws, introspective.	Seeking more data & information.
Best way to Deal With:	Get excited with them. Show emotion.	Let them be in charge.	Be supportive; show you care.	Provide lots of data & information.
Likes To Be Measured By:	Applause, feedback, recognition.	Results, Goal-oriented.	Friends, close relationships.	Activity & busyness that leads to results.
Must Be Allowed To:	Get ahead quickly. Likes challenges.	Get into a competitive situation. Likes to win.	Relax, feel, care, know you care.	make decisions at own pace, not cornered or pressured.
Will Improve With:	Recognition & some structure with which to reach the goal.	A position that requires cooperation with others.	A structure of goals & methods for achieving each goal.	Interpersonal and communication skills.
Likes to Save:	Effort they rely heavily on hunches, intuition, feelings.	Time. They like to be efficient, get things done now.	Relationships. Friendship means a lot to them.	Face. They hate to make an error, be wrong or get caught without enough info.
For Best Results:	Inspire them to bigger & better accomplishments.	Allow them freedom to do things their own way.	Care & provide detail, specific plans & activities to be accomplished.	Structure a framework or "track" to follow.

Communication Styles by Christopher L. Heffner, M.S.

	Passive	Assertive	Aggressive
Definition	Communication style in which you put the rights of others before your own, minimizing your own self worth	Communication style in which you stand up for your rights while maintaining respect for the rights of others	Communication style in which you stand up for your rights but you violate the rights of others
Implications to Others	my feelings are not important I don't matter I think I'm inferior	we are both important we both matter I think we are equal	your feelings are not important you don't matter I think I'm superior
Verbal Styles	apologetic overly soft or tentative voice	I statements firm voice	you statements loud voice
Non-Verbal Styles	looking down or away stooped posture, excessive head nodding	looking direct relaxed posture, smooth and relaxed movements	staring, narrow eyes tense, clenched fists, rigid posture, pointing fingers
Potential Consequences	lowered self esteem anger at self false feelings of inferiority disrespect from others pitied by others	higher self esteem self respect respect from others respect of others	guilt anger from others lowered self esteem disrespect from others feared by others

Situations ...

Have a look at these situations and decide how...

...a passive person would react.

...an aggressive person would react.

...a passive-aggressive person would react.

...an assertive person would react .

1. You are trying to concentrate on some important work. However, a few of your co-workers are laughing and horsing around. What do you do?
2. You are a secretary in a small company. One day, your boss asks you to get some cigarettes for him from the store across the street. What do you do?
3. You are the head of your department. A young lady who works for you has started coming to work late everyday and is extremely moody. What do you do?
4. Your boss has borrowed your laptop to do some work. He has had it for several hours and it is now time to go home. You really want to take it home to do some personal work. What do you do?
5. Your boss walks up behind you when you are using the company phone for a personal call. "How much longer do you plan to be?" he asks. What do you do?