

The University of Toledo
College of Business Administration
Executive Center for Global Competitiveness

ASSERTIVE COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Program Overview

Communicating assertively means communicating with strength and sensitivity. It means being direct, honest, and respectful when interacting with others. It is necessary for healthy relationships, and it is required for “win-win” outcomes in business situations, negotiations, and conflict resolutions. During this program, participants will develop assertive skills that will enhance their ability to communicate more clearly and confidently, set limits more effectively, deal with difficult people more easily, and project more personal power.

Program Objectives

During this seminar participants will learn how to:

- Evaluate their current level of assertiveness
- Change their attitudes, expectations, beliefs, and perceptions to think assertively
- Identify the three communication styles—nonassertive, aggressive, and assertive behavior
- Choose assertive words and body language signals
- Accept responsibility for their feelings and respect the feelings of others
- Develop appropriate responses without becoming combative
- Expand their assertiveness by mastering an approach for dealing with conflicts
- Assert themselves in special situations—saying no, coping with criticism, and listening

Program Topics

- What is assertive behavior and why is it important?
- Adopting assertive beliefs and responsibilities
- How to create positive outcomes by reprogramming yourself for success
- Overcoming blocks to assertiveness and strategies for thinking assertively
- Nonassertive behavior—communicating a message of inferiority
- Aggressive behavior—communicating an impression of superiority and disrespect
- Assertive behavior—communicating a message of trust and mutual concern
- Basic guidelines for assertive word choices
- Body language signals for assertive interactions
- Ten assertive skills—what they are and when to use them
- DESC—the four-step program for assertive confrontations
- Using “I” statements rather than “you” statements to minimize defensiveness
- Saying no and setting limits without offending or feeling guilty
- The do’s and don’ts for handling criticism assertively
- The dirty dozen—12 typical turnoffs to listening
- How to listen assertively—the skills and format of active listening
- How to present ideas that are accepted and acted upon quickly
- The five P’s of successful change
- Setting short and long term goals for staying on the assertive road

About the Instructor

Debra A. Smith is a nationally respected consultant, speaker, and seminar leader. Her subject is professionalism—a composite of respect for the organization, respect for the people it serves, and respect for oneself. She develops this professionalism in her listeners, thereby enabling employees to reach their highest potential within the organization. People who attend her seminars gain new insight and direction, reinforced by effective skills that greatly enhance their performance. Every year Debra travels to over 100 cities in the United States and Canada to deliver her seminars on communication, time management, conflict resolution, and customer relations. Her seminars are skillfully designed to meet the needs of managerial, supervisory, and support personnel. She has trained over 450,000 people from organizations in the private sector and government as well as in numerous colleges and universities.

If you wish to tailor this program for onsite training at your company, please contact Carrie Herr, the Director of ECGC, by calling 419-724-2591 or via email at carrie.herr@utoledo.edu.