

CREATING & USING

# ASSERTIVE

S T A T E M E N T S

PART **1** Empathy Statement

*an indication that you  
**understand the perspective**  
and feelings of the other person*

PART **2** Rationale / Reason

*provide some reasons and your feelings  
**to support your opinion**  
(without blaming others)*

PART **3** Request

*a clear, direct statement of  
**what you want to happen***

## Creating and Using Assertive Statements

### Three-Part Assertive Statements

An assertive statement is one that clearly expresses your wants, needs, and/or thoughts while being respectful to the person you are communicating with. There are three necessary parts for creating an assertive statement; statements must include all three parts in order to be genuinely assertive.

- **Part 1:** An empathy statement, or indication that you understand the perspective and feelings of the other person (e.g., teacher, parent, or employer).
- **Part 2:** The rationale behind your action/request. Provide some reasons and your feelings to support your opinion. Do not blame others (e.g., don't say "you make me feel angry"), but do share feelings (e.g., do say "I feel frustrated").
- **Part 3:** A coherent, direct statement of what you want to happen. Be clear and detailed.

Here's an example situation where an assertive statement could be helpful. There's half an hour left of third period, but you need to use the restroom now. Instead of simply walking out of class or arguing with your teacher, you could communicate this three-part assertive statement: "I understand that you're in the middle of teaching and this is disruptive, but this is an unexpected dire situation, and I would like your permission to quickly use the restroom."

Break down that example sentence into the three-part assertive statement structure:

- Empathy statement:
- Rationale/reason:
- Request:

### Activity: Identifying/creating assertive statements

Review each situation and statement in the table below, and complete the other two columns.

| Situation and Statement  | Assertive statement?<br>(Yes/No) | Which assertive statement parts are missing? How could the statement be modified to become assertive? |
|--|----------------------------------|---|
| <b>Situation:</b> Riley is distracting you in class.<br><b>Statement:</b> I want you to stop interrupting my reading. You are frustrating and making me angry.   |                                  |   |
| <b>Situation:</b> Hope dislikes you and makes fun of you with her friends.<br><b>Statement:</b> If you stop making faces, gestures, and put-downs about me, I will help you with biology.                      |                                  |   |
| <b>Situation:</b> You used too much data last month so your guardian took your phone away.<br><b>Statement:</b> I want my phone back. It is killing me not being able to talk with friends. I need it.         |                                  |   |
| <b>Situation:</b> Ray lied to you about not having money to repay what you loaned him.<br><b>Statement:</b> I know you struggle with managing money, but it feels like you took advantage of me. And you lied! |                                  |   |

## Creating and Using Assertive Statements

### **Activity: Using assertive statements in your own life**

Think of a situation in which you wish you had been more assertive. This can be at home, in school, with friends, or even within extracurricular and sports settings. Write a short paragraph describing this situation with as much detail as possible. If it's easier, you can write about the situation in the third person.

Next, draft an assertive statement (including all three parts) that you could have used in that situation. Pair up with another student and share the situations and your assertive statements. Provide feedback to each other, considering things like:

- Are there parts missing?
- If you were to communicate this statement, would it be assertive (e.g., even when it's difficult, expressing your wants, needs, and thoughts while respecting others)?
- What could be changed or added to improve the statement?

### **Activity: Using assertive statements to maintain personal boundaries**

Personal boundaries are limits that we set with other people, which indicate what we find acceptable and unacceptable in their behavior toward us. We do this so that we can be mentally healthier (e.g., calmer, happier, and less stressed). Personal boundaries protect our emotional wellbeing and define limits to relationships.

Spend a few minutes brainstorming some of your personal boundaries (e.g., I won't let friends cheat off my homework, I won't text and drive, etc.).

My personal boundaries:

- 
- 
- 

Choose one of the boundaries you identified above, and write an assertive statement that you could use if someone crossed this boundary.

Assertive Statement: