



Communication and assertive attitude as protection against burnout



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TRAINING OBJECTIVE

Improving skills in the area of proper communication and assertive attitude.

TRAINING METHODS

- Lecture with presentation, discussion and individual and group exercises.
- The exercises will be conducted in an active form, which will allow participants to ask questions and discuss.
- The training can be held in a hybrid, online or stationary form.

Training Plan

PART I

Communication and
assertive attitude - theory

PART II

Communication and
assertive attitude - training

PART I

Communication and assertive attitude - theory

What is communication?

- Communication is the process of transmitting and receiving information between individuals or groups of individuals. It is a fundamental element of human existence, playing a key role in all aspects of life. The communication process includes not only the transmission of verbal content (verbal) but also non-verbal content (gestures, facial expressions, body posture) and paralinguistic elements (intonation, pace of speech).

- **The ability to communicate effectively is a key element of success, both in professional and personal life. Communication serves as a bridge that connects individuals, social groups and organizations, enabling the exchange of information, ideas and feelings.**

In order for communication through language to be possible, certain conditions must be met.

The Sender must speak or write their message to the Recipient.

The condition for effective communication is: - knowledge of the language by the Sender and the Recipient - understanding of the real intentions of the Sender by the Recipient (which often causes cognitive difficulties).

Barriers prevent proper communication

- The language barrier affects not only people speaking different languages, but also those using specialized vocabulary or jargon incomprehensible to the other person.

- Cultural barriers are related to differences in values, beliefs or customs, which may lead to misinterpretation of words or intentions and cause misunderstandings and strong emotions.

Barriers to communication

Thomas Gordon identified three categories that encompass 12 obstacles to communication. He called them the “dirty dozen” and included them:

Judging:

- criticizing,
- calling names,
- making a diagnosis,
- praising combined with evaluation.

Giving solutions:

- ordering,
- threatening,
- moralizing,
- asking too many questions or the wrong questions,
- advising

Running away from problems, from the topic of conversation:

- distraction,
- logical argumentation,
- calming down.

- Overcoming communication barriers begins with recognizing your own problems and limitations in this area. It is very easy to spot communication errors in others.

Two people contribute to misunderstandings in dialogue, so in order to eliminate barriers, it is worth starting by changing yourself.

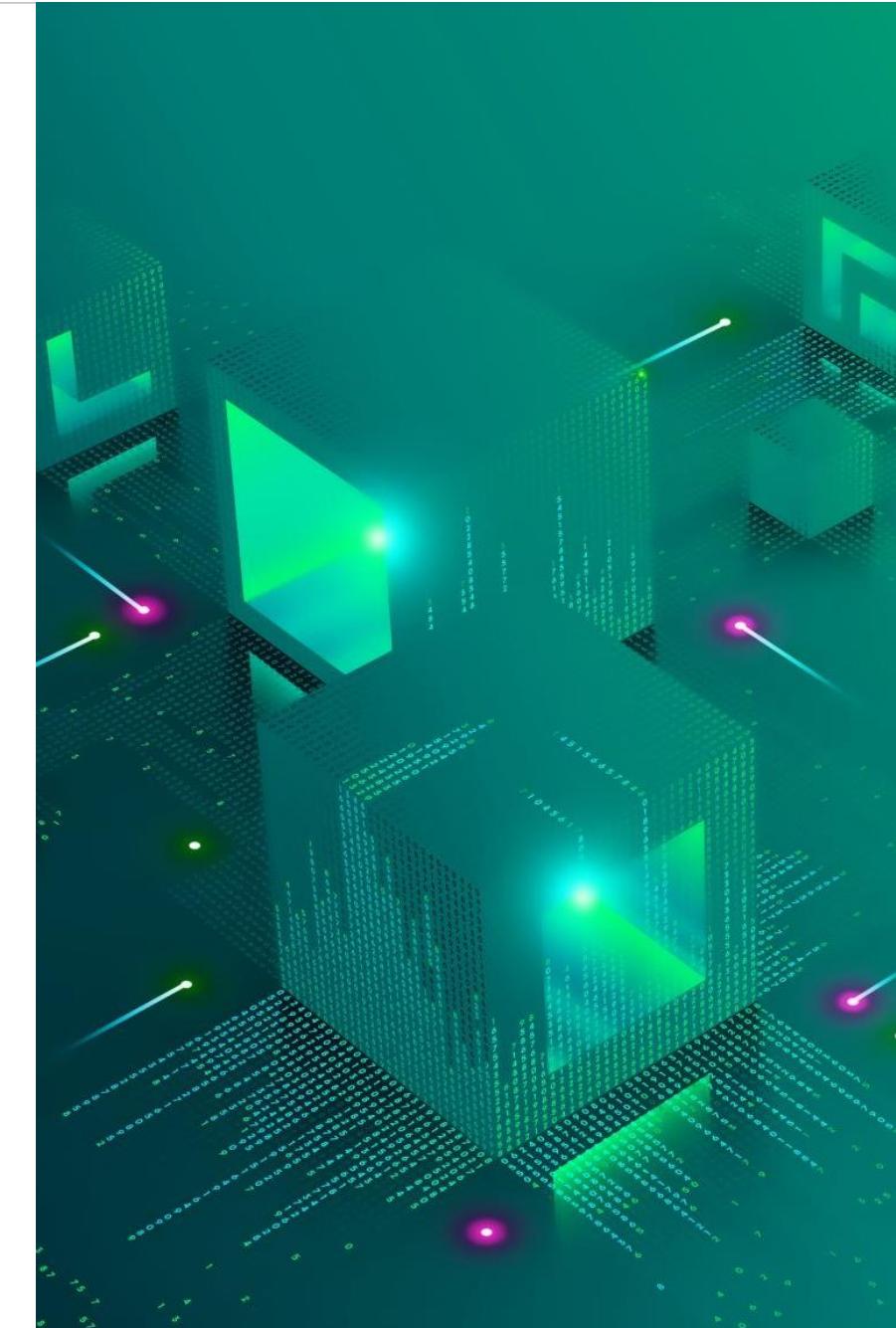
If we understand what makes it difficult for us to communicate with others, it will be easier for us to avoid these communication errors.

Overcoming communication barriers

How to overcome communication barriers?

Here are some practical tips that can help overcome communication barriers:

1. Make sure your messages are clear and understandable to the recipient.
2. Try to avoid technical language unless it is necessary.
3. Use technology that facilitates communication, e.g. instant messaging, email, phone.
4. Pay attention to emotions – both yours and the other person's.
5. Try to understand the other person's point of view, even if you disagree with it.
6. Be open to cultural differences and try to understand them.



Listen to your interlocutor. The ability to listen is the key to communication.



active listening – involves asking questions and giving appropriate feedback,



empathetic listening – includes empathizing with the interlocutor,



open listening – consists in listening to what the other person has to say in its entirety, without interrupting or interfering, and only then drawing conclusions from what they say,



conscious listening – what our general knowledge, observation and listening to the coherence of speech consists of.

Non-verbal communication is an important element of every conversation

It is a way of transmitting information using means other than words, i.e. without the use of speech or writing.

It includes all behaviors, attitudes and gestures performed consciously or unconsciously, which enable communication between people.

It is worth knowing how others perceive us. It is worth asking your friends:

Is my verbal communication consistent with my non-verbal communication?

Elements of non-verbal communication

gestures and body language,

facial expressions,

body posture / body position,

touch, physical contact,

eye contact,

voice (tone, intonation, fluency and speed of speech, voice modulation),

physical appearance (clothing, hairstyle, jewelry, make-up, etc.),

physical distance between interlocutors.

Why is communication so important?

-  Effective communication is essential for building healthy interpersonal relationships in your personal and professional life.
-  It enables the transfer of information, cooperation, learning and decision-making.
-  Communication helps people understand each other better, which fosters collaboration and problem-solving.
-  Communication skills are crucial for leaders, helping them effectively manage their team and achieve their goals.
-  It also allows you to express your thoughts and feelings, which supports your personal growth.

What is assertiveness?

Assertiveness in communication

Assertiveness is the ability to express one's own opinion, feelings, attitudes in an open way, within the boundaries of the rights and mental territory of others and one's own. In other words, it is the ability to behave simultaneously with respect for oneself and for others.

Assertiveness in communication –

Don't say **YES** when you want to say **NO**

To be assertive is to know that I have the right to:

1. Take care of your needs with respect for others.



2. Have your own opinion.

Everyone has the right to their beliefs. Even if others think differently, our opinion is important and should be expressed.

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3. Make decisions and bear the consequences.

Everyone has the right to make decisions, but it is worth considering the consequences of your choices

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... to know
that I have
the right to:

4. Not to know.

5. To your privacy.

**. 6. Decide whether he wants to get
involved in other people's problems.**

7. Change and exercise your rights.

8. Make mistakes.

... to know that I have the right to:

9. Be successful.

10. Change your mind.

11. Live my life and decide what or who I invite to it.

12. Allow myself to do things I feel like doing.

Think about how your life can improve when you start applying the principles of assertiveness 😊

Lack of assertiveness

Lack of assertiveness is often associated with a submissive attitude, where the person does not defend their boundaries. This can lead to serious consequences, such as being exploited by those around them who do not respect their needs or opinions.

Which in turn leads to frustration and lowered self-esteem.

In the case of assertive behaviors ... It is important to choose the right phrases.

It is important that they emphasize that an assertive person does not excuse himself or herself for a fault or mistake, such as refusing to participate in a family dinner. You should bet on statements such as: "in my opinion", "I prefer", "I already have other plans", "this is unpleasant for me", "I think so", etc.

The ability to construct other important messages, such as an assertive request, is equally important.

Such a request is often combined with the fear of refusal, which can be heard.

For example – talking to your boss about working hours, a raise

The most important tips when formulating our needs.

- ❖ Be direct. Get straight to the point and explain what you want.
- ❖ Be brief. If you are too detailed, your interlocutor may not understand you. When you make a request, stop and pause for a moment to give them a chance to respond.
- ❖ Justify your request. If an explanation is necessary, it should be simple and concise.
- ❖ Avoid flattery.
- ❖ Avoid emotional or other blackmail.
- ❖ Do not make excuses.
- ❖ Do not treat rejection as a personal defeat.
- ❖ Accept the other person's right to say no.
- ❖ Do not exploit the other person's feelings or sensitivities.

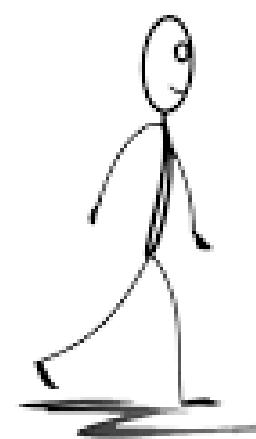
Aggressive

I am OK;
You are not.



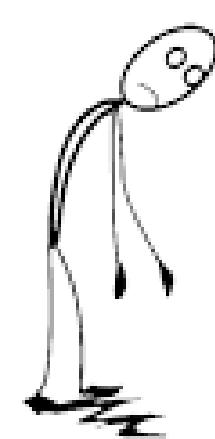
Assertive

I am OK;
You are OK.



Passive

I am not OK;
You are OK.



Aggressive behavior includes:

- ❖ ordering instead of asking,
- ❖ ignoring the other person and what they want to say,
- ❖ not taking into account the other person's feelings.

We see submissive behavior when a person does not take care of themselves and their needs. They are afraid to fight for them. They agree, although they do not want to perform a given action. Such a person withdraws from the discussion, accepts the will of the majority without trying to negotiate. They want to avoid conflict at all costs, because they would not be able to deal with it.

**Assertive is between aggressive and
submissive ... and this is the perfect
place ☺**



- Part II – Communication and assertive attitude – training

HOW TO PLAY

➤ **Rule No. 1 – listen actively**

Communication is not only about talking, but also about listening. Interest in the interlocutor allows you to better understand his message. Effective communication is based on dialogue, not monologue. It is worth observing body language and maintaining eye contact.

➤ **Rule No. 2 – think first, say later**

Communication should be well-thought-out. It is important to formulate thoughts clearly, without shifting the responsibility for understanding to the interlocutor. If something is unclear, you should improve the way you express yourself.

➤ **Rule No. 3 – preferably short and to the point**

Short and concise statements are the most effective. In communication that is supposed to convey thoughts or persuade to act, it is important to clearly present arguments.

HOW TO PLAY

➤ Rule No. 4 – remember the goal

➤ When engaging in communication aimed at achieving a specific result, it is important to formulate sentences with that goal in mind. Digressions and anecdotes can lead us away from the main plot, which is not conducive to achieving the intended effect.

➤ Rule No. 5 – The importance of feedback

Effective communication requires feedback to assess whether we have been understood as intended. Thanks to this, we can make any corrections or additions.

➤ Rule No. 6 – remember about non-verbal communication

It should be borne in mind that communication is not just about words. Body language can be used to build a positive impression, and gestures and facial expressions are important in the context of our interlocutors' messages.



1. Instructions for participants

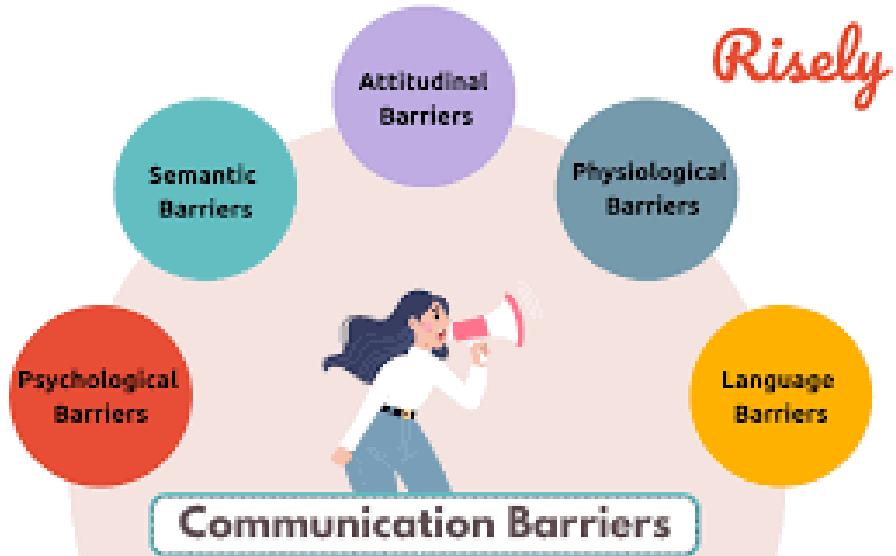
- ✓ Task: Prepare an advertisement for yourself and present it to the group, focusing on your best qualities, skills and resources that highlight your uniqueness. Here are the key elements to consider:
- ✓ Introduction – A short introduction.
- ✓ Best Features – Listing strengths.
- ✓ Skills – Description of competences.
- ✓ Resources – A representation of the available resources.
- ✓ Conclusion – Summary of the presentation.
- ✓ After each (be willing) participant presents themselves in the group, we will have a short discussion.

Overview

Ask each other questions

- 1.What new things have you learned about each other?
- 2.Did this task cause you any difficulty?
3. Is it easy to speak GOOD about yourself?

I encourage you to honestly exchange impressions and reflections, which will allow each of you to get to know and understand each other's strengths in communication and assertive attitude.



2. Instructions for participants

In groups, try to compose 3 sentences to selected, most common barriers in communication:

- ✓
- ✓ Judging
- ✓ Deciding for others
- ✓ Running away from problems

Try to look for your own examples based on your experience, especially those from your work as a teacher. Below are examples :

- Judging: "As usual, you didn't try hard enough", "You're lazy, that's why you failed", "You didn't try hard at all when doing that task",
- Deciding for others: "You have to do more", "You should do it", "If you don't put in the effort, things will definitely go wrong",
- Running away from other people's problems: "Everything will be fine", "You just have to put in a little more effort, and you'll definitely be judged better", changing the subject during a difficult conversation, diverting from the subject by asking "What would you like to have for dinner?".

- **Which mistakes do YOU make most often?**

Change the sentences you have arranged in a constructive and assertive way using this technique

Technique - Facts-Feelings-Expectation, determines the way of assertive expression and is particularly useful in conflict situations. It helps to manage emotions and inform the other person about the consequences of their actions. "I feel annoyed when you come late again because I would like to spend more time with you, so I would like you to be on time next time."

The pattern of speech is simple:

Describe a fact, i.e. a situation or behavior that took place.

Express your emotions or opinion about it.

Set your expectations by taking care of your boundaries.

Examples:

"When you're late for meetings, I feel disrespected; I hope you will come on time for the next one."

"When you talk to me like that, you make me sad – please call me by my first name."

"When you raise your voice in a conversation, I feel attacked – please stay calm."

1. If someone insists, it's hard for me to say no
2. Someone who bothers me I don't ask him to stop
3. If someone wrongly blames me, I don't protest
4. I often feel hurt
5. I don't really know how to stand up for my own
6. I don't know how to demand the return of a borrowed item
7. Sometimes I feel used
8. It's hard for me to start a conversation with someone I don't know well
9. If someone praises me, I feel embarrassed and don't know what to say
10. I can't praise others
11. I don't know how to behave when I'm criticized
12. I can't ask for help
13. I can't be completely honest
14. I don't know what to do when I'm embarrassed
15. I can't defend my own opinion
16. I get angry when someone has a different opinion than me
17. I feel strong stage fright when I have to speak in public
18. I often succumb to others
19. I can be aggressive
20. It happens that I force my requests to be fulfilled by shouting

3. Instructions for participants

- Read 20 sentences carefully, if you answer YES to most of them, you may have a problem with Assertiveness
- Set yourself realistic goals related to developing assertiveness: maybe you want to learn to say no, maybe you want to train assertiveness at work, express your opinion more often during team meetings? Think about where you can benefit most from an assertive attitude.
- **CONTACT A BURNOUT EXPERT for HELP.**

Assertiveness in the teacher's work

- Assertiveness in the teacher's work is an invaluable tool that helps in effective classroom management, building positive relationships with students and other employees, as well as in protecting one's own boundaries, both mental and temporal.
- For example, an assertive teacher can refuse a task that is beyond his or her duties and abilities without feeling guilty. He/she can react to the student's inappropriate behavior, expressing his/her expectations in a clear and specific way.

THINK ABOUT WHAT ELSE AN ASSERTIVE TEACHER CAN DO (write down 2 examples, read aloud in the group)

4. Instructions for participants



What prevents us from speaking openly, what we think? Why don't we always defend our rights?



Task: try in groups (pairs), answer a question and give examples when you have not spoken openly about your needs...



Think about what were the consequences of such behavior?



Discussion, brainstorming, group work.

5. Instructions for participants

- In the next exercise we will focus on assertiveness training.
- Try to refer to your own examples, experiences.
- Using the hints, try to build your own sentences and write them down.
- If you have difficulty finding examples, repeat aloud the examples given in the presentation.

Practice: EXPRESSING A DIFFERENT OPINION

Without guilt and fear of hurting someone. With confidence, but without showing superiority. You can say, for example:

- I respect your point of view, but I see it differently.
- I have a different opinion on this matter.
- I don't agree with that.
- My opinion is this:...

We practice: REFUSING

Firmly, briefly, confidently, without too long an explanation. You can say, for example:

-
- I'm sorry, but I can't do it, I have too many responsibilities.
- Unfortunately, I can't help you, I have a lot on my mind.
- I can't help you in this matter.

Practice: EXPRESSING CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISM

Whether you are a person who is being criticized or criticized, pay attention to whether the criticism refers to a person's character or behavior. In assertive communication, it is better to refer to a specific behavior, without judging the person, and not to generalize.

-
- Instead of: "you are an irresponsible person", say: "you behave irresponsibly".
- Instead of: "I can never count on you", say: „, I could not count on you in this matter".

Practice: EXPRESSING DISSATISFACTION

Sometimes, under the influence of strong emotions, we insult the other person and put the responsibility on them. We forget to convey what is most important, i.e. how we feel in a given situation. Talking about feelings is a safe way to resolve any misunderstandings.

- You can say, for example: "I feel... (e.g. anger, sadness), when you... (e.g. you speak to me in a raised tone, you are late for a meeting again) and please... (e.g. talk to me more calmly, be on time next time)."
- Note: Don't say this from a position of superiority. In assertive communication, always remember to respect yourself, but also the other person.

I'VE GOT MY EMOTIONS IN CHECK

- If you find it difficult to stop your emotions from bursting during a conversation, you have at least two constructive options: stop the discussion, ask them to postpone it until the tension subsides a bit, or tell them about your feelings directly.

Remember: you have the right to talk about your feelings, you do not hurt the other person, but only inform them what is happening to you at the moment.

Try to form a sentence.

Share how easy it is for you to respond assertively

SUMMARY – Assertiveness exercise

Can assertiveness be trained? Yes, assertiveness needs to be trained. First of all, we need to know what it is. Once we know the theory, we can move on to assertiveness training.

1.,,Like a broken record” - consistency is important in assertiveness. Very often, a one-time refusal is not enough for someone to change their behavior towards us. Like a broken record, repeat the same message politely but firmly until the person changes their behavior.

2.Practice messages every day. At first, it may be easier for you in a familiar, safe environment - at home or with friends. Use phrases in messages such as: „in my opinion”, „in my opinion”, „I respect your opinion”, „I believe that”.

3.,,Scenario” - write yourself a scenario of an example event, these can be events from the past. Try to write an assertive message to a specific person in this event. Follow the tips you have learned. Writing scenarios of different situations trains your assertiveness.



THANK YOU



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