

## DEVELOPING COMMUNICATION COMPETENCE

### Assertiveness Self-Assessment Questionnaire

Fill out the following Assertiveness Self-Assessment Questionnaire. Be as honest as you can. This is not an assessment of your “ideal self.” This should be your “real self.” For each situation, indicate how likely you would be to take the action indicated by using the following scale:

5 = Very likely      4 = Likely      3 = Maybe      2 = Unlikely      1 = Very unlikely

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. You have been invited to a party but you don't know anyone except the friend who invited you, who is not present when you enter the room. You see dozens of strangers. You walk up to a group of people, introduce yourself, and begin a conversation.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. There is a definite undercurrent of tension and conflict in your group. You are feeling that tension as your group begins discussing their project for class. You stop the discussion, indicate that there is unresolved conflict in the group, and request that the group address this issue.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. You strongly disagree with your group's choice for a symposium project. Nevertheless, you say nothing and go along with the majority decision.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. During class, your instructor makes a point that angers you greatly. You raise your hand, are recognized by the instructor, and vehemently challenge your instructor's position, raising your voice to almost a shout.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. You're sitting in the back of the class. Two students sitting beside you engage in an audible conversation that is distracting. You can't concentrate on the instructor's lecture. You lean over and calmly ask them to stop talking so that you can listen to your instructor.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. At a family holiday dinner gathering, your uncle makes a blatantly racist remark, then tells a sexist joke. You sit silently.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. While on vacation, you sign up to receive a group lesson in rock climbing. After the instructor has explained the basics, everyone in the group appears to understand perfectly. You, however, are unclear about a couple of instructions. You raise your hand and ask the instructor to repeat the instructions and explain them more fully.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Three individuals representing a religious group knock on your door. When you answer, they begin to proselytize, trying to sell you on their religious point of view. You stand there waiting patiently for them to finish, wishing they would go away.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. A small group of teenagers talk loudly during a movie you are attending at a local theater. You become increasingly annoyed but say nothing to them.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. You live in a dorm room with two roommates. Next door, loud music is playing, making it impossible for you to study. Your roommates seem not to care, but you are becoming increasingly annoyed. You walk next door, pound on the door, and it opens, demand that the music be turned way down immediately.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. A member of your group couldn't afford to buy the textbook for the class. He asks you if he can borrow your book for "a couple of days." You agree. He has had the book for more than a week now and shows no sign of returning it to you. You wait for him to return the book or to explain why he hasn't mentioned it.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. You are a member of a project team at work. Every member of the team makes considerably more money than you do, yet your jobs are equivalent. You believe

that you deserve a hefty raise. You make an appointment with your boss to ask for one.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. You receive an email from a team member that has a condescending tone. It angers you that this team member, whom you view as a bit of a screw-up, lectures you on the “right way” to approach your part of the group task. You write back a sarcastic, biting reply.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 14. Your coach berates players at a team meeting for “lackluster play” and “lackadaisical attitudes.” The coach is shouting and abusive. You believe the criticism is mostly unfair and doesn’t apply to most of the players. You remain silent, wishing the coach would wind down.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 15. A group member pulls you aside and begins accusing you of “unethical behavior.” She is shouting at you, her face is flush red, and she is gesturing wildly. People are noticing. You shout back at her.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 16. The family that lives next door has a dog that barks all hours of the night. It is disturbing to you and your family members. You meet one of the dog’s owners during a walk through the neighborhood. You stop, begin to talk, and calmly bring up the barking-dog problem.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 17. While taking an exam, you notice that several students are cheating. You’re upset because this gives these students an undeserved advantage and may lower your own grade because the instructor grades on a curve. The instructor doesn’t notice the cheating. You report the cheating to the instructor after class.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 18. During a group discussion, your point of view clashes with that of another group member. You want very much to convince the group that your viewpoint should

be accepted. You interrupt when the member who disagrees with you tries to voice her opinion, keep talking when she tries to disagree with a point you make, and insist that she is wrong and you are right.

\_\_\_\_\_ 19. A member of your project team “steals” your idea and takes credit for work you have done. You angrily denounce him in front of the entire team and insist that he own up to his deception.

\_\_\_\_\_ 20. One of your team members has extremely bad breath. This is a common problem when you meet. His bad breath bothers you a great deal. Nevertheless, you say nothing and try sitting as far away from him as possible during meetings.

\_\_\_\_\_ 21. You are waiting in line to be served at a local store. Just as you are about to be waited on, a group of three individuals steps in front of you. You demand that they step aside, insisting that you were in line ahead of them.

**SCORING DIRECTIONS:** Total your scores for numbers 4, 10, 13, 15, 18, 19, and 21 (aggressiveness). Next, total your scores for numbers 1, 2, 5, 7, 12, 16, and 17 (assertiveness). Finally, total your scores for numbers 3, 6, 8, 9, 11, 14, and 20 (passivity). Enter these raw totals in the appropriate blank below:

\_\_\_\_\_ Aggressiveness ( )      \_\_\_\_\_ Assertiveness ( )      \_\_\_\_\_ Passivity ( )

Now, average each raw score by dividing by 7 (e.g., 21 on aggressiveness divided by 7 equals 3.0 average). Put averages in parentheses above.

**NOTE:** Generally speaking, you want to average between 4.0 and 5.0 on assertiveness and 2.0 or less on aggressiveness and passivity. This reflects the general desirability of assertiveness and

the general undesirability of aggressiveness and passivity. A low score on a specific assertiveness scenario or a high score on a specific aggressiveness or passivity scenario may also indicate a need for improvement in these particular situations.