

IDENTIFYING BEHAVIOURAL STYLES

Please read through the following extract and identify the four different types of behaviours.

The Weekly Office Meeting

Tom, Rachel, Steven, Toby and Lyn are all IT Administrators in the ICT Department of the Stoneybridge Council. Their Manager is Grant. Grant has been in his position for 2 years and he calls for a weekly Monday morning meeting. This meeting occurs for 1 hour every Monday morning without fail and most of the team don't really look forward to it.

Here is an example of a typical Monday morning meeting:

Grant opens the meeting with a request that each person goes through a summary of their previous week's activities. He begins by congratulating the team on an excellent piece of work they have recently completed. He was pleased that the work was done to the agreed specification and all the deadlines were achieved. He said that there was potentially another project coming from the management team but at this stage he was unsure whether they actually were going to give the project to his team or (as usual) talk about it and never actually follow it up.

Tom responds angrily to Grant's comments as he agrees with Grant that the management are completely useless and only ever think about themselves and their salaries.

Rachel waits for Grant to ask her to present some information as she is terribly shy and prefers not to be in the limelight. Rachel quickly and quietly goes through her section and hopes that no one will ask her any questions. She doesn't contribute again during the meeting.

Lyn finds Rachel very irritating and she interrupts Rachel throughout her presentation. Lyn is asked by Grant to contribute her section but Lyn says that she hasn't anything to add since she's of the strong belief that no-one will be bothered to listen anyway. Lyn is generally quite grumpy first thing on a Monday although no-one is sure that she ever cheers up.

Steven offers to go next and presents his bit to the team. He asks the team their opinions about certain aspects of the project he has yet to decide upon. Steven writes down what the team says and thanks them for their contribution. Steven is very good at eye contact with people when he speaks to them and he is also good at nodding when people are talking to him.

Toby also finds Rachel irritating but he would never dream of telling her that as she is quite a nice person. Toby also presents his bit to the team and when he's asked some pertinent questions by Grant he tends to get a little defensive. As soon as the meeting is over Toby seems to be in a terrible mood and spends the rest of the day taking it out on the rest of the team, snapping and generally being quite unpleasant to everyone.

Discussion

- Can you identify the behaviours in the text above?
- What is the impact of unaware natural behaviour on teams?

IDENTIFY YOUR OWN BEHAVIOURAL STYLE

What would you do in each of these situations? Please circle either a, b, c, or d for each.

1. You are being overlooked for a pay rise at work. Would you...
 - a) do nothing, because you believe there must be a good reason for it
 - b) discuss very angrily with your colleagues how hard done by you feel
 - c) demand a meeting with your boss & tell them in no uncertain terms that you will not be overlooked
 - d) request a meeting with your boss to ask what the issues are surrounding the pay rise

2. One of your colleagues at work has said something in the meeting that you have found offensive. Do you...
 - a) go home and feel very angry and upset – taking it out on your partner
 - b) ask the colleague concerned to have a chat to you about what happened in the meeting
 - c) immediately respond in the meeting by getting very sarcastic and quite offensive.
 - d) feel hurt, you certainly wouldn't do something like that to anyone

3. You're in a restaurant and the food that both you and your partner have ordered is terrible. What would you do?
 - a) absolutely nothing, you're aware of the potential consequences of making a fuss in a restaurant
 - b) you tell the waiter at the end of the meal that you're bitterly disappointed and won't be returning to the restaurant
 - c) at the start of the meal you ask the waiter if he could call the chef. You discuss your specific issues with the chef
 - d) you get up, walk to the cooking area and shout over the counter how disgusted you are in the quality of the food in this restaurant. You storm off.

4. You are on a flight to Tenerife and a little child in the seat behind you keeps pulling your hair and kicking your seat. What do you do?
 - a) you turn around and shout at the child – you cannot believe how parents allow their kids to behave so badly
 - b) you order another drink from the bar and grit your teeth. The 3-hour flight will be over soon...
 - c) you ask the child gently and nicely to stop as it's hurting you.
 - d) you talk very loudly to your husband about the shocking behaviour of children on flights

- 5 You have a close circle of friends. One of your friends keeps going on in public places such as nightclubs and restaurants about the need for you to become attached. It's beginning to get on your nerves. What do you do?
- a) politely take your friend aside and ask them to refrain from discussing this issue any further as it's not an important issue for you
 - b) as soon as your friends is out of sight, you confide in your other friends how angry she/he is making you
 - c) do nothing and continue to feel embarrassed and uncomfortable
 - d) finally can't take anymore and tell her/him (in front of everyone else) how angry they are making you and that enough is enough. You think it's time you ended the friendship anyway.

Please write down your scores below:

Question	Assertive	Passive	Aggressive	Passive-Aggressive
1	d	a	c	b
2	b	d	c	a
3	c	a	d	b
4	c	b	a	d
5	a	c	d	b

Are they any patterns of behavior that you can identify for yourself?

ASSERTIVENESS SKILLS EXERCISE

The Director's Request

Your Director has seen one of your members of staff coming in late this morning. As lateness is one of his BIG hates he has hauled you into his office and told you to get downstairs and "sort him" out. You're not sure what "sort him" out means but it obviously sounds serious.

You feel that the Director is going over the top on this one as the member of staff in question is never late. Whilst you may have a word with him you feel it inappropriate that it should be done in a "sort him out" type manner. You therefore feel you need to discuss this further with your Director.

Prepare what you feel you could say to your Director

The Magical Mystery Tour

As a salesman, you are used to travelling all over the country from your base in Aberdeen to meet your clients. Your Manager however wants you to visit your four key clients next Thursday in order to show them your new product, the XJF filter, first hand before it is publicised in Friday's press. He has arranged appointments for you: 7am in Glasgow, 11.30 am in Inverness, 3.00pm in Aberdeen and 6.00pm in Perth.

You are not happy with these arrangements. Although technically possible to carry out these visits in a day you have a number of concerns, namely a 3.30am start to get to Glasgow from Aberdeen, the tight scheduling of the visits and the travelling time and the order of the visits (finishing in Perth and having to travel back to Aberdeen).

You do not believe that with this schedule you could give the clients the best service in explaining the new product and therefore want to **say no** to his request.

Prepare what you feel you could say to your Manager

The Car Lender

A very good friend of yours asked to borrow your car two months ago to pick his sister and her husband up at the airport. You lent it to him in good spirit. He then asked if he could borrow it a week later to run them back to the airport. Once more you were happy to oblige.

Over the next four weeks your friend borrowed your car to go shopping, take his wife and kids out for the day and for various other reasons. On each occasion, you have lent it without question (at an inconvenience to yourself sometimes.)

In the last fortnight, however your friend has asked for your car but with an attitude that he now seems to expect it. You are getting a bit sick of this now especially as the last time he borrowed it, it was filthy with sand after a trip to the seaside. You have decided that the next time he asks for it you are going to **say no**.

Using all your assertiveness skills, attempt to deal with this situation.

Freedom From Speech

As a gifted public speaker, you have, for the last four years given a variety of talks on a variety of subjects to a charity forum based in Glasgow. You have always been willing to do this and do not expect any payment. The preparation for the event however can take up 4 weeks of your time, then there's the travelling from Aberdeen to Glasgow on a cold February evening and the travelling back.

Although you do not expect payment for the event, it would be useful if your car expenses could be met and a bed for the night in Glasgow provided. You did discuss this with the organisers last year and they said that this year you'd definitely get some form of compensation. However, there is now new management in place and they have denied all knowledge of this conversation taking place. The last conversation ended in them saying that once you've completed the talk, and submitted your expenses, then they'll have a meeting to discuss whether or not they will pay.

In essence you are out of pocket and greatly inconvenienced each year when you attend this event. You are entirely unsatisfied with this outcome at this stage.

Using all your assertiveness skills attempt to deal with this situation.

COMMUNICATION SKILLS: HOW WE SAY THINGS

Practice saying the following sentences / phrases to sound

1. Passive
2. Aggressive
3. Assertive
- 4.

Please feel free to add words, take away or change slightly.

- “I’m not happy with this piece of work, do it again”.

- “Well done, you managed that well”.

- “I’m afraid John is busy right now, call back later please”.

- “I’ve got a lot of work to get through and I don’t want to chat right now”.

- “It’s my child’s nativity play next Wednesday, I’d like to take some time off work”.

The Self Assessment Table below lists a variety of activities that we all may encounter on a regular basis. To assess your level of assertiveness in each activity, ask yourself “do I feel comfortable carrying out this activity with this person?” If the answer is ‘yes’, put a tick in the box, if it is ‘no’ put a cross. When completed the table will show the people and activities you have difficulty being assertive with.

	Friends of the same sex	Friends of opposite sex	Intimate relations	Other family members	Children	Authority figures	Business contacts	Subordinates	Colleagues
Giving compliments									
Receiving compliments									
Express liking									
Making requests									
Initiating & maintaining conversations									
Standing up for your rights									
Refusing requests									
Refusing invitations									
Expressing opinions									
Expressing justified anger									

Your Notes:

WHAT WILL YOU DO NOW?

Choose the course of action you will now take in each case. Circle the appropriate letter.

- 1. You are in a committee meeting and someone asks your opinion on a contentious matter which is important to you. Would you:**
 - A come straight out and say exactly what you think?
 - B prefer to discuss it after the meeting?
 - C acknowledge that others might not agree, before making your case?

- 2. You are in a restaurant with a colleague and the soup is cold. Would you:**
 - A for the sake of politeness, pretend you haven't noticed?
 - B refuse to pay the bill?
 - C ask for the soup to be replaced / heated up?

- 3. You are keen to apply for the job of a colleague who has just left. Would you:**
 - A walk into the boss' office and put yourself forward?
 - B ask for a meeting with the boss to present your case?
 - C wait until it appears on the notice board and apply through the usual channels?

- 4. A colleague visiting from France comes into your office smoking a cigarette. As a non-smoker, would you:**
 - A sarcastically explain that Scotland is now a smoke free zone, you would prefer them not to smoke in the buildings at all?
 - B ask them to put it out and not to smoke in your office again?
 - C let them smoke but open the window after they had gone?

5. **The boss is driving too fast for you, the passenger. Would you:**
- A sit back, grit your teeth and hold tight so as not to appear too critical?
 - B tell the boss that whilst you are impressed by their driving skills you are actually a nervous passenger so would they slow down for you?
 - C make a few sarcastic remarks about dangerous driving?
6. **When dealing with senior management, would you:**
- A agree where possible with their suggestions?
 - B insist that, as the expert, your own suggestions should be taken up?
 - C discuss and agree each point on its own merits?
7. **A subordinate asks to leave early yet again because of domestic problems. Would you:**
- A sympathise with them and agree, even though there is a rush job on?
 - B explain that while you understand that they have domestic problems you need to rely on them too, agree a mutually acceptable compromise and agree to meet to discuss a longer term solution.
 - C refuse because it has been happening too often lately and you have a rush job on?
8. **An angry customer is on the telephone, but you realise the mistake is theirs. Would you:**
- A sympathise with their situation and the inconvenience, then explain the correct solution?
 - B tell them what they should have done to avoid this happening?
 - C apologise and say you will put it right for them?

- 9. A computer salesperson is patronising you because of an assumed lack of technical knowledge. Would you:**
- A mention your degree in Computer Science and ask to see their manager instead?
 - B say nothing and let them continue but just not buy anything from them?
 - C interrupt the interview to say that you understand many customers may not be knowledgeable but...?
- 10. A colleague is shouting at you. Would you:**
- A say you can see how angry they are and you want to know the reasons why?
 - B sit back and let them get it off their chest?
 - C shout back?
- 11. You have to make someone redundant. Would you:**
- A explain the economic situation and the terms of redundancy?
 - B apologise, explain the terms and ask how they feel about it?
 - C give them a written statement and discourage discussion?
- 12. A friend doesn't seem to be listening to what you say. Would you:**
- A stop talking and answer in monosyllables?
 - B talk more loudly to get their attention?
 - C say you have noticed that they are distracted?
- 13. You want to use up your last week's holiday before the end of the year but it's a busy time. Would you:**
- A present a revised work schedule along with the request?
 - B be quite firm about your rights to take holidays?
 - C say you'd be prepared to cancel the booking if necessary?
- 14. Your partner wants to go out for the evening but you want to stay in. Would you:**

- A use any means you can to get your own way?
 - B go out feeling resentful?
 - C explain how you feel and reach an agreement?
- 15. You are offered a job at less money than expected. Would you:**
- A accept and be very glad you were chosen?
 - B explain that you expected that job to be valued more highly and remind them of the skills you would bring?
 - C refuse the offer as completely unacceptable?
- 16. You want to purchase a number of new computer systems but the salesperson does not want to give you a discount. Would you:**
- A understand their position and accept the price offered?
 - B explain that while you realise this is not a large order, there is the possibility of more orders in the future?
 - C make it clear that this is a case of no discount, no order?
- 17. You are on the receiving end of some unjustified criticism. Would you:**
- A take the opportunity to criticise them too?
 - B say you would like to correct the misunderstanding?
 - C pacify them by saying that you will try harder?
- 18. You are concerned about not having the right knowledge for a project. Would you:**
- A find an expert and ask for their advice?
 - B try to bluff it without bothering anyone?
 - C question why you were given this job?

19. A supplier invoices you twice for some inexpensive goods. Would you:

- A decide to pay because you've tried to fight their system before?
- B write to them enclosing copies of all the relevant paperwork, asking for a speedy solution?
- C phone them right away tell them how inefficient they are and threaten to place no more orders?

20. Delegated work is returned to you incorrectly done. Would you:

- A tell them it's wrong and will have to be done again?
- B don't say anything and correct it yourself?
- C point out the good parts and those which need reworking?

Scoring

Circle the answer you have given to each question, add up the number of circles in each column and write the totals at the bottom.

Question No.	Passive	Assertive	Aggressive
1	B	C	A
2	A	C	B
3	C	B	A
4	C	B	A
5	A	B	C
6	A	C	B
7	A	B	C
8	C	A	B
9	B	C	A
10	B	A	C
11	B	A	C
12	A	C	B
13	C	A	B
14	B	C	A
15	A	B	C
16	A	C	B
17	C	B	A
18	B	A	C
19	A	B	C
20	B	C	A
Total			

TECHNIQUES EXAMPLES

- **BROKEN RECORD**

I have a manager who doesn't listen to what I say in meetings. I would like to be able to say;

"I have a suggestion that I feel would benefit us as a team from both a financial & motivational perspective. If you would be prepared to listen to me, then I'm sure you would find my idea interesting."

Ignored.

"I have a thought that I'd like to share with the group that will be both financially & motivational excellent for the team. Could I put my thought forward at this stage?"

Ignored.

"I'd like to propose an idea that I believe will be very motivation and financially beneficial to this team. I'd like it if the team would listen to me for a few minutes now?"

Okay then – you have 5-min to put your thoughts across...

- **FOGGING**

The telephone rings and a customer is very angry and upset as they have driven into a pothole on the road and the damage to their car is extensive. They believe very sincerely that it is the responsibility of the Council to ensure that all roads are properly maintained during winter. Last winter the roads weren't maintained, didn't anyone learn any lessons what kind of an organisation are you running here ... what do I pay my council tax for ...

"I completely understand how you feel, you must be very upset about your vehicle. Tell me what exactly happened and I'll do my best to ensure that your complaint is dealt with effectively and as quickly as possible..."

- **NEGATIVE FEELINGS ASSERTION**

You have had a minor surgical procedure and have asked your loved one not to broadcast it to the world (that includes your family). The next minute you receive a telephone call from your mother asking why you didn't tell the family. You really didn't want to discuss it with the family and feel angry that your request was completely ignored. You address the issue with your loved one once you have calmed down and prepared something to say.

"A few days ago, just before I had the surgery, I asked you not to tell anyone in the family (or elsewhere) that I'd had this procedure. I wanted to keep it to

myself just until I got used to the idea and then I would have told people. I felt it was my decision to tell people and I'm very angry and hurt that you've ignored my request. I've now had to spend time and energy (that would have been better spent getting completely well again) dealing with my mother who is upset with me also now and of course very worried about me. In future, please don't go against my wishes."

- **DISCREPANCY ASSERTION**

This can be very useful during a negotiation of any kind. If the person who you are discussing issues with makes a statement or they give you some information and later on contradicts that information – then you could tell them that there is a discrepancy in the information that you have been told. You can then ask them for reasons for this discrepancy. The big warning when using this technique is that it can become very defensive if the person feels they have now been made a fool of or 'lost face'.

PLEASE CONSIDER USING THESE TECHNIQUES YOURSELF IN CONJUNCTION WITH DEVELOPED COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Please write a passage below of a situation that you feel is a common 'assertiveness' issue for you. What normally happens in this situation and do you feel that you normally don't deal with it assertively?

By applying one or more of the above techniques – how could this situation be re-written?

TECHNIQUES EXERCISE

Please discuss each technique in your group along the following lines:

- What scenarios would suit you using or not using this style?

- What factors could be significant in ensuring this technique is successful?

- Have you had this used on you before? How did it make you feel?

- Have you used it before? What was your success rate like?

- Is this an appropriate technique to use at work?

DEALING WITH CHALLENGING BEHAVIOUR

1. Take time to think
 - What is going on?
 - Where is the behaviour coming from?
 - How do I feel and how am I like likely to react?
 - What outcome do I want from this?
2. Disarm them
 - Listen to what is being said
 - Acknowledge their emotional state
 - Agree wherever you can – without agreeing with the issue itself
3. Reframe
 - Ask analytical questions: Why? Why not? What if?
 - Turn negatives into positives
 - Use mirroring techniques
4. Build a Golden Bridge
 - Involve them in decision making (options, build on their ideas)
 - Be sure to save face
5. Talk consequences
 - If this doesn't work – we need to talk about what happens next?
 - Last resort

Recognising behaviour for what it is [game playing] and work out strategies for dealing with it

Obstructive behaviour – Stonewalling

- What's done is done and its policy and it can't be done

Attacks – offensive

- Do it or else and you're a bit young for this work, aren't you? And I know your manager

Tricks – Deceptive

- Using false or confusing information