



Assertiveness Worksheet



Part 1: Self-assessment

Mini self assessment

Let's evaluate your relationship with assertiveness across the assertiveness scale.

Before going into your next meeting, take a look at the scale below and assess where you fall on the assertiveness scale for that particular meeting.

I strongly recommend doing this exercise separately for different meetings, because depending on the type of meeting, you'll fall at a different place on the scale. Repeat this exercise as often as you need to for different meetings (you'll learn a ton about yourself if you put in the legwork to do this!)

The Assertiveness Scale

0	1	2	3	4
You don't know your opinion	You know your opinion, but you don't share it	You know your opinion and you share it, but if someone disagrees you defer to them	You share your opinion and are willing to disagree with someone to defend it	You share your opinion and know how to disagree with someone to defend it – even if they're a super difficult or defensive stakeholder



Part 2: Focus Areas

Focus Areas

Now that you know where you fall on the scale, you can identify your focus area for the meeting. Below is an overview of my suggested focus areas for each number on the scale.

For example, if you're a 1 on the scale for your next meeting, your focus area should be learning to become more vocal in that meeting.

On the pages that follow, you'll find a deeper dive on each and I'll help you create next steps tailored to where you are on the scale.

The Assertiveness Scale

0	1	2	3	4
				
Focus on trusting yourself	Focus on being more vocal	Focus on getting better at navigating disagreement	Focus on getting better at navigating high tension / high stakes disagreements	Nothing to focus on – you're crushing it at assertiveness! (focus on making sure you're in a leadership role because with this level of skill, you should be ;)



Part 3: Action Steps (0 on the scale)

Action steps

Below is a list of action steps you can try if you're at a **zero** on the scale.

Choose just ONE and try it out before your next meeting.

Action steps to try out

1. Identify ONE area in your life where you 100% trust your judgment and your opinion. Before going into your next meeting, ask yourself: how would I act in this meeting if I brought THAT level of self trust into the meeting today?
2. Imagine your boss is MIA and needs you to take their place in this meeting. How might you participate differently?
3. If you're unsure of what your opinion is, ask yourself: if I had to come up with a hypothesis, what would my best guess be? And then notice and observe whether your hypothesis turns out to be correct. If it does – celebrate! If it doesn't – that's ok, too. Simply ask yourself – what did I learn and how will this change my hypothesis in a future situation?



Part 3: Action Steps (1 on the scale)

Action steps

Below is a list of action steps you can try if you're at a **1** on the scale.

Choose just ONE and try it out before your next meeting.

Action steps to try out

1. Imagine that the salary you earn in your job is 50% for the work you do in solitude at your desk, and 50% for the ideas you contribute in meetings. How does this change your willingness to speak up? And even more importantly – how is it true that a portion of your salary IS being paid to you for your participation in meetings?
2. Before entering into your next meeting, ask yourself: what is most in service of my team? If I put my fears aside, what level of participation in this meeting most benefits those around me?
3. Imagine you are 10 years into the future, and you've become a successful C-Suite executive. You're writing a note to past you to help her feel more courageous in this meeting. What do you say in that note? Write it out and stick it to your laptop before the meeting!



Part 3: Action Steps (2 on the scale)

Action steps

Below is a list of action steps you can try if you're at a **2** on the scale.

Choose just ONE and try it out before your next meeting.

Action steps to try out

1. Ask yourself: did I learn at some point in my life that it isn't OK to disagree? If so, where did I learn this? Do I still think this is true and applies at work?
2. Ask yourself: how is it selfish NOT to disagree? Who loses out when I don't disagree?
3. Come up with a list of 5 reasons why disagreeing is at its core an act of teamwork and collaboration.
4. Come up with a list of 5 reasons (even if it's hard!) why YOU enjoy when someone disagrees with you. Stretch your brain on this one!



Part 3: Action Steps (3 on the scale)

Action steps

Below is a list of action steps you can try if you're at a **3** on the scale.

Choose just ONE and try it out before/during your next meeting.

Action steps to try out

1. When navigating disagreement with a challenging stakeholder, practice pausing and slowing down the conversation. This is essential to de-escalate the tension and move towards collaboration. To slow down the back-and-forth, try saying: "let's take a pause and recap what we're both seeing – I want to make sure I'm understanding your POV correctly."
2. Notice if your brain goes into fear when a difficult stakeholder is disagreeing with you. Write down any exaggerated fear-based thoughts that come up (example: I'll lose my job because of this). Write down these thoughts before the meeting, and put them aside during the meeting reminding yourself that you don't need to allow these fears to detract from your ability to navigate a difficult conversation.
3. Take time outside the meeting to get to know the difficult stakeholder. Genuinely understand their goals, their team, and their business challenges. This will make future conversations with them much easier.