



# Assertiveness

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# Intended Learning Outcomes

By the end of this session, you will be able to:

- Identify behavioural choices and their impact on communication and relationships in the workplace;
- Discuss cultural differences in communication;
- Describe the elements of assertive language;
- Practice using assertive language in response to workplace situations

# Domestics and Introductions



Introduce yourself to  
colleagues on your  
table

What would you like  
to learn from today's  
session?

# Working together

Interactive

Safe space

Breaks

Feedback

# The pre task

Think about the situations at work where you would like to be more assertive.

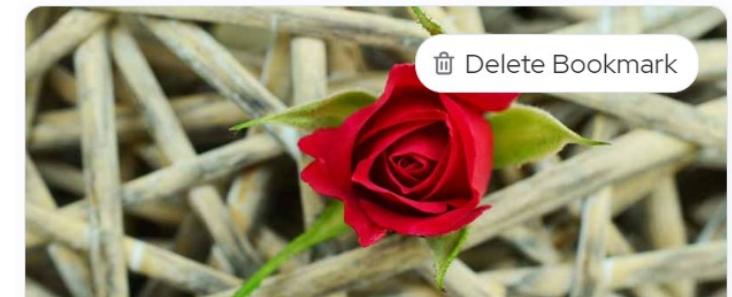
Who are you talking with?

What are you talking about?

What do you need to achieve?

What makes it easy / hard?

Where is the conversation taking place?



## Developing Assertiveness

⌚ 4 Mins



12

Category: How to Guides | Keywords:  
assertiveness, confidence

# Assertiveness definition

“Behaviour which enables a person to **act in (their) own best interests**, to **stand up for themselves** without undue anxiety, to **express honest feelings** comfortably, or to **exercise their own rights** without denying the **rights of others**”

*Calberti & Emmons (1974)*

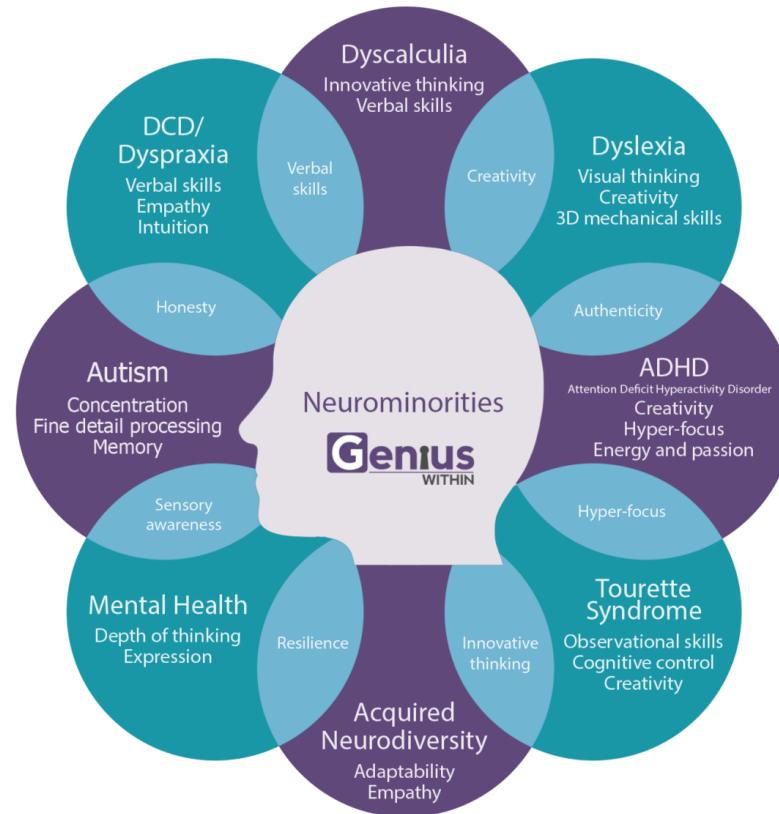
Learned behaviour – practice makes perfect

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## Assertiveness and cross-cultural variations

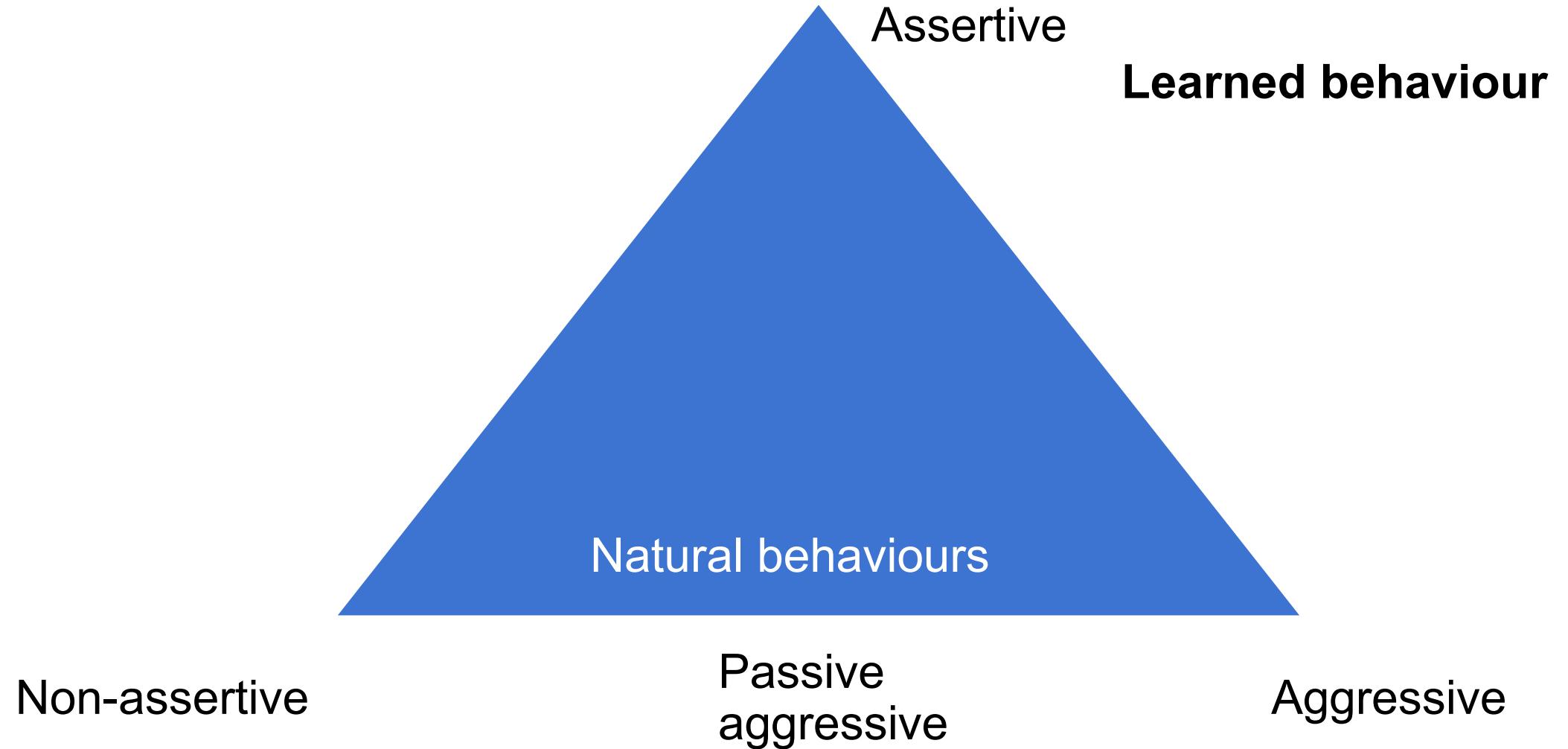


# Neurodivergent people and assertiveness



- It is estimated that 1 in 7 people in the UK are neurodivergent (ACAS, 2019)
- How can neurodivergent colleagues be supported to use their strengths and so practice assertive behaviours?

# Understanding behavioural choices



# Understanding behavioural choices

**aggressive behaviour** is defined as an interaction style that disregards the rights, needs, and feelings of others. It often involves hostile actions or words that can intimidate or harm others.

**Non-assertive behaviour** is defined as a tendency to prioritize others' needs over one's own, often leading to feelings of being taken advantage of or helplessness

**Passive aggressive behaviour** is defined as an indirect expression of negative emotions, often accompanied by subtle behaviours or comments.

# Understanding behavioural choices

Activity: (in three groups, one behaviour per group)

What does the behaviour look like and sound like?

What does the behaviour feel like to do?

What does the behaviour feel like to receive?

# Assertiveness is

Adult to adult

Respectful

Trying to achieve a win : win

Respecting all parties' rights and responsibilities



# Rights and responsibilities

Assertiveness is based on us accepting our rights and responsibilities and affording the same to other people

If you are going to assert your right, then you need to take responsibility too



# Rights and responsibilities

Legal rights

General rights



# Activity

Why do we need assertiveness in the workplace?

# Activity debrief

Legal rights

To get the job done

Positive, respectful working  
environment

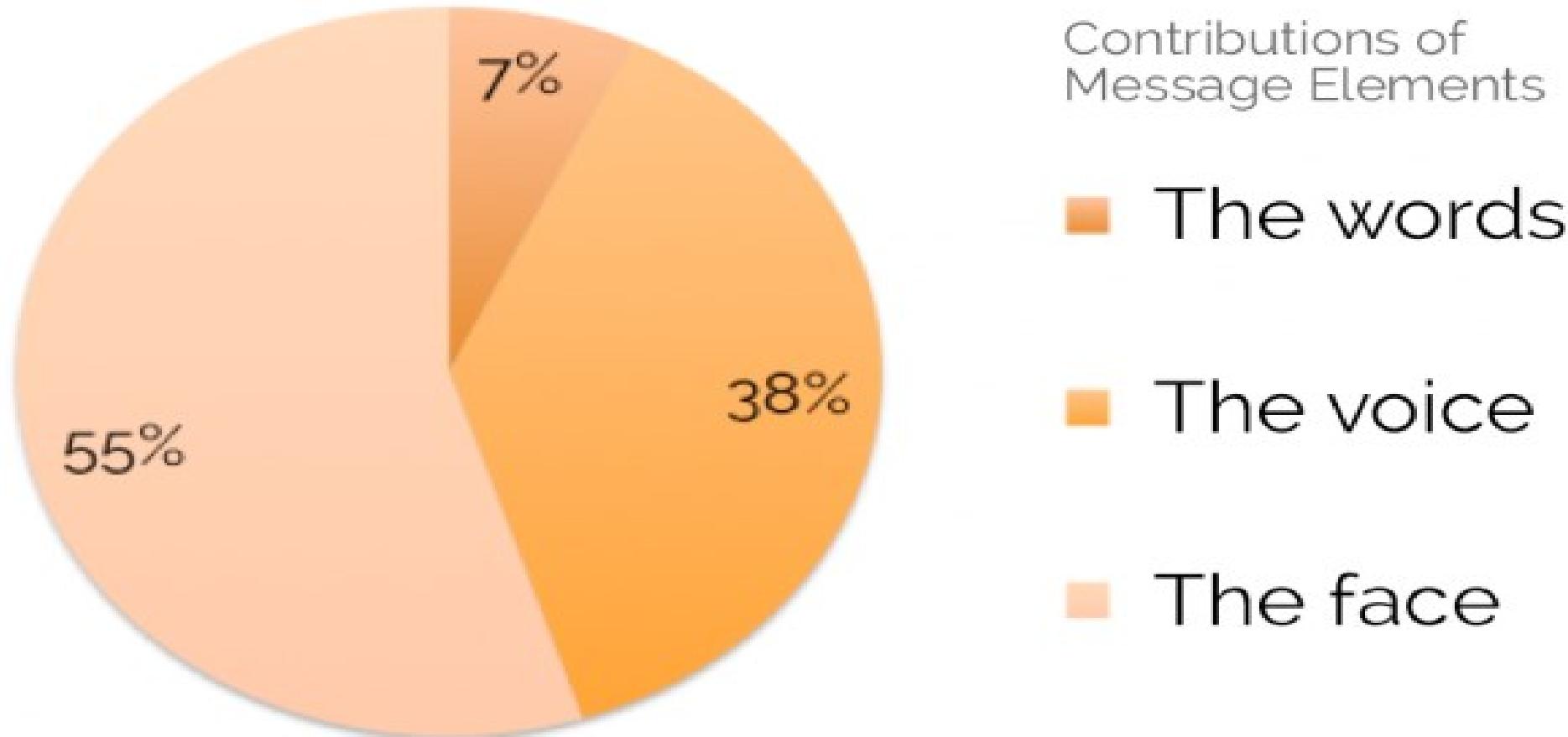


# Getting the tone right in assertiveness

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- Applies in situations where we are involved in:
- Face to face communication
- Causing an emotional response

## Mehrabian's "7-38-55 Rule" of Communication



# Tone, emphasis and pace matters!

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- “You did that really well”

# Activity

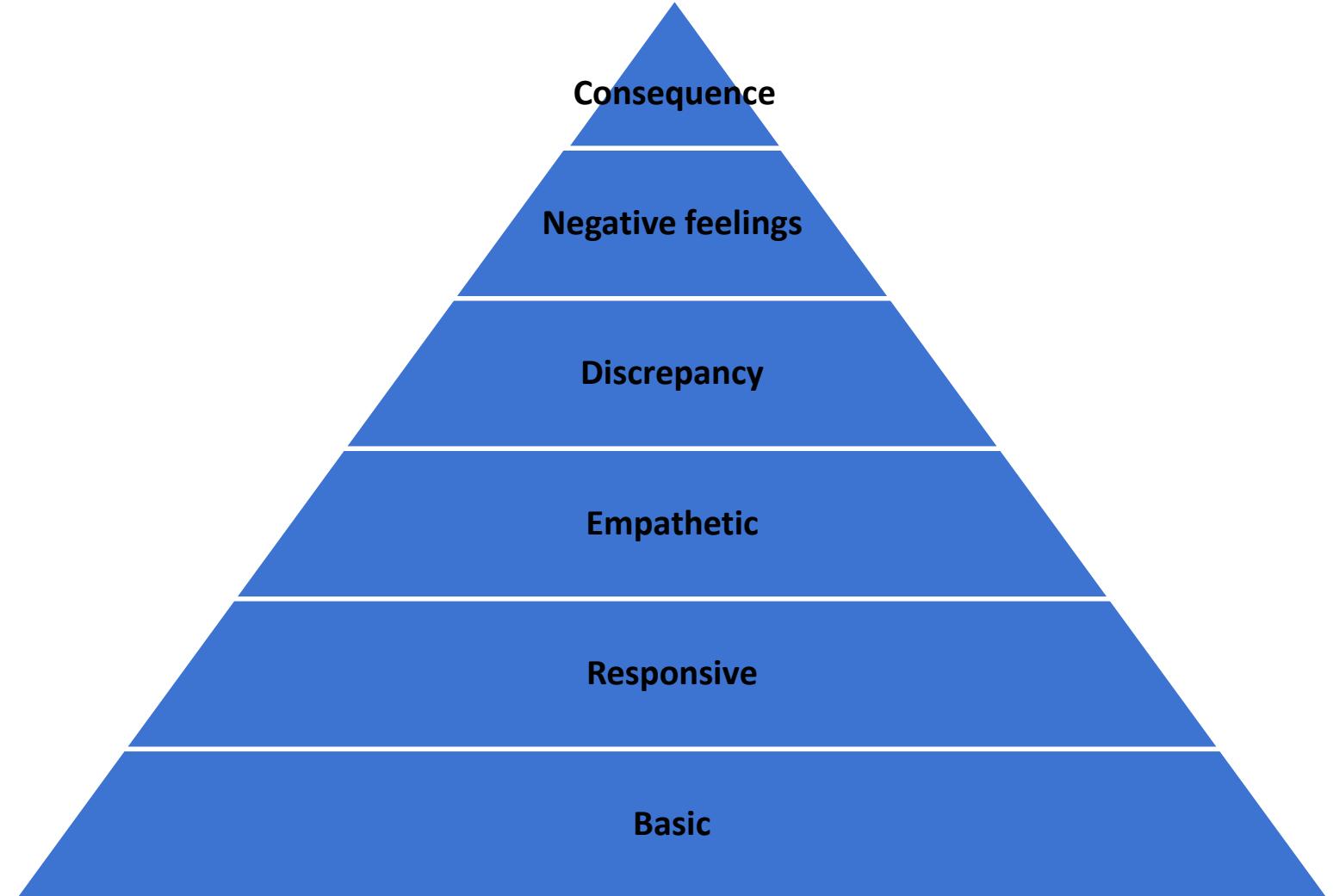
Working in pairs / small groups, identify the behavioural styles used in each example.



# Behavioural continuum



# 6 levels of assertiveness



# Activity

Create your own examples to use within the 6 levels of assertiveness and discuss with colleagues



# Assertiveness tools



# Applying assertiveness in the workplace

Review the situation that you highlighted in the pre-course task

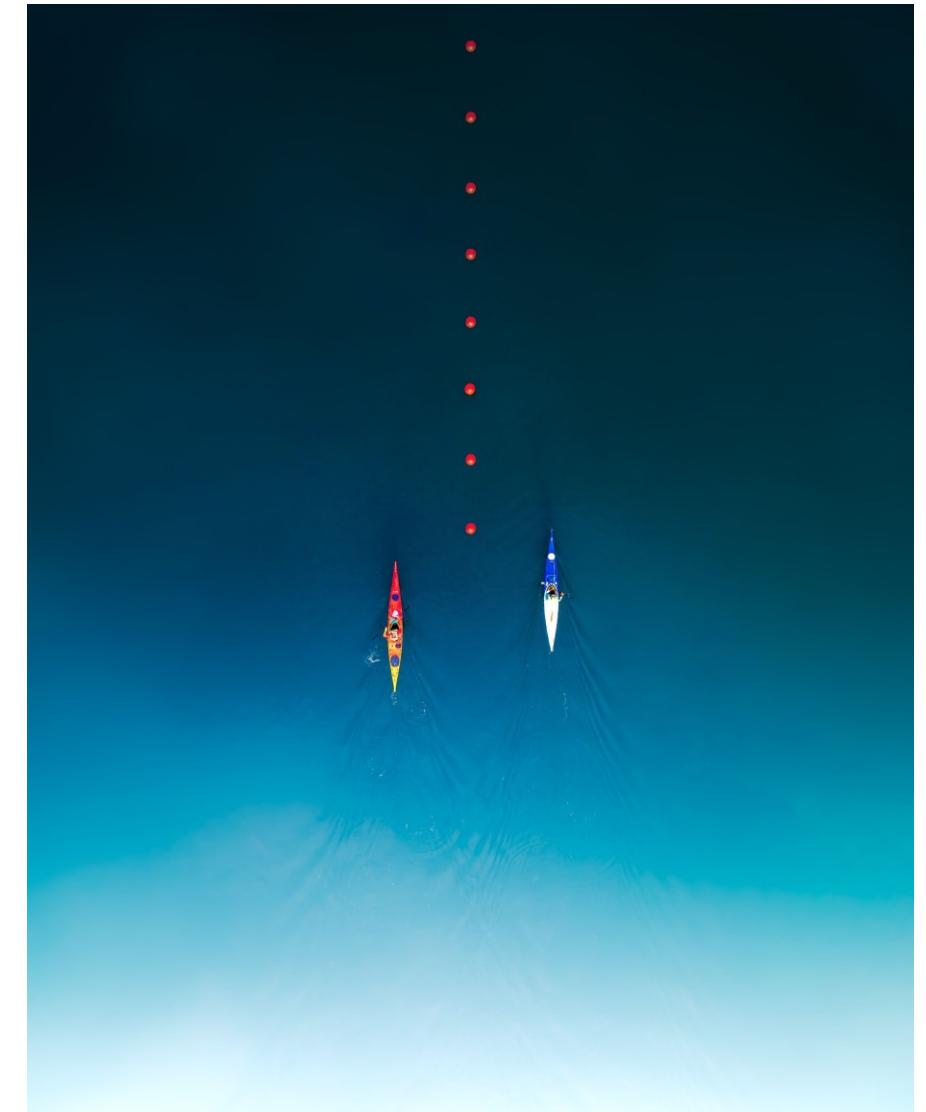
Which of the 6 levels of assertiveness are relevant here?

Which of the assertiveness tools would be useful to use?



# Action planning

Share one thing you are going to do after this session.



| **Thank you**

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