Assertiveness and Diplomacy Skills

Larry Long, Jr., Ph.D., Psychologist
Director, Counseling & Educational Support Services
Assistant Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs
Positive Work Culture

- Supportive and encouraging
- Help people perform at their best
- Foster investment in each other’s successful outcomes
- Provide a safe environment so that disagreements may be addressed productively
Distress:
We coach your faculty to look for...

- Performance Issues
  - Decline in performance
  - Showing up late
  - Calling in sick

- Disturbing content in humor/e-mails

- Notes not completed on time

- Duty hours not recorded consistently
Distress: We coach your faculty to look for...

- Changes in Demeanor, Appearance, or Personal Hygiene
- Disruptive Conduct
  - Inappropriate outbursts
  - Persistent interruptions
- Disorderly Conduct: dominant voice tone, aggressive physical stance, making threats
Why is assertiveness or diplomacy sometimes so difficult?!
It's not worth it, Roy! Let's just give him our noses & let him go!
What are the consequences of not being speaking up?

Or not filtering appropriately?
Defining Assertiveness
Conflict Management Styles

- Competing
- Collaborating
- Compromising
- Avoiding
- Accommodating

Assertive Unassertive

Uncooperative Cooperative
Fundamental Attribution Error
Self-Serving Bias

The tendency for individuals to attribute their own successes to internal factors while putting the blame for failures on external factors.
Adam Galinsky: How To Speak Up For Yourself

(3 Take-Aways and 1 Question)

https://www.ted.com/talks/adam_galinsky_how_to_speak_up_for_yourself
Takeaways and Questions
Listening ≠ Agreeing
Communicating you understand another’s perspective doesn’t mean you agree with them.
Listening must be DEMONSTRATED

Especially when there is an interpersonal charge...

- Paraphrasing
- Summarizing
- Restating
Carefrontation
What are best practices for a caring confrontation?
When Confronting (or Asserting)...

Determine Your Specific Desired Goal or Outcome
When Confronting (or Asserting)...

- Speak Privately AND Choose a Limited Number of Concerns
- Use single, specific, and observable examples (whenever possible)
When Confronting (or Asserting)...

- Demonstrate Active Listening
- Paraphrasing
- Summarizing
- Restating
When Confronting (or Asserting)…

- Be open to different interpretations of the same event
When Confronting (or Asserting)...

- Keep it about the message
- And keep the message receiver safe)
When Confronting (or Asserting)...

- Allow the message receiver to make a gracious exit
When Confronting (or Asserting)...

- For those with "big egos"
- Use "Stroke/Stroke/Thump" method
When Confronting (or Asserting)...

- Post-confrontation evaluation: “Who’s got the problem?”
When Being Confronted...
When Being Confronted...

Breathe
(manage your distress)
When Being Confronted...

Maintain respectful language, tone, and pace
When Being Confronted...

- Listen actively
- Ask for clarification and additional details
When Being Confronted...

Set limits when language, tone, or approach is inappropriate

[boundaries]: limits that define acceptable behavior
When Being Confronted...

Agree In Part
(disarming technique)
When Being Confronted...

Use “Graceful” Retreat Strategies
Confrontation
Consultation
Concluding Thoughts...
Want more ideas?

Larry Long, Jr., Ph.D.
Student Center G116
(913) 588-6580
llong@kumc.edu