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## How assertive are you? Take our test

Giving employees critical feedback, negotiating with vendors, sticking up for your people (or your budget)—they're all communications situations that require a certain amount of assertiveness.

Some HR pros are naturally assertive; others may need to learn to be more assertive. The payoff can be significant: When people understand exactly what you're saying or asking, you're far more likely to get what you need.

These 18 questions, developed by psychologist and business consultant [Judith Tingley](#), can help you pinpoint areas of weakness in your ability to express yourself. Use your results to figure out where you can improve.

### Instructions:

Using the following scale, score yourself on how you *usually* react to a particular situation, or your *usual* attitude.

**0** = Almost always

**1** = Usually

**2** = Sometimes

**3** = Seldom

**4** = Rarely or never

\_\_\_\_\_ 1. Do you ignore it when someone pushes in front of you in line?

\_\_\_\_\_ 2. Do you raise your voice when you're trying to make a point in a conversation?

\_\_\_\_\_ 3. Do you find it difficult to accept compliments from your boss?

\_\_\_\_\_ 4. Do people think you have a temper?

\_\_\_\_\_ 5. Do you find it difficult to ask a friend to do you a favor?

\_\_\_\_\_ 6. When someone criticizes you, do you find something about him to criticize?

\_\_\_\_\_ 7. Do you keep your opinions to yourself when talking to people whom you do not know very well?

\_\_\_\_\_ 8. Are people afraid of you?

\_\_\_\_\_ 9. If you are angry with someone, is it difficult for you to tell her?

\_\_\_\_\_ 10. Are you sarcastic with people?

\_\_\_\_\_ 11. Do you find it difficult to refuse people's requests?

\_\_\_\_\_ 12. Do you think up smart remarks and quick comebacks to put other people down or on the defensive?

\_\_\_\_\_ 13. Do you let other people make decisions about where to go and what to do?

\_\_\_\_\_ 14. If someone disagrees with you, do you strongly dispute his viewpoint?

\_\_\_\_\_ 15. Do you tend to drag out apologies?

\_\_\_\_\_ 16. Are you pretty sure you are right?

\_\_\_\_\_ 17. Is it hard for you to express your negative feelings to others?

\_\_\_\_\_ 18. Do you tend to be judgmental?

**Scoring:**

Score the odd-numbered questions separately from the even-numbered questions.

A low score (under 10) on the even-numbered questions indicates that you generally are aggressive. *Aggressiveness can be detrimental to communication.*

A high score (higher than 25) on the odd-numbered questions indicates that you usually are able to assert yourself. *Assertiveness enhances understanding.*