

DESC Script for Assertiveness

RESPONDING ASSERTIVELY USING A DESC RESPONSE:

Describes a behavior that has a negative impact on the speaker.

Example: "When you start shouting, I want to end the conversation immediately."

Expresses a feeling in response to the behavior.

Example: "I feel attacked and defensive."

Specifies the desired change in behavior.

Example: "I need you to tell me clearly and calmly what I'm doing to upset you so I can understand my role in this."

Or **S**pecifies the effect the behavior had on you and others.

Example: "Your shouting disrupts our co-workers and our ability to focus on our customers."

Consequences if the desired change does not occur (Note: Step 4 is not always possible or necessary and is not only a negative consequence).

Example: "or I will ignore you." or "so that we can work more collaboratively"

IDEAS FOR MAKING DESC RESPONSES MORE EFFECTIVE:

- Use "I" statements" – it says I have the problem and I want to fix it
- Be brief – avoid repetition or "kitchen-sinking" ("you also do this, this, and this wrong.")
- Use non-judgmental descriptions of behavior
- Avoid ascribing motives to behavior – we can't know why people act the way they do
- Avoid absolutes and exaggerations (always, never)
- Avoid name-calling
- Make sure your body language and voice tone support your verbal assertive message.