

SURVIVAL GUIDE TO ONLINE LEARNING

ABOUT THE GUIDE >

This guide is the combined effort of the following English Colleges: Champlain Lennoxville, Champlain St. Lambert, Champlain St. Lawrence, Dawson College, Heritage College, Marianopolis, and Vanier College.

In Winter 2020 semester, we had to pivot to remote emergency online learning. We decided to work together to help everyone to prepare for the coming semester.

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PURPOSE >

With this guide, you can self-assess your readiness for college success. You can keep these resources for reference to help you along your way. By consulting each section, you will have the opportunity to reflect, learn new strategies, find helpful information, and get an overview of your college's resources. Do not hesitate to reach out to access services and resources to get more support.



TOPICS COVERED >

- COMPUTER AND TECHNOLOGY HELP
- ACADEMIC READINESS
- STUDY SKILLS AND ORGANIZATION
- WELL-BEING
- NETIQUETTE

Netiquette for Participating in Online Courses

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Netiquette for Participating in Online Courses

THE RULES >

RESPECT

- I respect other's values, emotions, differences and truths and enter all online interactions with good intentions and without judgement.
- I do not use racist, sexist, homophobic, abusive and derogatory language, swear words or any language that would cause offence or be perceived as threatening.
- I use people's names and their pronouns.
- I do not share the virtual classroom link or a recording with anyone not registered in the class.
- I do not record or take screenshots of any online class unless asked to do so, or I requested a permission to do so.

PREPARATION AND PARTICIPATION

- I stay up to date with the course by reading all teacher's instructions and assigned materials.
- Whenever I receive an online class invitation from my teacher, I make certain that I know how to use the online class tool before the start of the class.
- I am on time for all online classes, and I let my teachers know ahead of time if I cannot attend a class for any reason by contacting them.
- If during a class I encounter technological problems, I take necessary measures to communicate with the people involved.
- In online classes, I am an active participant to the best of my ability.
- I turn on my microphone and camera at teacher's request.
- I wait my turn to speak and raise the virtual hand.
- I complete all self-study tasks on time.



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Netiquette for Participating in Online Courses



ENVIRONMENT

- I manage any disruptive elements that may distract the other classmates, the teacher and me during online classes as much as possible.
- I put all my electronic devices on silent and turn off notifications.
- I let my teacher know when my environment may become a problem.

CLOTHING

- I ensure that I am appropriately dressed and presentable for online classes.

FOOD AND BEVARAGES

- I eat during breaks.
- I drink water as needed.

IMPORTANT COLLEGE POLICIES >

As a student participating in an online learning environment, I am aware that I must abide by all rules and regulations including, but not limited to,

- rules in my course outlines,
- Institutional Code of Student Conduct
- Policy Against Sexual Violence
- Harassment Policy
- Information Security Policy

For more information on the above, please [click here](#).

Academic Readiness

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Academic Readiness



I know my academic rights and responsibilities >

To learn more, please consult the [IPESA](#) (Institutional Policy on the Evaluation of Student Achievement).

DISCIPLINE >

RESOURCES FOR REVIEWING SECONDARY 5 MATH, PHYSICS AND CHEMISTRY

Physics:

- [Resources for Secondary 5 Physics from Vanier College \(PDF\)](#)

Mathematics:

- [Resources for Secondary 5 Mathematics from Vanier College \(PDF\)](#).
- [Pre-Cal lessons from Learn Quebec](#)

Chemistry:

- [Secondary Chemistry Review from Learn Quebec](#)

ONLINE
RESOURCES

ACADEMIC READING

Even if you like reading for pleasure, academic reading requires additional skills. Academic reading is intentional and involves activities that you do before and after reading, including note-taking. You may initially expect lower engagement and higher level of difficulty, but different strategies will help you find all the information you need and find enjoyment in learning new things.

- [Reading an Academic Article or Textbook SQ3R and SMART \(PDF\)](#)
- [Strategies for academic reading from Open Universities Australia \(PDF\)](#)

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Academic Readiness



HELP AT THE COLLEGE >

- Please check your Omnivox for information on resources such as the Writing Workshop, French Help Centre, Tutoring and more.

ACADEMIC WRITING

Academic writing refers to a style of writing that is used to express ideas in a disciplined way when writing about academic subjects. The language is more formal and requires following the rules of grammar and of the academic format such as literary essay or research paper. It needs to be precise and clear. Writing in academic English requires following evidence-based reasoning.

- [Academic Style \(PDF\)](#)
- [Essay Basics from Dawson College \(DOC\)](#)
- [Compare and Contrast Essay from Vanier College \(PDF\)](#)
- [Academic Integrity from Heritage College](#)

ONLINE
RESOURCES

FRENCH LANGUAGE SKILLS

- [Francomane](#) from CCDMD

ONLINE
RESOURCES

ENGLISH LANGUAGE SKILLS

If English is not your first language, and you need some practice to be fully comfortable in any situation, you can practice online, or consult the resources available in your college:

- [A Listening Companion](#) from CCDMD
- [Language and Reading Companion](#) from CCDMD

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Physical and Mental Well-Being

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Physical and Mental WELL-BEING

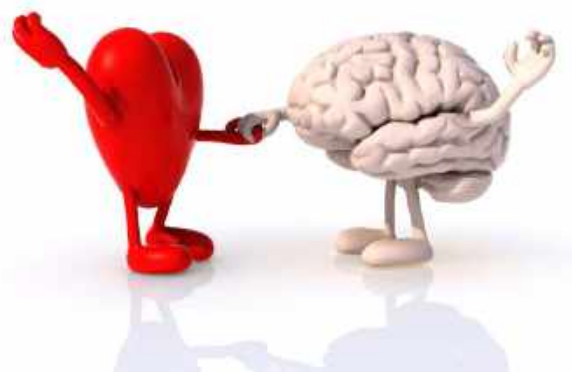
INTRODUCTION >

The current global reality can greatly impact our overall physical and mental well-being, which can affect our academic success and motivation.

We invite you to strengthen some already present skills and develop new ones that will help you to successfully navigate the upcoming semester.

ON CAMPUS >

[Emergency and security contact information for Champlain College Lennoxville students.](#)



ADVICE >

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Your learning and study environment is essential to your academic success. Not everyone thrives and is able to focus in the same type of environment, so you need to figure out how to make your physical space at home work for you. Part of this process is becoming aware of your own body and brain, and the situations in which you are able to focus better.

Some general things to consider when you are setting up your study space:

- Choose a place with a strong, consistent and secure internet connection.
- Try to make this place as comfortable and appealing as possible to improve motivation and concentration, and help lift your mood:
 - Keep it clean and organized,
 - Ensure good lighting,
 - Personalize it with plants or nature related themes.
- Prepare for your school day as you if you were going on campus.
- Make your bed and get dressed (yes, out of your PJs).
- Try as much as possible to use a desk or a table, not your bed.
- Consult [ergonomics guide](#) to set up your study space. Healthy posture while studying is important for avoiding muscle pain, headaches and lack of concentration.
- Try out different types of environments to find one that works for you; do you prefer a quiet environment? stimulated environment? or, depending on the task, a combination of both?

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ERGONOMICS
GUIDE



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Physical and Mental WELL-BEING

REMEMBER

Make sure you take regular breaks: take a short walk outside, stretch your arms and legs, get yourself a healthy snack or a glass of water.

It will help you keep your concentration and energy levels, and help avoid risks associated with prolonged sitting.

ADVICE >

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT - CONT.

Quiet environment

Some students thrive in a very quiet environment that allows complete focus. A quiet environment may mean turning off your social media, using ear plugs or noise-canceling head phones to minimize external noises. If this environment allows you to focus on what you are reading or studying, make a note of that. Perhaps, you will find that this environment works well when reading for English and humanities but not for your math and physics course work and problem solving. Make note of the differences.

To create a quiet learning environment:

- Use a quiet and undisturbed location at home.
- Remove digital distractions (phone, gaming).
- Share your schedule with family members about the times you will be online for class and ask for their support in keeping the environment quiet and without interruptions.
- Make a sign to indicate when you are in a live class.



Stimulated environment

Some people focus better with background noise. These students find that the hum in the background allows them to focus on what they are working on.

To create a stimulated learning environment:

- Develop a routine that helps you focus
- Identify the background noise that helps you concentrate, such as music, shows that you have seen before, the noise of the metro.
- Identify background noise that interrupts your focus, and avoid it.



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Physical and Mental WELL-BEING



ADVICE >

NAVIGATING SOCIAL MEDIA



- You stay connected and build friendships.
- You can build a community, and get a sense of belonging.
- You can express your ideas, creativity and share your interests.
- You can have fun.



- Exposes you to cyberbullying.
- Exposes you to misinformation.
- Leads to the feeling of lack of real connection and distorted view of others.
- It can be a real drain on your time and a strategy to avoid more important things.

How to use social media safely?

- Set social boundaries - don't engage with people who you don't know in real life.
- Be kind online - expect everything you do to be shared.
- Safeguard your reputation online; think twice of what you share - your future employer might see it.
- Learn how to protect yourself from identity theft, cyberbullying and more on [Cyber-Self](#)

Mon image Cyber
Web.com Self.ca

How to stay in control of social media usage?

- Stop worrying about missing out!
- Change notification settings (it's best to turn them all off).
- Monitor your usage (use apps like Screen Time, Moment).
- Disconnect regularly.
- Turn your screen to gray scale or utility mode to make it less appealing.
- Cut your access to apps temporarily (Freedom, Forest, Thrive).
- Delete apps too!



TOP SECRET



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Study Skills and Organization

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Study skills and organization

SEE MORE >

- > MOTIVATION
- > ORGANIZATION
- > TIME MANAGEMENT
- > ATTENTION
- > FOUNDATIONS OF LEARNING
- > STUDY ROUTINES
- > GROUP WORK

**I CAN
I WILL**

ADVICE >

MOTIVATION



One of the more challenging aspects of the shift to online classes can be loss of motivation. While in school the routine of getting up, dressed and leaving the house, the prospect of meeting friends and making new ones, all contribute to our desire to engage with our school work on a regular basis. This new reality means you need to try different ways to create and maintain motivation.

Some of the reasons why studying online may make you feel demotivated:

- It may require more effort; it is harder to ask for support and you need to monitor your progress more on your own.
- No face-to-face interaction with your professors and peers means that you can't share enthusiasm and common goals.
- Distractions are harder to avoid than in the class.
- You may feel anonymous when you don't get to chat informally with others.

Some strategies to help you stay motivated:

- Remind yourself of your goals and why you care about them.
- Talk about it with someone you care about and respect. Even if your big goal is unclear, create smaller goals – for a day or for a week.
- Choose one thing you can do today to get started.
- Study with classmates who are motivated – they will share their enthusiasm and model how to keep on going.
- Remember the times when you were motivated and think of what worked for you then.
- Use your strengths and your skills to energize yourself.
- Think of fun or creative ways to approach the task, find a personal connection to it, or relate it to an experience of someone you know.
- Routines can put you on an auto-pilot and instill a sense of discipline. Start small.
- Reward yourself... after completing a significant task.

SURVIVAL GUIDE TO ONLINE LEARNING

Study skills and organization

SEE MORE >

- > MOTIVATION
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SERVICES AT THE COLLEGE >

- Please refer to your Omnivox for the contact information of the Academic Advisors and Career Counselling services or [click here](#).

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MOTIVATION - COMMON PROBLEMS



I know I have to do my work, but I can't seem to push myself to it.

Try to break your work into smaller steps. Don't think about the whole chapter because that is too long, too scary. Just think about the very first step and do it. In this case, the very first step is to open your book at the beginning of the chapter. Then just read the first paragraph.

I have a hard time returning to continue my work on the same day.

Try to leave a part of your task undone or just start the next one. Unfinished work tends to stay on our mind and is easier to go back to. If you have two chapters to read, do not stop after chapter one. Start the second one so that you can return to it easily that day. Start a new problem or a new question before stopping your work.

I have a hard time with courses I have no interest in.

Spend some time learning about the subject before deciding that you have no interest in it. Learning is about making a connection. If you stop thinking about the subject as soon as your class is done, you will never appreciate the subject like someone who is "into it". Try to find someone who is really enthusiastic who can show you that the subject can be fun or why it matters. Be like this person for a semester.

I don't know what I am doing in CEGEP and in my program.

Long term planning, like getting an overview of your program, can help to see the pertinence of every course and the finality of your program.

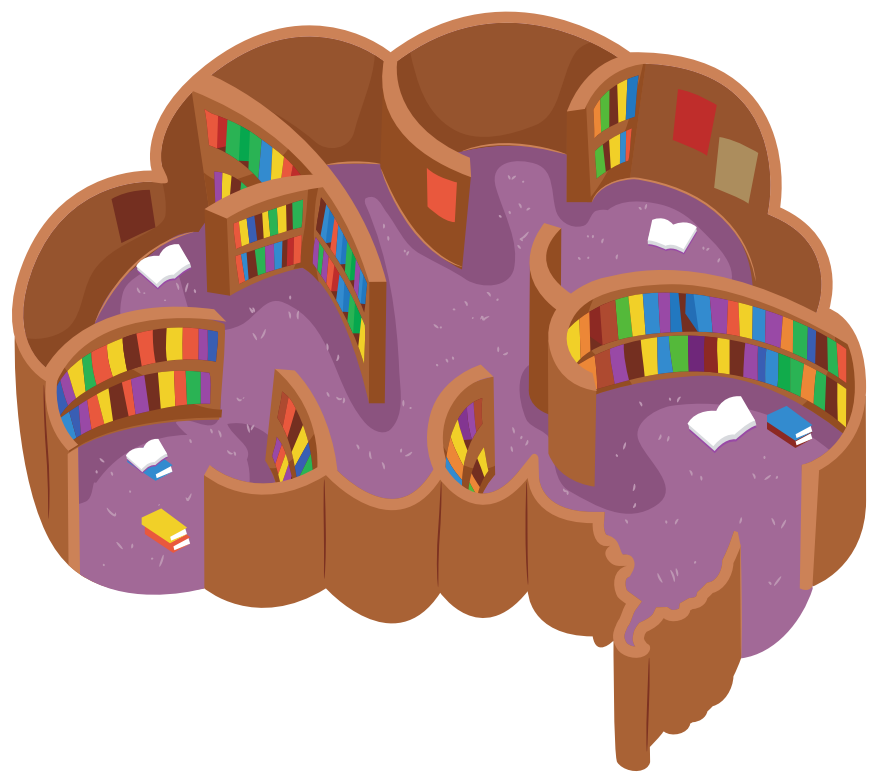
- If you want to take a look and discuss your progression, see your Academic Advisor (link).
- If you don't have a precise plan for your future, you may want to book an appointment with your guidance or career counsellor (Link).

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ORGANIZATION

Being organized and prepared is an essential part of learning. When studying in class, structure for learning is provided, but in an online setting, you must create your own structure and be more self-directed. Don't be afraid to experiment and be flexible as different strategies may work for you at different times.



For in-person and online learning activities:

- Complete your readings prior to class.
- Bring all readings and handouts to the class session.
- Attend class alert and ready to engage with the material, professor and classmates.
- Do not be afraid to ask questions: you can send the questions privately on chat, MIO, or email if you are nervous to speak aloud.

For organizing your school work, time and physical space:

- Carve out a positive work space, one where you feel able to focus.
- Try different methods to manage social media.
- Chunk time and material into manageable sections.
- Keep an agenda or calendar, either printed or on online.
- Create checklists to keep you on task.
- Keep separate notebooks or folders for each course.

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FOUNDATIONS OF LEARNING



Learning is a process that needs to take time. At first, we may feel uncomfortable or excited because we are learning something new. As we study, we need to apply different strategies to learn more deeply. True mastery of the subject matter is when we don't have to make effort to know it anymore.

When we master something, we can do it even when we are anxious. We learn by doing something, reflecting on it, researching it, talking to others about it, or applying it in the new context.

We learn better when...

... we are active, not passive learners:

- We engage with texts and problems and we ask questions about them.
- We engage with other people who are also tackling the subject.
- We seek help from others, and offer our help.

... we make sense of the content:

- We make connections to prior knowledge.
- We understand how the knowledge is organized. Read more on [Concept mapping](#).
- We practice until most answers come to us automatically.
- We explore how the knowledge is relevant and find real life examples.
- We learn how to evaluate the sources and think critically about arguments.

... we pay attention to how we learn:

- We favor active study skills over passive.
- We take time to organize our learning.
- We monitor our own learning and evaluate our own progress.
- We learn from mistakes and adapt.

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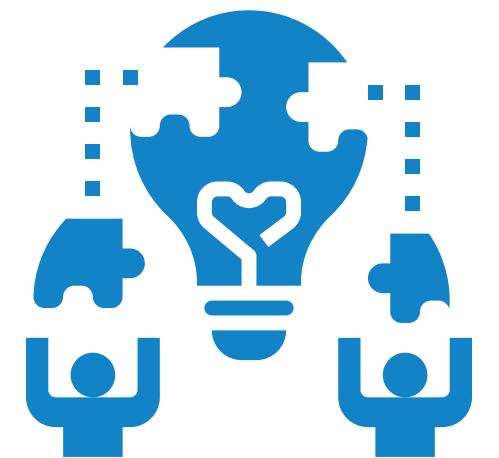
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FOUNDATIONS OF LEARNING - CONT.



... we are motivated and self-disciplined:

- We value knowing things for ourselves and for the society.
- We practice good time and attention management strategies.

Why is learning online harder?

- Many active learning strategies requires close collaboration with others.
- Teachers can help you monitor your own progress more easily when in class.
- College setting provides structure that helps you to focus and to stay motivated.

How to deal with learning online?

- Take advantage of the opportunities to collaborate and study with classmates.
- Ask professors and school tutors for help.
- Test yourself often to monitor your understanding of the subject.
- Use checklists to monitor your progress.
- Use school's online resources.
- Watch online videos on the subject you are learning.



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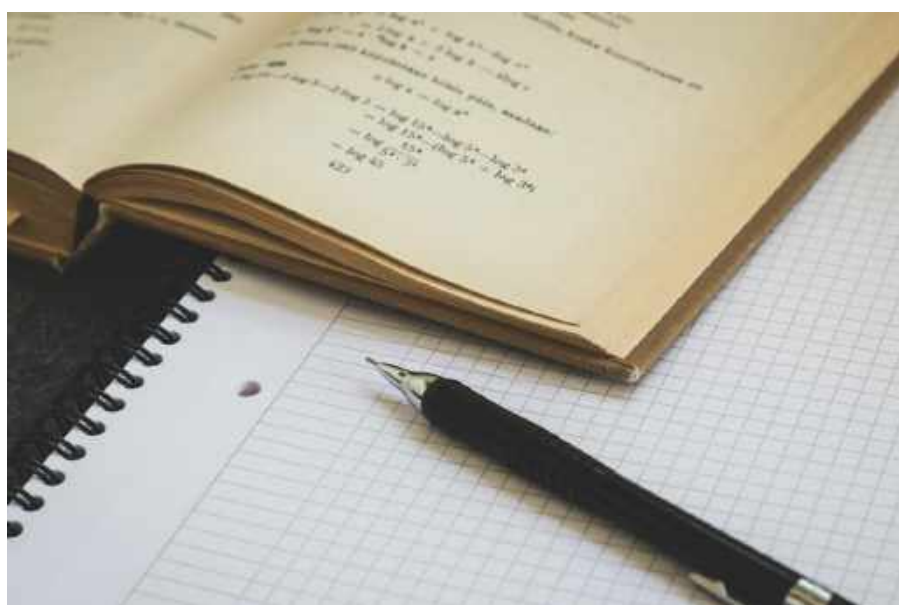
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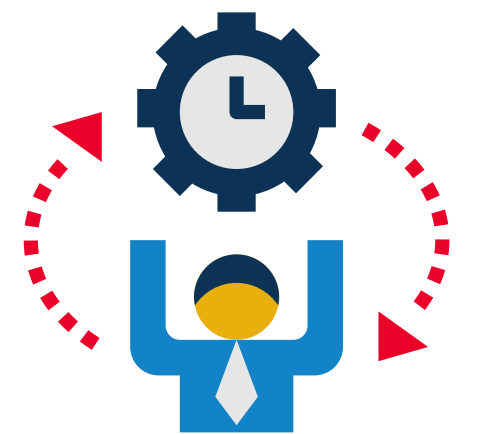
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CREATE A ROUTINE



When you do schoolwork or chores, having a routine makes it easier because you don't have to make any decisions or force yourself to do it – you just do it. Routines are a secret weapon to productivity and success.

What you need:

- **Context:** everything around you, especially location and time should be the same. For example, if it is 10 am, and you are at your desk, it means study time.
- **Repetition:** repeat the same action every day. Remember, the first step is just to get the time and location right! It will get easier.
- **Reward:** do something that will make you feel great after each session. It could be a walk with a dog or a chat with a friend.

Tips:

- Name a new routine; for example, after breakfast study session.
- Remind yourself why this is important.
- Set up a reminder so that you don't miss the time to start.
- Create a setup that is only for studying: prepare all items you need, and remove physical objects that remind you of other uses of that space; for example, clean up the dining room table, make the bed.
- Start small with just one activity at a time. Reading one page or going through one activity is a good start.
- Remove distractions for the period of study – having notifications pop up every two minutes will not help you.
- Take a short active break if you get tired, but come back soon.
- Tell someone you are trying to form a new habit; better yet, try it with a friend so that you could motivate each other.

**Don't give up when you mess up.
Identify the obstacle, remove it, and try again.**

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REMEMBER

The **three Cs** of effective communication:
Confidence in your understanding of the situation and ability to communicate effectively,
Clarity in that your message is clear and easy to understand,
Control in the way you communicate your message in a calm and respectful manner.

ADVICE >

GROUP WORK

Group work is tricky at the best of times. At the same time, collaborative work can help you stay motivated and reduce anxiety. Do your part in a timely fashion, and expect the same of others following these tips:

- Maintain clear positively assertive communication.
- Review assignment and instructions, to come to a common understanding of the goals.
- Define clearly tasks and responsibilities; if possible, pair people for each task.
- Clearly define the roles in the team, including the team lead.
- Set clear deadlines, regular meetings and check-ins.
- Set a primary method of communication, preferably one where you can see if people have read your message, to maintain flexibility and accountability.
- Be responsible and do your part. If you encounter difficulties, first bring it to your team, then escalate to professor if needed.
- Remember each individual works differently, but you are a team. So compromise is important.



ASSERTIVE COMMUNICATION

What is it?

Assertiveness is a healthy positive way of communicating. Assertive communicators are self-aware, responsible, honest and respectful. As a student, it is important to develop these skills when approaching a teacher, communicating with members of your study group, working together for group assignments, participating in your student clubs, interviewing and even when asking someone for a date. Be mindful of cultural differences...



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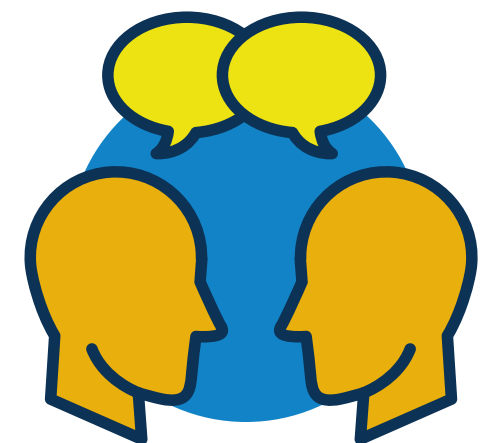
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ASSERTIVE COMMUNICATION - CONT.

Why is assertive communication important?

If your communication style is too passive, you can get to feel taken advantage of and may begin to feel hurt, angry or resentful. On the other hand, if you are too aggressive you may alienate others, be rejected or lose respect. Both passive and aggressive communication can hamper the achieving of your goals. Understand that your ideas and opinions are just as valuable as those of others, even when the situation is difficult and uncomfortable.

PHRASES TO IMPROVE ASSERTIVE COMMUNICATION

- **Use “I” statements to communicate:** I think, I believe, I prefer, I would like...
- **Use “you” statements to express empathy:** You seem to have a lot going on, Do you need more time to complete your part of the assignment?
- **Use “we” statements to foster negotiation and compromise:** I think we should meet again this week., I believe it would be good for each of us to send what we have worked on to the group chat by tomorrow so that we can see where we are in the project.
- **Delay further discussion if needed:** I can see that you are upset, shall we talk about this tomorrow? Perhaps we can set a new deadline for ____?
- **Facilitate further discussion:** I can see how you may feel I’m being bossy/ stubborn/ ...can we talk/discuss/ figure out....?

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HOW TO BECOME MORE ASSERTIVE



How to become more assertive

- Be mindful that language and culture can shape how people perceive what is passive or aggressive communication.
- Be aware of what you think, feel and want.
- Push yourself to give your opinion if you tend to be more passive.
- Practice in a safe environment if you tend toward aggressive or passive aggressive behavior.
- Acknowledge that you can't control others behavior.
- Learn to say No! specially to doing more than your fair share.
- Seek to compromise and find a "win-win" solution.
- Be open to both criticism and compliments; approach both with curiosity to see what you can learn.

REAL TALK >

EXAMPLES



Hey! Just wanted to check in since the deadline we set for ourselves is coming up. Please let me know if you need an extra day or two to complete your portion of the project. Thanks!

Hi _____! I've completed my part of the project and I'd like to put our entire project together as soon as possible to ensure we have enough time to review the entirety of it before handing it in. Thanks!

