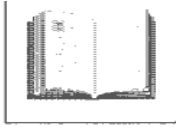


UNIT 1: UNDERSTANDING ASSERTIVENESS



Read Text

INTRODUCTION

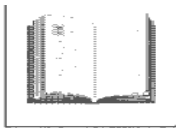
This Unit introduces Education Managers to an important concept and function which has, for a long time, not received its due attention. It focuses on what assertiveness is and considers some practical examples such as assertiveness versus aggression as well as the need for assertiveness, which could help you, as a woman manager, to deal with the obstacles you might be faced with in your day-to-day management tasks.

OBJECTIVES

After working through this unit you should be able to:

- define assertiveness
- differentiate between assertiveness and aggression
- state the advantages and disadvantages of assertiveness.

CONTENT



Read Text

DEFINITION OF ASSERTIVENESS

ASSERTIVENESS can be defined as behaviour that involves:

- standing up for your own rights in a way that does not violate other people's rights
- expressing your needs, wants, opinions, feelings and beliefs in a direct, honest and socially acceptable manner
- being able to say "NO" without feeling guilty.

NON-ASSERTION CAN BE DEFINED AS:

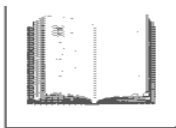
- failing to stand up for your rights or doing so in such a way that others can easily disregard them
- expressing your needs, wants, beliefs in an apologetic, diffident and self-effacing way
- failing to **honestly** express your needs.

Being **ASSERTIVE** requires the following strategies:

- thinking assertively
- feeling confident
- behaving positively without losing your cool.

Phelps and Austin (1992: 33) state that social behaviours are learned and practised over time. You become assertive by paying attention to your attitudes as well as to specific behaviours. Whether or not the environment will support your newly-adopted behaviours is also an important consideration.

Looking more closely at the above extract, it becomes clear that as a woman manager, you need to go through a self-assessment exercise and discover your strengths and weaknesses. To most managers this may mean re-writing their whole lives, because they might find themselves wanting to change quite a number of aspects of their lives. To a few others, this could mean tightening a few straps on certain aspects. Of course this should mean that, as a woman manager, you are claiming the recognition and respect that any other manager in an organisation deserves.



Read Text

ASSERTIVENESS AND BELIEFS

ASSERTIVENESS is based on the following beliefs:

- you have needs to be met
- other people have needs to be met
- you have rights, so do others
- you have something to contribute, so do others.



Self Evaluation

SELF-EVALUATION ACTIVITY 1.1

READ THE ACCOMPANYING NEWSPAPER ARTICLE AND ANSWER THE QUESTIONS THAT FOLLOW:

A grade 8 pupil who was disciplined for breaking the school rules by growing dreadlocks and wearing a cap has won the battle to wear her Rastafarian headgear.

Danielle Antonie, a pupil at Settlers High School in Cape Town, told the headmaster, Trevor Webster, that she had become a Rastafarian and wanted to wear dreadlocks and a cap, in line with her faith. He told her she would have to wait for the school authorities to discuss her request, as the cap was not part of the school's dress regulations.

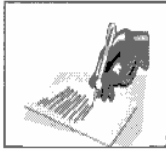
"They took some time, and it bothered me that I could not wear a cap or grow dreadlocks, so, on April 10, I went to school with my cap on," Antonie said.

Two weeks ago a disciplinary hearing found her guilty of serious misconduct for defying school rules, and this week she was sentenced to five days suspension from school. Her sentence was due to begin tomorrow but was postponed as she begins writing mid-year exams on Friday.

However, the school decided on Friday that Antonie's cap and dreadlocks were permissible. Webster stressed however, that the school had not lifted her suspension order as this related to her breach of school rules.

Antonie said dreadlocks were an important symbol of her religion . . . (Sunday Times 21 May 2000)

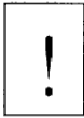
- In your opinion, would you consider Antonie's actions as assertive or aggressive? Give reasons for your response.



Self Evaluation

SELF-EVALUATION ACTIVITY 1.2

If you were put in the principal's shoes, would you have handled this situation in the same manner or differently? Support your response by providing concrete examples.



Important-take note!

Possible answers are at the end of the Unit.



Read Text

It is important that you do not confuse assertiveness with aggression and although the two may sound similar, they do not have the same meaning.

Let us now differentiate between **assertion** and **aggression**.

ASSERTION VS AGGRESSION

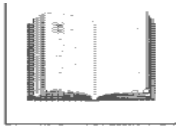
In order to be able to draw a distinction between the two, let us first find out what **aggression** is.

AGGRESSION can be defined as winning, if necessary, at the expense of others. This is based on the belief that:

- your own needs, wants and opinions are more important than those of other people
- you have rights but others don't
- you have something to contribute, but others have nothing to contribute.

It is very important that a clear line is drawn between these two terms so as to avoid confusion, which could lead to unnecessary conflict. The difference between the two will not only be evident in the words used, but can also be displayed in any of the following ways:

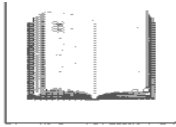
- tone of voice
- eye contact
- body movements.



Read Text

By studying the comparative table below, you should now be a bit more familiar with the differences between assertiveness and aggression.

ASSERTION	AGGRESSION
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Putting forward your own needs, ideas and feelings, but also respecting the right of others at the same time.• Knowing reasons for, and accepting your true needs and feelings and then communicating them.• Concerned with operating in a manner that develops one's self-assurance and confidence and that of others.• Concerned with effective task performance coupled with respecting people's rights.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Putting forward your own needs, ideas, and feelings, while at the same time ignoring or putting down those of other people.• Blaming others for problems and mistakes.• Using sarcasm, adopting a patronizing attitude, verbal hostility.• Concerned with achieving own goals, having little or no concern for the goals of others.• Concerned with beating others.



Read Text

NON-VERBAL CUES

WHAT we say is not only important, it is HOW we say it. The tone, facial expression and gestures we use, are equally as important.

There are non-verbal cues that we give, which can either work for or against us. There are times when we say one thing, and our bodies give a different message.

Let us look at some cues that can further clarify the point under discussion.

ASSERTION

- Body language - Sits upright and relaxed or stands with head held up, hands loosely at side using open hands movements - palms outwards – to indicate openness and invitation to other person.
- Eye contact - Steady and firm, but not staring.
- Facial expression - Jaw relaxed but not loose, open features, smiles when pleased and frowns when angry or confused.
- Voice and speech - Steady and firm, clear tone, fluid with few hesitations, emphasis on key words, even space.

AGGRESSION

- Body language - Sits bolt upright or leans forward, finger pointing, fist thumping or clenched, may stride around, arms crossed – unapproachable.
- Eye contact - Peers, stares down and tries to dominate.
- Facial expression - Jaw firm, chin thrust forward, wry, mocking smiles, angry scowls, eyebrows raised - disbelief/ amazement
- Voice and speech - Fluent, few hesitations, may be clipped, usually fast, cold or may shout, often a hard voice.

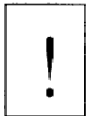


Practise Activiy

PRACTICE ACTIVITY

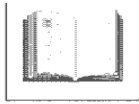
Now that you have differentiated between assertion and aggression, study the following situations and see if you can decide whether they are assertive or aggressive.

- MUSA : “Will you do the report back on this?”
ANN : “No, I won’t.”
- HUSBAND : “Are you going to get me some cigarettes?”
WIFE : “If you say so.”
- MOM : “Jean, why are you so late today? Can you see what time it is?”
JEAN : “But mom, I had to stay behind and complete my homework because I needed help from Poppy.”
- PRINCIPAL : “I will not tolerate such behaviour. Not in MY school!”
KGOMOTSO : “I would appreciate it if we finish the work this afternoon.”
- ALI : “I cannot eat this food because of my religious beliefs.”
ZONKE : “I told you I didn’t do it!”



Important-take note!

Possible answers to this activity are at the end of this unit.

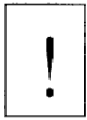


Read Text

ADVANTAGES OF ASSERTIVENESS

The advantages of assertiveness can be summarised as listed below. Assertiveness::

- can be used as a way of making room for new choices and possibilities in life
- can restore a balance in life without having to reconcile the old with the new
- can lead to successful careers
- strengthens one's self-respect
- enhances self-esteem, confidence, enthusiasm and inner energy
- can be integrated into our lives without causing drastic changes, and in such a way that we get support from the people around us.



Important-take note!

It is therefore very important to consider these advantages, as they are the ultimate aim of assertiveness.



Read Text

DISADVANTAGES OF ASSERTIVENESS

As much as women managers can achieve a number of positive results through assertiveness, it should be noted that assertive behaviour may also have a negative impact, which may result in unexpected reactions from the recipients.

Assertiveness does come with its own disadvantages of which you should be aware.

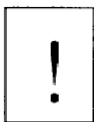
- Because of misinterpretation, people can react negatively to assertive behaviour and this can lead to conflict.
- Care should be taken to ensure that assertiveness is not taken to extremes, because it can be damaging to the relationships amongst the people concerned.
- Being assertive will not always give you the results you expect and this can be very disappointing.
- You can be labelled as a 'pushy' manager.
- Lack of understanding from others may lead to disrespect.
- Assertiveness can influence associates to retaliate, or go underground in order to bring you down.
- Assertiveness can lead to non-participation by associates, thus rendering you an inefficient manager.



Assessment Task

SELF-ASSESSMENT ACTIVITY

Discuss ways in which you can exercise control over aggressiveness.



Important-take note!

Possible answers to this activity can be found at the end of this unit.



Summary

SUMMARY

In this Unit you have been introduced to the basic concept of assertiveness and to some important issues surrounding assertiveness and aggressiveness. This Unit also drew your attention to the distinction between assertion and aggression, as well as the advantages

and disadvantages of assertiveness. In addition, you looked at non-verbal cues relating to assertion and aggression. Your understanding of these issues as well as your engagement in the various activities will equip you with the necessary back-up to achieve self-confidence and self-worth which lead to effective management.



Reflection

REFLECTION

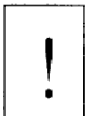
Having gone through this unit, reflect on how you, as a manager, could empower members in your working environment to become more assertive. What steps would you follow?



Unit Test

UNIT TEST

Having gone through this unit, outline the possible strategies you would use in dealing with negative reactions from your associates.



Important-note!

Possible answers to the Unit Test are included at the end of this Unit.

SUGGESTED ANSWERS

SELF-EVALUATION ACTIVITY 1.1

Yes. She stated that it was in line with her religious beliefs. She stood up for her rights in an assertive manner.

SELF-EVALUATION ACTIVITY 1.2

Responses to this activity could vary from one manager to the next. However, in your answer you could consider the following:

Yes, Danielle Anthonie should have informed the principal of her religious practices beforehand.

or

No, the principal should have understood that everyone's religious beliefs are protected by the Constitution, which is the Supreme Law of the country.

PRACTICE ACTIVITY

A possible response to this activity is to differentiate between assertiveness and aggressiveness.

SELF-ASSESSMENT ACTIVITY

Possible answers to consider are, to:

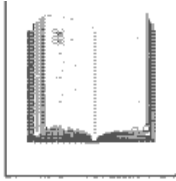
- consider other people's needs and feelings together with your own
- avoid sarcastic remarks and verbal hostility
- have concerns for other's goals
- respect other people's rights.

UNIT TEST

Suggested answers are:

- listen patiently and attentively
- understand the colleague's input/opinion and don't be aggressive
- avoid confrontation and remain calm
- don't be offensive or judgemental
- offer clarification
- provide information
- test understanding.

UNIT 2: THE RIGHT TO BE ASSERTIVE



Read Text

INTRODUCTION

Unit One dealt with assertiveness and some important issues with regard to assertion and aggression.

This Unit highlights some of the legislative considerations pertaining to the protection of women's rights. Furthermore, it considers those rights in relation to assertiveness.

OBJECTIVES

After working through this unit you should be able to:

- identify the legislation that gives women the right to be assertive
- describe the kind of freedom that women could exercise in order to be assertive
- critically analyse certain assertive/non-assertive behaviour.

CONTENT



Read Text

THE RIGHT TO BE ASSERTIVE

With the advent of the new Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, all levels of legislation have changed. Five years after the adoption of our Constitution, the recognition of human rights was enhanced.

The Bill of Rights emphasises that everyone is equal before the law and has the right to equal protection and benefit from the law. The Bill of Rights is part of the CONSTITUTION, which is the supreme law of the country, against which all others are judged. (Adapted from Pillemer, Torr, Zikalala 1999:20)



Read Text

Let us look at a few of these rights:

- the right to privacy
- the right to expression/speech
- the right to association
- the right to movement
- the right to information
- the right to assemble, demonstrate with others.



Read Text

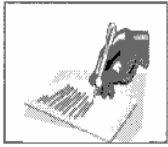
RIGHT TO PRIVACY

Every person shall have a right to personal privacy. Communities and families are still infringing on women's rights. Knowing and exercising your rights will guarantee your dignity and privacy.

There are some habits that people practise which have become an acceptable norm, but which violate women's rights to privacy. Here are a few examples:

- your daughter has a habit of taking everything out of your handbag and scrutinising the items one by one
- your partner quickly answering your cell phone to find out who is calling
- your partner scrolling through all the functions in your cellphone
- friends paging through your diary
- somebody interrupting you when you are deep in thought by asking "What are you thinking?"

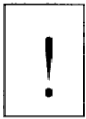
You will find that some of these issues of privacy are very sensitive. For example, how do you tell your friends not to page through your diary without causing conflict? If you take this as a challenge, and apply some of the strategies to develop assertiveness suggested in Unit One, you will strengthen your relationship and enjoy your privacy.



Self Evaluation

SELF-EVALUATION ACTIVITY 2.1

Look at the first habit on the previous page in the examples of the right to privacy. How would you assertively root out your daughter's habit?



Important-take note!

Possible answers to this activity can be found at the end of the Unit.



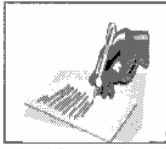
Read Text

Right of Expression / Speech

You should know that it is your right to express yourself and your opinion. You can overcome any barrier by communicating effectively.

Generally, women are good speakers and this skill could be used to your advantage. It is a strength that women are known to have, which could be limited by stereotyping. You need to know that the Constitution of our country protects your right to be assertive.

For example, a colleague offered to compile a report for you but the end product was of poor quality. He/she expects you to accept it as it is. It is your constitutional right to politely reject the report as it is, and request your colleague to amend it, so as to improve the quality of the report. At the same time you will be helping your colleague to improve his/her standard of report writing by giving specific guidelines in this regard.



Self Evaluation

SELF- EVALUATION ACTIVITY 2.2

Read the story below and think carefully about the questions that follow.

A matric schoolgirl who was asked to 'be a magistrate for five minutes' decided that the fellow pupil whom she had charged with rape was not guilty.

In an unusual twist to the rape trial in the Durban Regional Court yesterday, the schoolgirl said she wished to withdraw the charge against her schoolmate.

The schoolboy – who cannot be named – smiled broadly when told by the magistrate that he was free to go.

The schoolgirl had charged her fellow pupil with raping her in a flat in Russell Street after allegedly being forced out of the school grounds. After listening to her evidence, magistrate, Mr Stanley Gumede, said the girl's story was so improbable that it would not stand up in any court of law. The schoolgirl, from an Umbilo Secondary School, had alleged that the pupil had forcibly removed her from her class, taken her to town and raped her.

Gumede said that the girl's evidence seemed improbable and "no reasonable court would convict the accused".

During cross-examination yesterday, the magistrate asked her what she wanted to become when she finished school.

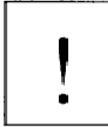
She replied: "I want to be a social worker."

Gumede suggested she become a 'magistrate for five minutes' and judge her own case.

"If you were to decide this case, would you say this man is guilty or not guilty?"

To everyone's surprise, she replied: "Not guilty, your worship." (Daily News: 26 May 2000, page 2)

- Do you think the magistrate violated the girl's right to expression? Motivate.
- Do you think the girl's final judgement showed assertiveness? Motivate.



Important-take note!

Possible answers are given at the end of this Unit.



Read Text

THE RIGHT TO ASSOCIATION

In most communities women are not free to practise their constitutional rights. Men seem to limit association to themselves only, be it at different social or professional levels, or even in religious associations. It is important that women too, are given that freedom to form associations with whomever they wish, without it causing any misunderstanding amongst their colleagues or counterparts. Social clubs, for example, help people to share ideas on issues like:

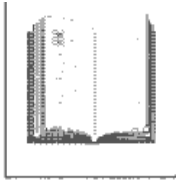
- how to improve their level of performance
- how to establish a successful organisation
- spiritual growth
- self enhancement programmes professional growth
- how to relieve stress.



Practise Activiy

PRACTICE ACTIVITY

You have been appointed principal at a school where teachers belong to different teacher organisations. A situation arises where members of one particular organisation heed a call to stay away from classes for two days. Describe how you would deal with this problem assertively.



Read Text

THE RIGHT TO MOVEMENT

Limitations are everywhere in most women's lives. A decision to build a home at a specific place is mostly the function of men. Very limited input from women are considered.

A man could decide to take up a job in a foreign place/country. He could decide the fate of that family/wife on grounds of remaining and migrating. Few liberated/liberal men consider the option of choice from the woman's side.

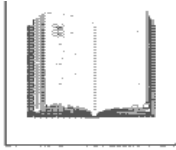
A woman on the other hand, will have to consider many issues before deciding to move. Moreover, she will even be expected to consult first so that the decision does not become her own. In some cases, women's movements are controlled by time limits and in some cultures, women are not allowed to attend certain occasions because it is culturally unacceptable.



Assessment Task

SELF-ASSESSMENT ACTIVITY

A colleague of yours organised a conference for women only. Out of the fourteen people she had invited, only six turned up and the rest apologised at the eleventh hour with the excuse that their partners did not want them to attend. What do you think caused the problem?



Read Text

RIGHT TO INFORMATION

Access to Information

It is an overall basic right to have access to information.

Limited access to information places restrictions on:

- the individual's power
- one's attitude in pursuance of justice
- knowledge explosion
- the evolution of new information
- the dynamic nature of culture.

Like everyone else, you share the right to be informed and there are no limitations to that right. The more informed you are, the better you can perform as a manager. As an informed manager you can disseminate relevant information to your staff and motivate them to perform better.

Right to Assemble, Demonstrate with others

Unfair labour practice is also provided for in the Labour Relations Act, Act No. 66 of 1995. This teaches us that in all spheres where human-beings meet, there is a regulatory legislation.

Unionism in South Africa strives to:

- support workers' interests
- protect workers' rights
- enlighten workers on professional issues
- empower workers on developmental issues.

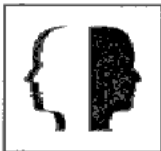
It is up to each woman to decide which labour organisation to associate herself with and to be assertive enough to express her concerns or problems.



Summary

SUMMARY

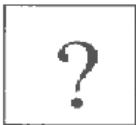
Unit Two reminded you that, as a woman manager, you must know that the Constitution of South Africa backs you in your attempts to claim your rights. It is up to you therefore, to assert yourself and pursue these claims in a manner that will yield positive results. The information you gained from this Unit, as well as the activities you engaged in should assist you in becoming a more assertive education manager. This, in turn, will help contribute to the upliftment of education for the learner.



Reflection

REFLECTION

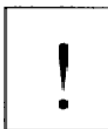
Reflect upon how you would advise your colleagues to assertively claim their rightful recognition.



Unit Test

UNIT TEST

Having gone through this unit, how would you, as a manager, maintain a “conflict free” environment where people’s rights are recognised?



Important-take note!

Possible answers are given at the end of this unit.

SUGGESTED ANSWERS

SELF-EVALUATION ACTIVITY 2.1

Consider the strategies of asserting yourself mentioned in Unit One, namely:

- think assertively
- feel confident
- behave positively, without losing your cool.

SELF-EVALUATION ACTIVITY 2.2

No. The magistrate gave the girl a chance to express herself and give an account of what had happened.

No. She buckled under cross-examination and did not assert herself by putting forward a strong argument to support her claim that she had been raped. She displayed weakness by being intimidated by the judge's remark about her seemingly improbable evidence.

PRACTICE ACTIVITY

Consider what assertiveness involves. Make the teachers aware that in exercising their democratic right to obey the call of their union, they are violating the democratic right of the learners to a sound education. Emphasise the Department's policy of 'No work no pay.' Follow Departmental procedure with regard to filling in of leave forms for absence from duty. Inform teachers that their absence will be recorded.

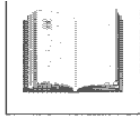
SELF-ASSESSMENT ACTIVITY

The reasons could range from misconceptions from partners, to the habit of partners wanting to overrule. This could imply that women are not assertive enough. The reasons could also be that invitations went out late, or that the theme of the conference was uninteresting, or that the time and venue were not suitable.

UNIT TEST

Encourage people to be aware of their rights, but at the same time, to respect the democratic rights of others. Hold workshops to empower your staff in this regard. As a manager at an educational institution, encourage learners to know their rights, as well as their responsibilities. Encourage staff to teach this aspect through discussions and debates.

UNIT 3: IDENTIFYING AND DEALING WITH BARRIERS TO ASSERTIVENESS



Read Text

INTRODUCTION

The previous Unit dealt with some of the legislative considerations pertaining to women's rights. In particular, it focused on the right to be assertive. This Unit looks at the various barriers to assertiveness. Furthermore it suggests ways of dealing with these barriers.

As you talk to women about their experiences as managers, you will discover that definite barriers exist in their respective workplaces. There are many factors that lead to these obstacles. The domination of one sex over the other is common to all work situations. Decision-making structures are, and have been, dominated by men. The government has tried, through legislation, to level the playing field so that the rights of all people, and more especially, the groups that were previously discriminated against, e.g. women, could be honoured.

OBJECTIVES

After working through this unit you should be able to:

- state the barriers to assertiveness
- identify problems women managers face
- share strategies to overcome barriers.

CONTENT



Read Text

BARRIERS TO EFFECTIVE ASSERTIVENESS

A barrier is something that prevents, or makes it difficult for a person to break the chains that deny an individual or a group of individuals the opportunity to take some action.

Barriers to progress and assertiveness can be perceived in two parts. Firstly, it may be those that exist within an individual, that is, attitude, motivation, internal factors, locus of control. Secondly, obstacles that are external in orientation, that is, organizational culture/structure, stereotypes and bureaucracy.
(Stead 1985)

It is disconcerting to note that women can be hampered by their own behaviour and attitude. A barrier such as this requires internal motivation, self-confidence and a change of attitude. Stead (1985) suggests that people, especially women, who are perceived as performing well, often receive no credit for their performance. This tends to be attributed more to either external or internal factors than to ability. Their ability is never acknowledged, but suppressed.

When girls appear to be intelligent, families tend not to give credit to mothers but to fathers, because good performance is perceived as indicative of males' general intelligence.

Certain types of work are regarded as feminine (that is, they are considered typical of women). This is an example of negative stereotyping that is an external barrier to assertiveness, and one that is very prevalent in our society. Overcoming this barrier requires added confidence and a positive self-esteem on the part of women.

It is commonly understood that the following are some of the **external barriers** to assertiveness:

- cultural biases
- social and sexist stereotyping
- lack of education
- local area or location
- religious issues.

Now that you are aware of some of the external barriers, we shall discuss each of them in greater detail.

EXTERNAL BARRIERS TO ASSERTIVENESS

- **Cultural biases**

Many South African cultures still allow little room for advancement, empowerment, independent thinking and individuality of women. A woman's place is often perceived to be in the home. In some cultures, women are not free to dress as they please, because of the restrictions placed on them by traditional norms.

- **Social stereotyping**

Women in some cases, do not have any identity in their societies. They are regarded as minor. A married woman assumes the name of her husband, hence losing her own identity.

Society often perceives the role function of males as different from that of females. This perception often works to the disadvantage of females.

Do you think that girls are treated in the same manner as boys by parents and/or society? Can you identify one or two things that you may consider as a social barrier? Our example might be that girls are associated with fetching water, collecting firewood, carrying babies and cooking, while boys are supposed to till the fields, look after livestock and play soccer, cricket, golf and rugby.

Some of the subjects offered in schools are sexually biased. Think of Home Economics for example, where the greater percentage of learners is female. Is this not an example of sexist stereotyping? The content and the subject policy do not discriminate against the sexes. However, society imposes its own norms and hence, males who take this subject are regarded as being in violation of the unwritten rules of society where Home Economics is regarded as a female domain. This existing stereotyping could lead to a feeling of inferiority among female learners, and this, in turn, could make them less assertive.

Phelps (1975: 67) states that people hear jokes about mothers-in-law being blamed for family conflicts.

There are visible testimonies that support the idea that stereotyping of male and female role functions starts early in a person's life and continues to direct and influence progress throughout the working environment. Owing to this barrier, women 'have reacted with guilt and apology and have incorporated these perceptions/feelings into many other situations'. (Phelps 1975: 67.)

Developing a sense of personal power could be an important factor in developing assertive behaviour. It is therefore important for you, as an educational manager, to establish a sense of self-worth and encourage your colleagues to do likewise. By rising above the pressures of social stereotyping you can develop assertive behaviour in a more affective manner.

- **Lack of education**

In most uneducated communities, the majority of women are not afforded the opportunity of exploring their full potential/capabilities/talents because they are denied access to education. Lack of basic skills such as reading, writing and mathematics has contributed to their feeling of inadequacy. This in turn, leads to lack of assertive behaviour and low self-esteem.

- **Local area or location**

Research shows that rural women and girls enjoy very limited rights and have very little power or authority in their homes and in their communities to assert themselves.

- **Religious issues**

In some religions, men and women worship in separate rooms. In Islam, for example, women are not allowed into the mosque. Church policies are usually drafted and decided by men, because of the common perception that men are thinkers and decision-makers. Fortunately, many churches are breaking away from this tradition of male supremacy and are affording women leadership roles in church. It is up to the women to lobby for greater involvement in matters of religion by being more assertive. This can only come about if women develop a more positive self-image and greater confidence.

Other religion-based factors that discriminate against women and undermine their sense of self-worth and assertiveness are listed below:

- **Polygamy**

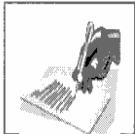
Some religions regard polygamy as sinful as it is seen as committing adultery. Other religions allow polygamy and this is often practised without the consent of the wife. Women have the right to assert themselves and to stand their ground against polygamy if they value a monogamous relationship.

■ **Women in public**

In some cases, the manner in which women dress and conduct themselves in public, is often dictated by the laws of their religion. Some religions require women to cover their entire bodies and even their faces in public.

Transformation of religious laws and practices requires activism from women within those communities that are affected. That activism can reveal itself through assertiveness.

As a manager in education, you need to be mindful of the influence of these external barriers on your general assertiveness. You will have to rise above these external pressures if you wish to succeed in asserting yourself effectively.



Self Evaluation

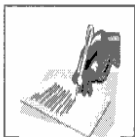
SELF-EVALUATION ACTIVITY 3.1

Identify five examples of external barriers to assertiveness.



Important-take note!

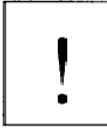
Possible answers to this activity are found at the end of this unit.



Self Evaluation

SELF-EVALUATION ACTIVITY 3.2

List some examples of other subjects where society tends to impose sexist stereotyping.



Important-take note!

Possible answers to this activity are found at the end of this unit.



Read Text

STRATEGIES TO OVERCOME BARRIERS TO ASSERTIVENESS

In order to effectively overcome the barriers to assertiveness, we are suggesting some of the following strategies:

- be able to say “NO” when necessary
- handle criticism and put-downs effectively
- voice an opinion and negotiate confidently
- handle compliments positively
- ask for help when necessary
- start a conversation with strangers.

This will further require:

- a deeper understanding of yourself
- analysing problem situations carefully
- prioritising goals
- developing a positive self-image and self-confidence
- identifying the communication needs and feelings of others; in reality this means anticipating and handling different situations that could arise.

Some body language that will enhance your assertiveness:

- make eye-contact without glaring or staring
- talk in a calm, relaxed manner
- squarely face the listener or person talking to you
- react with appropriate nods, smiles, frowns to the talker’s story
- relax and don’t fidget
- don’t cross your arms on your waist or across your chest; let them lie relaxed on your lap or on the armrests.

(Mayne, 1991: 37)

In addition to the strategies suggested above, you may find the tips listed below, useful.

Tips to developing assertiveness:

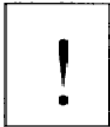
- You have the right to claim your rights. Structures have been put in place which will freely help any citizen with legal representation. Use these to inform yourself about your rights.
- Attend public addresses aimed at motivation. Most church groups invite people to deliver speeches that motivate and affirm your self-esteem.
- Join social clubs to enrich yourself with the shared knowledge that the member brings into the club. The testimonies in these clubs are practical and are based on people's experiences.
- Read as much as possible. Information is power. An informed individual is an empowered individual.



Assessment Task

SELF-ASSESSMENT ACTIVITY

From the barriers mentioned in this Unit, identify one that is highly predominant in your experience as a manager. What strategies would you use to deal with these barriers?



Important-take note!

Possible answers to this activity are found at the end of the unit.



Read Text

THE USE OF LEGISLATION TO OVERCOME BARRIERS TO ASSERTIVENESS

To identify barriers to assertiveness calls for a deeper understanding of the self. There are also factors that pertain to your own perception and meaning that you attach to the role of women, that can destroy assertiveness.

You need to be mindful of factors that can lower your self-esteem and diminish your assertiveness. Be aware of your legal rights.

Legislation has been passed to address the problems facing women. Laws have levelled the ground for women to assert themselves effectively.

'Laws' are a group of rules that are recognised and accepted as binding on people's behaviour and deal with the way people relate to each other, the community and government. Laws give rights to people, limit some rights and protect other rights. (The Gender Manual Consortium 1999: 52.)

Now that you know that legislation is in place to protect your rights, you should be aware of the laws that actually protect you. The application of this knowledge can be a further strategy to overcome barriers to assertiveness.

The following laws protect your rights:

- The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996.
- The Employment Equity Act, Act 55 of 1998
- Labour Relations Act - Act 42 of 1996
- and other Acts.

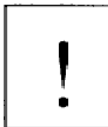
Policies are in place to guard against any form of discrimination and you should exercise your democratic rights in whatever situation you find yourself, as long as you respect the rights of others. Please note that exercising your rights should be within the parameters of the law.



Practise Activity

PRACTICE ACTIVITY

Prioritise, in order of importance, various forms of body language that you believe will enhance your assertiveness as a manager in education.



Important-take note!

Possible answers are found at the end of the unit.



Summary

SUMMARY

This Unit has introduced you to a number of important issues and concepts in assertiveness. The issues include barriers to assertiveness, such as stereotyping of women at home, in society and/or in the workplace. This Unit has also motivated you to exercise your democratic rights and has equipped you with skills to identify and deal with barriers to assertiveness. The various activities engaged your mind on the barriers and focused your attention on strategies for overcoming the same. You should now be empowered to exercise your democratic rights and become a more assertive manager in education.



Reflection

REFLECTION

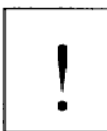
Having gone through this Unit, reflect on your work situation as a manager. Do you have any barriers at your workstation? Is there any stereotyping existing? Think of how you can positively and effectively overcome this barrier.



Unit Test

UNIT TEST

List, in order of importance, what you consider to be the five most effective ways of overcoming barriers to assertiveness at your institution.



Important-take note!

Possible answers are at the end of the Unit.

SUGGESTED ANSWERS

SELF-EVALUATION ACTIVITY 3.1

Five examples of external barriers to assertiveness are:

- cultural biases
- social and sexist stereotyping
- lack of education
- local area or location
- religious issues.

SELF-EVALUATION ACTIVITY 3.2

Other subjects besides Home Economics where society tends to impose sexist stereotyping are:

- Woodwork
- Motor mechanics
- Technical drawing
- Hair dressing
- Cosmetology.

SELF-ASSESSMENT ACTIVITY

Answers to this activity could vary depending on your experience as education manager at your institution. An example is cited below.

Barrier: Social and sexist stereotyping.

Society often imposes sexist stereotyping to certain subjects such as Home Economics (for females) and Motor Mechanics (for males). This can result in females developing an inferiority complex, which can result in their becoming less assertive because of their low self-esteem.

Strategy to overcome this barrier: Hold workshops to try and change learners' and parents' attitude to sexist stereotyping of subjects as 'male' or 'female' domains. Encourage a sense of self-worth among staff and learners, as a stepping stone to assertiveness.

PRACTICE ACTIVITY

Answers may vary depending on your situation. However, an example of prioritising various forms of body language that can enhance your assertiveness is given below.

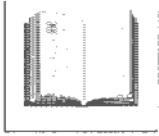
- talk in a calm, relaxed manner
- make eye-contact without glaring or staring
- face the listener squarely
- relax and don't fidget
- don't cross your arms on your waist or across your chest; instead, let them be relaxed on your lap or on the armrests.

UNIT TEST

Answers could vary from one education manager to the next. However, one example is as follows:

- develop a positive self-image and self-confidence
- anticipate and handle different situations that could arise
- handle criticism effectively
- be able to say 'NO' when necessary
- voice an opinion and negotiate with confidence.

UNIT 4: HANDLING OF FEEDBACK, CRITICISM AND REJECTION



Read Text

INTRODUCTION

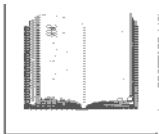
In the previous Unit you have been exposed to the possible barriers you could encounter that might hinder your attempts to become a successful woman manager. This Unit introduces you to some important aspects which impact on the success of the assertive woman manager. The focus in this unit will be on the handling of feedback, criticism, and rejection.

OBJECTIVES

After working through this Unit, you should be able to:

- define the concepts of feedback, criticism and rejection
- discuss the importance of feedback
- discuss three possible types of criticism: unrealistic criticism, put-downs, constructive/valid criticism
- explain ways in which rejection can be handled.

CONTENT



Read Text

DEFINITION OF FEEDBACK, CRITICISM AND REJECTION

FEEDBACK is the way of communicating back inputs, responses or messages through words, behaviour or emotion, to name a few.

REJECTION is a natural and an unavoidable occurrence when an idea or act is not desirable.

CRITICISM is the art of making unfavourable judgements or critical observations.

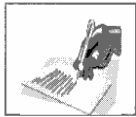
THE IMPORTANCE OF FEEDBACK

A good leader understands the importance of effective and specific feedback because it will convey the true feelings of the individual when critical messages are imparted. It is very important to let your employee know exactly how you feel about the situation, otherwise you will be regarded as being dishonest. When using an effective approach such as the 'I' message, the reaction will be less defensive from the other person.

Here is an example of using the 'I' message approach:

“When you are late for work, I feel angry because others must do more to make up for you. Is there some reason you can't be on time?”

'I' messages are helpful because the person you are addressing feels less defensive. “I feel (annoyed, angry, hurt, upset)” or “In my opinion, I believe, I think . . .” give more direct feedback. (Manning and Haddock 1989: 55)



Self Evaluation

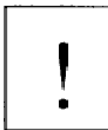
SELF-EVALUATION ACTIVITY 4.1

Rewrite the following using 'I' messages, for example,

“You never pay attention to my instructions.”

'I' message: “Based on your last report, I feel you are not paying attention to my instructions. Do you agree?”

1. You always make me cross when you do not submit your work on time.
2. You really hurt my feelings when you joke about my weight-gain in public.
3. You are too bossy.



Important-take note!

Possible answers to this activity are at the end of this Unit.



Read Text

THE THREE POSSIBLE TYPES OF CRITICISM: UNREALISTIC CRITICISM, PUT-DOWNS, VALID OR CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISM

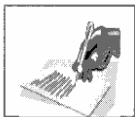
Usually, unexpected criticism is the one that hurts most and by using a step-by-step process you can gradually desensitise to critical remarks, whether they are anticipated or not. One must be cautious not to over-prepare and feel that you must be constantly on your guard.

Unrealistic criticism is the sort that is utterly ridiculous, e.g. Jane calling a slim person a “big fat slob.”

Put-downs may have an element of truth, but are said in a patronising and/or insulting manner, such as Lily saying to someone who is overweight, “Why don’t you have a banana split? You’ll never notice a few more pounds!”

Valid criticism is both realistic and stated in a straightforward, assertive manner, such as Cilla saying to an overweight friend “I have noticed that you have gained some extra weight. I think you really looked better and healthier before.”

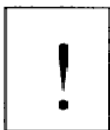
(Adapted from Phelps and Austin 1987: 116)



Self Evaluation

SELF-EVALUATION ACTIVITY 4.2

Sue wants to become a psychiatrist but her teacher advises her to decide on another career path because of her poor Science and Maths ability. Sue insists that this is a realistic goal that has she set for herself. In your opinion how should she counter-argue this valid criticism.



Important-take note!

Possible answers to this activity are to be found at the end of this Unit.



Assessment Task

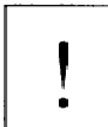
SELF-ASSESSMENT ACTIVITY

Make a list with three columns headed: WHO, WHAT, WHEN.

Under the '**WHO**' column, list the people in your working environment from the least anxiety-provoking to the most threatening.

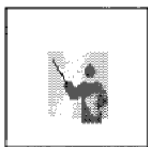
Under the '**WHAT**' column, list specific situations in which you feel most vulnerable.

Under the '**WHEN**' column, write down the times in which you feel most threatened by hearing a 'no' response.



Important-take note!

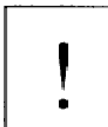
The possible points to include in your answer are given at the end of this Unit.



Practise Activity

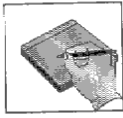
PRACTICE ACTIVITY

After completing the SELF-ASSESSMENT ACTIVITY, you have to role play these situations with a colleague, or in a group, starting with one in each column. Continue to practise until you feel comfortable with hearing a 'no' response.



Important-take note!

Possible points to go into the answer to this question are to be found at the end of this Unit.

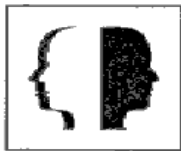


Summary

SUMMARY

This Unit has covered the aspects of **feedback, criticism and rejection**. These aspects include the definition of concepts and the ability to be spontaneous, to speak openly and initiate valid criticisms when it is necessary.

The activities included in this Unit helped you to understand that, being assertive involves defending yourself against verbal attack. At times, assertion will require that you reach out to others in a positive way. Most importantly, becoming an assertive woman means understanding and learning not only about defensive behaviours, but how to adopt a positive approach as well.



Reflection

REFLECTION

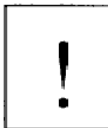
Having worked through this Unit, reflect on how you, as an Education Manager, will handle feedback, criticism and rejection in order to function more efficiently as an assertive leader at your institution.



Unit Test

UNIT TEST

As an Education Manager, what strategies would you adopt to sustain and stimulate staff under your charge?



Important-take note!

The possible answers to the test question are given at the end of this Unit.

SUGGESTED ANSWERS

SELF-EVALUATION ACTIVITY 4.1

1. I feel cross when you do not submit your work on time because it holds up my work.
2. I feel really hurt when you joke about my weight-gain in public.
3. In my opinion, you are too bossy.

SELF-EVALUATION ACTIVITY 4.2

CAREERS TEACHER: “Sue, I think your decision to become a psychiatrist is impractical. You aren’t good at Science and Maths, you know. Why don’t you try social work?”

SUE: “That’s not true. My abilities in Maths and Science are fairly strong, and I think becoming a psychiatrist is a realistic goal for me.”

When responding to valid criticism, the assertive woman will acknowledge the criticism as being realistic and may add a statement about how she is working on that problem and trying to improve.

Sue may also reply that Science and Maths are not her strongest subjects right now, but she has arranged for individual lessons and plans to master those subjects so she can reach her goal of becoming a psychiatrist.

SELF ASSESSMENT ACTIVITY

Answers to this activity may vary. The following is only an example.

WHO	WHAT	WHEN
Children	Asking for help around the house	At home at dinner time
Employer	Asking for time off	At work during a hectic day
Friend	Expecting company	Chores have piled up around the house
Husband	At a party	When feeling down

PRACTICE ACTIVITY

Consider using support and encouragement through role-play using the above self-assessment activity with a colleague to:

- build confidence
- participate actively
- express needs openly
- develop a positive approach.

As an Education Manager, the following suggestions could be of assistance to motivate the teachers under your charge:

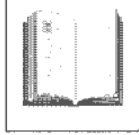
- ensure that they understand the importance and effectiveness of feedback. This requires honesty when delivering critical messages about a situation.
- make use of every option available when making decisions or making choices with careful consideration and conviction.

UNIT TEST

Answers could vary. However, you may consider the following:

- Build feedback mechanisms to assess the effectiveness of the decision.
- Test each option against the situation.
- Seek alternative options from team players.

UNIT 5: DEALING WITH ANGER ASSERTIVELY



Read Text

INTRODUCTION

The previous Unit dealt with ways of handling feedback, criticism and rejection. This unit focuses on the understanding of anger. It also considers the forms in which anger can be displayed and the impact it can have on women managers who are striving to be assertive. It is directly linked to the barriers to assertiveness that you studied in Unit 3, and the strategies used to overcome these barriers.

OBJECTIVES

After working through this unit you should be able to:

- define anger
- identify the different forms of anger
- state ways in which anger can be used positively
- give suggestions for dealing with anger.

CONTENT



Read Text

DEFINITION OF ANGER

Anger may be defined as an emotional reaction to feeling. This feeling can be influenced by a number of different factors and can be displayed in different ways. It can also have different results. There are some theories that state that assertion and aggression should be placed on the same level, because aggression is a more intensified form of assertion. It is therefore also important to be able to distinguish between anger of a violent nature and emotional anger.

FACTORS LEADING TO ANGER

As has been said earlier, anger is an emotional reaction or feeling we all have in us. It merely presents itself in different forms and is triggered by different factors. Here are a few situations that can trigger anger:

- **Misinterpretation**

This can be caused by not listening properly to what the other person is saying and you then think they are saying something else, which can either anger you, or the next person.

- **Expectations**

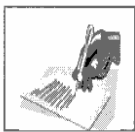
If you expect to get a certain kind of treatment, and your expectation is not met at that time, this may result in anger.

- **Poor sense of humour**

Some people have the natural inability of not recognising and appreciating jokes. As a result of this, people might be angered by something that was meant to be a joke.

- **Lack of patience**

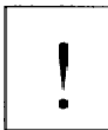
We all have different levels of patience. Some of us lose patience quickly, for example a nagging wife, husband, child or phone call, could really make us angry. Some people even find themselves saying, "I am really losing my patience now!" When this is said to you, you know very well that you have to lay off.



Self Evaluation

SELF-EVALUATION ACTIVITY 5.1

In your experience as a manager, what are some common causes of anger?



Important-take note!

Possible answers to this activity will be found at the end of this Unit.



Read Text

FORMS OF ANGER

In this section we are going to look at the different forms of anger and how they can be identified.

It has been made clear in Unit 1 that assertion and aggression are completely different. **Anger is, also, not aggression.** Anger is a legitimate feeling that can be expressed in any one of the following ways:

- Passively
- Aggressively
- Indirectly
- Assertively

PASSIVE ANGER

This type of anger can best be demonstrated with an example.

Deli: “I bought this moisturiser because my face has been getting drier since I moved to Pietermaritzburg. Now my face is full of pimples that I never had. This has just been a waste of money!”

Pumla: “This has obviously made you angry. Why don’t you return it and claim your money back?”

Deli: “No, I am not really angry. I’m just disgusted with my skin problems. I will try something else.

In this example, Deli does not want to admit that she is angry and she is directing her emotion to the wrong cause. This, in a sense, makes her real anger lie passive, unattended to, and might possibly erupt in another form. This is referred to as **displaced anger**.

AGGRESSIVE ANGER

Aggression can always result if people do not have the understanding that anger can be expressed in a direct, but subtle and respectful way. When people get frustrated in their attempt to express anger assertively, they resort to harsh words and even insults. This can be very damaging and can have negative results and even make situations worse,

because most of the time, once a person has cooled down, they discover that they have said things they would not have said under normal circumstances.

This could suggest, in a sense, that aggressive anger is a ‘temporary abnormal reaction’ that we end up regretting most times.

INDIRECT ANGER

This is where we deny feeling angry and try to make the other person feel guilty. This can be illustrated by an **example**.

Phumi and Siza have been married for two years. Siza has developed the habit of drinking almost everyday and coming home late. He even sleeps out occasionally. Phumi has constantly tried to talk to Siza about this and each time she raises the topic, Siza locks himself into a shell because he hates confrontation. So the problem is not resolved and Siza’s behaviour does not get any better. Phumi is convinced that Siza is having an affair because he even disappears from home for a full week-end. When Siza returns home, he wants to have sex with his wife. Phumi refuses to have sex with Siza because she is angry and she does not trust him! Siza beats her up for refusing him his rights.

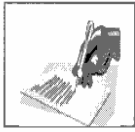
For the sake of peace, Phumi decides to buy condoms so that the next time Siza asks for sex, she would give him a condom. This makes her feel protected. When Siza sees this, he starts throwing insults at his wife: “Oh, this is the stuff you use when you sleep with your boyfriends! I am not going to use these, and I will NEVER touch you again, NEVER!”

It is very clear here that Siza is angered by his wife’s attempt to be assertive. He decides to push the blame onto his wife and make her feel guilty.

ASSERTIVE ANGER

Assertive anger is expressed clearly and directly. It does not involve physical or verbal abuse. It involves dealing with the problem in a firm, but calm manner, without resorting to physical or verbal abuse.

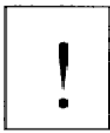
In Siza and Phumi’s case, Siza could have cooled down and told his wife that this was “degrading him as a man,” and they should sit down and try to solve the problem. If he had given himself enough time to think, he would perhaps even have been in a position to have come up with possible strategies that could help them solve their problem before it became worse.



Self Evaluation

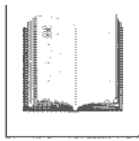
SELF-EVALUATION ACTIVITY 5.2

How do you normally show your anger? Into which of the four forms of anger does your anger fall? Motivate your answer.



Important-take note!

Possible answers to this activity can be found at the end of the Unit.

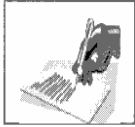


Read Text

REACTIONS TO ANGER

The manner in which we display anger has a great influence on the kind of reaction we receive. Consider the following example:

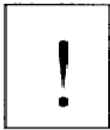
Sindy had asked her husband, Muzi to fetch her at 6 o'clock at her friend's house. Muzi had made an appointment to watch soccer at his friend's house at 7 o'clock. At six o'clock sharp, Muzi parked outside Sindy's friend's house and Sindy only managed to come out thirty minutes later. Boy! Muzi was so angry that he couldn't speak. He just started the car and sped away. Before they could proceed too far, they heard a police siren and Muzi could see the blue police light getting closer to them in his rear view mirror. He slammed on the brakes and Sindy almost hit the dash-board. He climbed out of the car in a rage and started swearing at the traffic officer for wasting his time when he is in a hurry. The poor traffic officer tried to explain that he was only doing his job. Muzi did not have time to listen, he just wanted to show this officer how angry he was.



Self Evaluation

SELF-ASSESSMENT ACTIVITY

- How would you describe the form of anger displayed by Muzi?
- Imagine that you were the traffic officer. How would you have reacted in this situation? Why?



Important-take note!

Possible answers are to be found at the end of the Unit.



Read Text

USING ANGER POSITIVELY

It is a fact that when we express anger, we will not always get the kind of reaction we are expecting. This does not in any way suggest that we should not express anger. Anger is a natural emotion and needs to be voiced. We just need to be careful **how** we voice it. Expressing anger can work for or against you, depending on how, and to whom you express it. Let us explore a few ways of expressing anger positively:

- admit the angry feelings to yourself
- take deep breaths to calm yourself
- if you begin to lose control, take some momentary action (like taking a piece of paper and folding it in half, and in quarters, and so on). As you lift your eyes from the paper, regain your composure

- take a break and do something physically vigorous or highly creative. When you engage in physical or mental exercise, you help to push your anger aside
- prepare to confront the person or situation that caused you to feel angry, once things are 'aired', the situation usually improves
- try to avoid outbursts. If they occur, they should be very few and far between. If it happens that you lose control, cool off, then apologise – not for how you feel, but for your outburst.

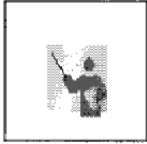
SUGGESTIONS FOR DEALING WITH ANGER

The first step towards dealing with your anger is **RECOGNISING** your anger. Once you notice your anger, **ADMIT** to yourself that it is **REAL**. Most women push their anger aside even after recognising it because they don't believe they have a valid reason for it. Recognising anger has a lot to do with being in touch with the emotional response it triggers off. It is not just an intellectual exercise.

Once you accept your angry feelings, ask yourself the following questions:

- Where is my anger coming from? Identify the source of your anger.
Note: When identifying the source of your anger, make sure you identify the **REAL SOURCE**.
- Why am I angry?
- Is this anger really necessary?
- How am I going to express it?
- What are the possible consequences?
- How am I going to deal with them?
- Is the choice I made displaying assertiveness?
- How would I react if somebody treated me in the same way I have just chosen?

These questions, in a way, sum up most of the ways of dealing with anger.

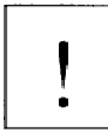


Practise Activity

PRACTICE ACTIVITY

Imagine the following scenario:

A member of staff, who frequently takes leave during official hours, storms into your office, accusing you of favouritism and hypocrisy, for refusing to grant him permission to take leave again, during school hours, to attend to a personal matter. This makes you very angry. Suggest some ways in which you will deal with your anger assertively.



Important-take note!

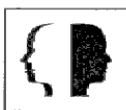
Possible answers are to be found at the end of the Unit.



Summary

SUMMARY

In this unit you have learnt to understand what anger is, how to identify different forms of anger, understand the positive and negative impact of expressing anger and identify assertive ways of dealing with anger. In addition, the activities in this Unit will help support you, as a woman, on your journey towards assertive management.



Reflection

REFLECTION

Having gone through this unit, reflect on how you would empower aspiring managers so that they are able to deal with anger in their working environment?



Unit Test

UNIT TEST

After studying this Unit, how would you empower your associates to deal with YOUR anger in order to restore a harmonious working relationship?



Important-take note!

Possible answers are to be found at the end of the Unit.

SUGGESTED ANSWERS

SELF-EVALUATION ACTIVITY 5.1

Consider the following causes :

- Misinterpretation
- Expectations
- Poor sense of humour
- Lack of patience.

SELF-EVALUATION ACTIVITY 5.2

Consider the following forms of anger :

- Passive anger
- Aggressive anger
- Indirect anger
- Assertive anger.

SELF-ASSESSMENT ACTIVITY 5.2

- Musi displayed indirect anger.
- Answers may vary. However your response could incorporate points involved in the example given below:

If I were the traffic officer I would stop the driver and politely ask him for his driving licence. Having checked that document I would firmly but politely inform him that he had exceeded the speed limit and that he would have to be fined for speeding. I feel that this assertive action is justified because it could mean saving the lives of people if the driver changed his behaviour.

PRACTICE ACTIVITY

Answers may vary. However, you could consider the following:

- stay calm and try to avoid an outburst of anger.
- confront the member of staff and 'air' the situation
- tell him your reason for refusing him leave
- if he does not accept, ask him to give, in writing, his request for leave, and inform him that this request will be placed in his file.

- refer him to the EMPLOYMENT OF EDUCATOR'S ACT 1998 or SACE CODE OF CONDUCT.

UNIT TEST

Your answers could include:

- Recognising your anger
- Admitting that you are angry
- Making sure that your anger is real.

UNIT 6: ASSERTIVENESS AND RELATIONSHIPS



Read Text

INTRODUCTION

Unit 5 covered ways of dealing with anger. This unit focuses on assertiveness and how it impacts on the relationships we have in our daily life, be it friends, lovers, family or colleagues. It aims at assisting you, as a woman manager, in your diverse management activities. Personality is closely linked with assertiveness and has a great influence on relationships. Relationships include interacting with the self and others.

OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit you should be able to:

- describe assertive ways of interacting with:
 - self
 - friends
 - family
 - colleagues
- identify the accepted behaviour in these different relationships.



Read Text

ASSERTIVE RELATIONSHIPS TO SELF

Personality: is the totality of inborn and acquired qualities. Acquired qualities are the result of the constant interaction between the developing and growing individual and the environment. The individual cannot be seen as separate from the environment. Personality is the summation of a person's individuality. Every human personality is unique. People differ in talents, attitudes, and qualities. Looking at assertiveness and relationships, personality, as an inner quality cannot be ruled out as it forms a cornerstone

of different human behaviours (Alberts 1996: 13). Self-esteem is an important inner quality that will impact positively on your assertiveness. Nobody can make you feel inferior unless you allow them.

Consider the following questions:

- how well do you manage yourself?
- are you in control of yourself, your ideas, your feelings and your actions?
- does your life have a purpose and direction?

Even people in authority have some shortcomings and may not always be in control of every situation. There is always room for improving your relationship with yourself and others.

People who want to improve the way they manage others must first learn to manage themselves. Starting from the inside, managers need to become more aware of what they are doing in terms of their management styles. A positive self-image is an important element in your relationship with yourself. Believe in yourself and this will help you to be an assertive manager.

Read the following case study carefully:

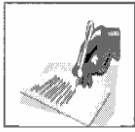
Hellen always thinks very highly of her supervisor and she respects him. Recently, however, her supervisor threw tantrums at her, complaining about the slow pace at which she does her work. She tries to defend herself but her supervisor does not give her the chance. She ends up in a bad mood for the rest of that day, because she believes that she is really trying her best to satisfy her supervisor. At home she keeps on coming up with excuses for her supervisor, like, “maybe he had a big fight with his wife in the morning” or, “maybe my work has really slowed down.”

What Hellen is failing to realise is that:

- her supervisor has treated her shabbily
- she knows how good she is at her work
- she must face her supervisor and express her real feelings.

In order to be able to face situations such as in Hellen’s case, consider the following:

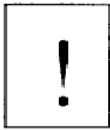
- assertiveness starts with you
- an assertive person trusts her inner wisdom and bases her actions on this understanding
- be honest with yourself.



Self Evaluation

SELF-EVALUATION ACTIVITY 6.1

Reflect on Hellen's case and state what advice you would give her to help her face the situation assertively.



Important-take note!

Possible answers are given at the end of this Unit.



Read Text

RELATIONSHIPS WITH FRIENDS

Your friend asks for a loan, but you cannot really afford it. Before thinking of a response to this situation, consider the definition of assertiveness in Unit 1:

Assertiveness means:

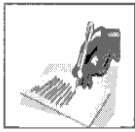
- standing up for your rights
- expressing your needs, wants, opinions, feelings and beliefs in a direct, honest and socially acceptable way
- being able to say "NO" without feeling guilty.

Remember the adage: 'Straight talk breaks no friendship.' The more open and direct you are in voicing your feelings, the more your friends will respect and understand you and mutual confidence will be established. Also remember to 'Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.'

FRIENDSHIPS WITH THE OPPOSITE SEX

Friendships with the opposite sex sometimes bring problems because of incorrect perceptions. Some factors that influence such perceptions are:

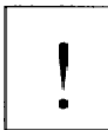
- gossip
 - if you are a manager, people will always be critical of your behaviour, they will analyse each step you take and each word you utter.
- Cultural biases
 - to other cultures, a hug is associated with affection; so when they see you hugging a member of the opposite sex, they may conclude that you are having an affair.
- Insecurities of partners
 - if your partner feels insecure, he will always misinterpret your relationships with the opposite sex.



Self Evaluation

SELF-EVALUATION ACTIVITY 6.2

You happen to have an innocent relationship with a male colleague at work. What problems could you possibly encounter as a result of incorrect perceptions from your colleagues and how could you deal with the problem assertively?



Important-take note!

Possible answers are given at the end of this Unit.



Read Text

ASSERTIVE RELATIONSHIPS IN THE FAMILY

Your interaction with members of your family could impact on your assertiveness at home and at work. According to Vrey (1984), all of our experiences take place within relationships (Urbani, 1987: 8). There can be no relationship without experiences. These experiences can be positive or negative, pleasant or unpleasant.

Nursing a grudge prevents people from moving on to discover joy in relationships. We can laugh at our awkward beginnings, and move forward, but remember to 'forgive those who trespass against you'. (the Lord's Prayer).

Consider the following checklist and answer 'Yes' or 'No':

- Do I demand from my children only what they can realistically complete at one time?
- When I make requests of my children, do I provide follow-through help?
- In most situations, do my children understand what I expect from them? Are my requests specific as to time, place, and other requirements?
- When I make requests or demands on my children, do I also specify how the demands can be met?
- Do I provide my child with some privacy, or do I feel threatened when I am not in direct control (eg., when my daughter is talking on the telephone without my knowing to whom she is talking?)
- Do I treat my child as though he/she has personal rights (eg., privacy in the child's room?)
- Do I set realistic limits for my child (curfew, television time, household chores?)
- Do I encourage my child to handle some situations independently but with my support (helping with homework, letting her resolve differences with friends?)
- Do I allow my child to disagree openly with my judgement (allowing him to choose his own friends?)
- Do I encourage my child to stand up for his/her rights with others as well as with me?
- When unable to control my child, do I resort to threats, shouting, or physical punishment?
- Do I listen to my child's point of view?
- Does my view always prevail, or do I also let my child 'win' sometimes?
- Do I over-protect my child (for example, not wanting him to be involved in any sports activities for fear of injury?)

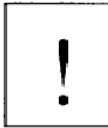
- Do I allow my child to state how she feels, without telling her how she feels?
(Phelps 1975: 186)



Assessment Task

SELF-ASSESSMENT ACTIVITY

Select one question from the checklist on page 54 where you have answered “no” and give ways in which you can improve.



Important-take note!

Possible answers are included at the end of this Unit.



Read Text

ASSERTIVE RELATIONSHIPS ON THE JOB

Passiveness and aggressiveness cannot be entertained – a balance between the two types of behavioural actions is known as assertive behaviour. It has been discovered that high performance is a matter of performing well within four successive working roles or stages. These stages are:

- newcomer
- colleague
- mentor
- sponsor

Performance in each stage is associated with different sets of tasks to perform, different relationships to establish and different emotional adjustments to make. These four stages also act as a rating scale of the performance. If an individual successfully goes through the four stages, then the individual is rated as a high performer. On the other hand, if an individual remains in the early stages and does not progress, then the individual is rated as a low performer.

The employing organisations should also encourage assertiveness. The question now remaining, is how you can evaluate encouragement of assertiveness in an organisation. We must further understand that one organisation can encourage assertiveness, while another can discourage it. Phelps (1975) suggests the following indicators of how you can judge encouragement and discouragement in an organisation. These indicators are not rigid, but could be unique in different given situations.

Below are listed some indicators of encouraging and discouraging signs.

ENCOURAGING SIGNS	DISCOURAGING SIGNS
Employee suggestions are actively sought in all parts of the operation.	Employee participation in policy setting is unheard of.
Communication flows openly up, down and across organisational levels.	There are stories about past employees who were fired on the spot for 'insubordination.'
Assertiveness is literally rewarded; prizes or other forms of recognition are given for independent action.	Your supervisor does not seem interested in hearing your ideas for improving your department's performance as that is regarded as management's job.
More emphasis is placed on performance than on status.	You get the impression that employees should be seen but not heard.
Management maintains an 'open door policy'; employees need not fear retribution for voicing their concerns or complaints	Morale is low in your organisation; people feel powerless to make even the smallest change.
Your supervisor takes the time to listen when you have something to say.	People who even gently criticise organisation policy are called 'troublemakers.'
Your organisation sponsors regular employee forums where any question is accepted.	The most frequent words from your boss are 'We tried that last year,' or 'I'll have to get back to you.'
Your supervisor regularly asks for your opinion on work-related decisions or issues.	Managers stay in their offices with their doors closed; the only way you can see your supervisor is if you make an appointment.
Being called 'outspoken' is a compliment.	Most of what you know about your organisation's plans you learn from the rumours you hear.

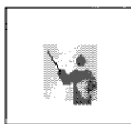
ENCOURAGING SIGNS	DISCOURAGING SIGNS
Mistakes are regarded as learning experiences.	Mistakes are viewed seriously as a waste of valuable time.
Your organisation is fun to work for	Your organisation is boring to work for.
Disagreements are aired openly	Outstanding contributions are not formally recognised
There is a profit or gain-sharing programme in effect in your organisation.	There is no profit or gain-sharing programme in which all participate.

(Adapted from Phelps and Austin 1975: 208/10)

In conclusion, you as a manager, could reduce personality clashes by developing the habit of:

- listening
- co-operating
- assisting
- accommodating
- understanding
- preventing conflict
- listening to both sides
- understanding other points of view.

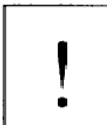
Assertiveness is much more than a strategy for self-defence. The assertive woman can use her skills to reach out in a warm, humorous, expressive way, as a positive communicator.



Practise Activity

PRACTICE ACTIVITY

Think of your organisation and rate it against the encouraging and discouraging signs that you have read about. Does your organisation encourage or discourage assertiveness? List the relevant signs in this regard.



Important-take note!

Possible answers are included at the end of this Unit



Summary

SUMMARY

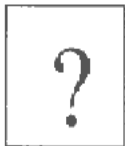
This Unit focused on assertiveness and relationships. It covered assertive ways of interacting with self, friends, family and profession. In addition, you engaged in activities that should help you develop assertiveness in all your interactions. This, in turn, should enhance your effectiveness as a manager in education and in various relationships.



Reflection

REFLECTION

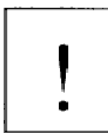
Having gone through this unit, reflect on your assertiveness in various interactions and consider its impact on your relationship with self, friends, family and profession.



Unit Test

UNIT TEST

Looking at your relationships, reflect and identify instances where you think you acted assertively and those where you did not. From those two categories, which instances count more than the others? Would you then conclude that you are assertive in most of your relationships or not?



Important-take note!

Possible answers to the Unit Test are included at the end of this Unit.

SUGGESTED ANSWERS

SELF-EVALUATION ACTIVITY 6.1

You could advise Hellen to face her supervisor and express her real feelings. Ask her to remember the following:

- Assertiveness starts with herself
- An assertive person trusts her inner wisdom and bases her actions on this understanding.
- Be honest with herself.

SELF-EVALUATION ACTIVITY 6.2

- Gossiping amongst colleagues could be a problem. A possible solution to this problem is to address any misconceptions openly by asking colleagues to express their views directly to you rather than gossip among themselves.

SELF-ASSESSMENT ACTIVITY

Possible answers to this question depend entirely on individual opinion. The example below is in response to question four. When I make requests or demands of my children I should specify how the demands can be met. I could also give guidelines and check if they require clarification or help if it is a difficult task.

PRACTICE ACTIVITY

Answers could vary. Possible answers could include:

- **Encouraging signs:**
 - communication flow
 - to be outspoken
 - sponsored employee forums
 - employees' suggestions encouraged
- **Discouraging signs:**
 - employees fired for insubordination
 - low morale in organisation
 - critical employees known as 'troublemakers'
 - outstanding contributions not formally recognised.

UNIT TEST

There is no set answer to this activity. Responses will vary. However, you could consider the following points:

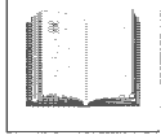
- **Instances of assertive behaviour:**

- Called a member of staff to the office and counselled him on the issue of punctuality and frequent absenteeism, in a polite, calm but firm manner.
- Addressed staff about the problem of gossiping in corridors during working hours.

- **Instances of non-assertive behaviour:**

- Gave up trying to encourage staff to attend meetings on Saturdays.
- Did nothing about certain members of staff switching on cell-phones during staff meetings, after they were instructed to switch them off.

UNIT 7: DEVELOPING AN ASSERTIVE BODY IMAGE AND DEALING WITH ANXIETY



Read Text

INTRODUCTION

The previous Unit dealt with assertiveness and relationships. This Unit introduces you to a variety of factors that will help in developing an assertive body image. We will focus on non-verbal factors. In addition, this Unit looks at ways of reducing anxiety and learning to relax. It also gives suggestions regarding the construction of a hierarchy of assertive behaviour.

OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- identify the different body image components that can help you to be more assertive
- describe how to reduce anxiety and promote relaxation
- state ways of constructing your assertive behaviour hierarchy.

CONTENT



Read Text

BODY IMAGE COMPONENTS

Eye Contact

Many women have a problem in making eye contact because certain cultures have taught them that it is more feminine to look away or to look down. Sometimes it is considered being shy to give little side glances and not to look directly at someone. In other cultures it is considered disrespectful for women to make eye contact with either men or figures in authority. Assertiveness on the other hand, requires that you make direct eye contact and

hold your head up. This does not mean staring at someone. You need to look into the eyes, then look away for a few seconds or drop your gaze slightly so that you focus on the mouth of the person with whom you are talking. If you practise this you will notice that you are able to:

- communicate better
- listen better
- convey more interest
- elicit more interest in what you are saying.

Facial Expression

Facial expressions say a lot about you as a person. Facial expressions always emphasise or negate what your mouth says. Most women find it easy to smile and to demonstrate warmth, but when it comes to expressing anger or disapproval, they may also do so with a smile. Look in a mirror and see how you look when you are expressing anger, joy, sadness, fear, and other emotions. Practise making your face and head look assertive by:

- making direct eye contact
- feeling the control over your facial muscles
- holding your head high.

Posture

Posture refers to your stance, that is, the way you carry your body, for example, when sitting, standing and walking. Posture is very important in the sense that it says a lot about the way you feel. Changing your posture can change the way you feel about yourself.

Practise the following tricks for an assertive stance:

- lean slightly forward with feet solidly grounded and enjoy feeling grounded with your body.
- decide how close to another person you like to stand or sit; this is your optimal distance that makes you feel comfortable and that could improve assertiveness. To discover your optimal distance, stand across the room from a friend, face each other, and walk slowly towards your friend as she stands still. Make eye contact with her the whole way and then stop walking as soon as you feel that you are at a comfortable distance from her. Allow your friend to repeat the same process and you will discover that she has her own optimal distance, and so will everyone else you interact with. Being aware of this will help you maintain an assertive posture.

Gestures

These are the body movements while you speak. There are two types of gestures:

- Descriptive gestures - those that give people a picture by sketching a scene or object in the air
- Emphatic gestures - those that do not always convey the real message of what you are saying.

Style of Dress

The way in which you dress says a lot about you and your image.

Some important points to remember about dressing assertively:

- dress appropriately for the occasion
- dressing in your favourite outfit gives you the confidence to help you be assertive
- when you are feeling down, wear an outfit that projects an outgoing appearance without overdoing it.

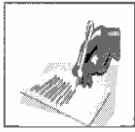
Voice

Your voice can either improve or destroy your attempts to be assertive.

Consider the following aspects:

- when you speak your voice should be audible
- if you speak very loudly all the time, you might turn people off
- avoid talking too fast when you are nervous
- your rate of speech needs to be evenly paced, not too fast or too slow
- to emphasise an important idea, speak at a slower rate
- stress important words
- people will listen to and respect a full-bodied voice rather than a squeaky, loud and harsh voice
- use simple, direct and spontaneous language to make yourself heard.

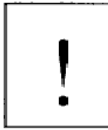
(Adapted from *The Assertive Manager*, Phelps & Austin 1975: 104)



Self Evaluation

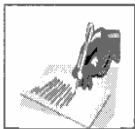
SELF-EVALUATION ACTIVITY 7.1

In your position as a manager, which body image components would you target as needing urgent attention?



Important-take note!

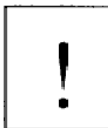
Possible answers to this activity are to be found at the end of this unit.



Self Evaluation

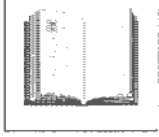
SELF-EVALUATION ACTIVITY 7.2

Name and explain the difference between the two types of gestures mentioned in this Unit.



Important-take note!

Possible answers are at the end of this unit.



Read Text

REDUCING ANXIETY

What is anxiety?

Anxiety can be described as being uneasy, with fear, regarding something in a doubtful manner.

Some symptoms of anxiety include:

- headaches
- uneasy stomach
- asthma
- dizzy spells
- stomach cramps.

In extreme forms, people can suffer from:

- ulcers
- migraine headaches
- heart attacks.

In addition to the already mentioned physical discomforts, anxiety can cause emotional discomfort. Some people may be scared to speak in front of a group, even though their speech may be informative and interesting. Others may even avoid approaching their employers to discuss important issues because of fear of repercussion.

Care should be taken that we do not try and avoid anxiety - provoking situations because the danger is: the more we avoid these situations, the stronger our anxiety becomes about facing them.

As an assertive woman, you should not be a helpless victim of anxiety. You need to take action, for example, by addressing the issue that is causing your anxiety.

LEARNING TO RELAX

Learning to relax can help you to reduce your anxiety. There are different forms of relaxation that people can practise to help them cope with anxiety. Some of these include:

- meditation

- yoga
- taking a walk or going to the gym
- reading comics/cartoons
- soaking in a foamy bath
- taking a nap or a break
- elevating your feet, keeping your eyes closed
- listening to relaxing music
- engaging in deep muscle relaxation

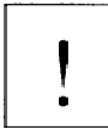
Extreme forms of anxiety may require medical, psychological or psychiatric attention.



Assessment Task

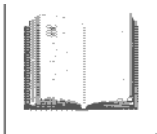
SELF-ASSESSMENT ACTIVITY

Select one symptom of anxiety and decide which form of relaxation could help to relieve it.



Important-take note!

Possible answers to this activity may be found at the end of this Unit.



Read Text

CONSTRUCTING YOUR ASSERTIVE BEHAVIOUR HIERACHY

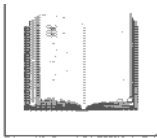
After dealing with anxiety, the next step is to gain a better understanding of your sources of anxiety. In doing this, these are the questions to ask yourself:

- what situations make you feel anxious?
- what causes you to be passive and non-assertive, resulting in your emotional and/or physical harm?
- what triggers your anger?

The assertive behaviour hierarchy can be used to specify situations in which you find it difficult to assert yourself. Here are the steps you could follow in developing an assertive behaviour hierarchy:

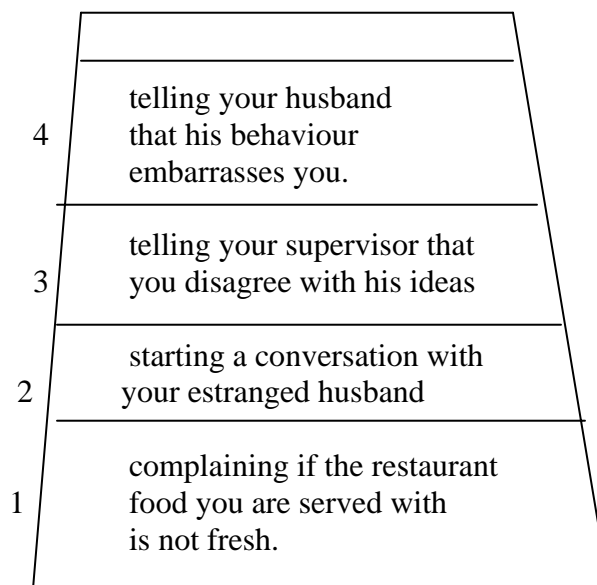
- the order of the items should be according to the degree of anxiety produced by each situation
- begin with the least anxiety-provoking item, and end with the most anxiety-provoking item
- if you experience success with the first item, you will gain the courage to move on to the next
- proceed through your hierarchy items in the order that they are listed
- avoid the temptation to jump to the last items before you feel comfortable with the first ones.

Using your hierarchy helps you to become more aware of the specific times you behave non-assertively. It will also give you a starting point for the application of assertive tips from this whole module.

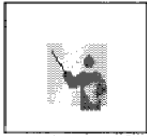


Read Text

EXAMPLE OF A HIERARCHY OF ASSERTIVE BEHAVIOUR



You can continue in this way until you get to your most difficult situation. You will then have to work out a way of how you will handle them assertively.



Practise Activiy

PRACTICE ACTIVITY

Create your own assertive behaviour hierarchy and give ways of how you will deal with each of them.



Important-take note!

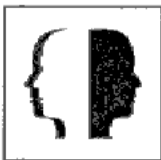
Possible answers are at the end of this unit.



Summary

SUMMARY

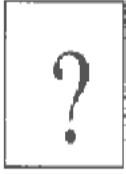
This Unit has taken you through the different aspects of body image that can help you to be more assertive. It has also looked at the possible causes of anxiety and how to deal with them, through your assertive behaviour hierarchy. The ultimate aim is that you should have an assertive body image, and the activities you engaged in should help you achieve this aim.



Reflection

REFLECTION

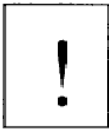
After going through this Unit, reflect on how you as a manager would assist members in your working environment to develop an assertive body image before they even reach managerial level.



Unit Test

UNIT TEST

After going through this Unit, how would you, as a manager, create a relaxed working environment for staff members under your care.



Important-take note!

Possible answers are at the end of this Unit.

SUGGESTED ANSWERS

SELF-EVALUATION ACTIVITY 7.1

Answers can vary from one manager to the next. However, your answer could include some of the following components.

- eye contact
- facial expression
- posture
- gestures
- style of dress
- voice.

SELF-EVALUATION ACTIVITY 7.2

Two types of gestures are:

- descriptive gestures – these give people a picture by sketching a scene or object in the air
- emphatic gestures – these do not always convey the real message of what you are saying.

The difference between these two types of gestures is that the former type helps to enhance the meaning of what you are saying while the latter type can be misleading.

SELF-ASSESSMENT ACTIVITY

Consider the following symptoms and forms of relaxation:

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">- headaches- uneasy stomach- stomach cramps- dizzy spells | } | take a nap, or listen to relaxing music |
|--|---|---|

PRACTICE ACTIVITY

This activity needs to be personalised and you need to start from the simple to the complex items. You need not necessarily have to draw the hierarchy; listing the items will be sufficient. The items included in the example below may be similar to the items you list:

- complaining to the electricity department for constantly cutting off your electricity supply even though you paid the bill

- informing the parents of one of your learners that their daughter is pregnant and has to leave school
- informing your neighbour that his loud music is disturbing you
- telling your staff that you are not happy with the overall results of learners
- telling your husband that if he does not change his bad behaviour you will seriously consider separation.

UNIT TEST

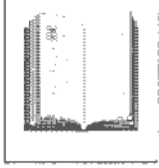
Consider the following forms of creating a relaxed environment:

Encourage your colleagues to identify the areas of anxiety and apply some of the forms of relaxation mentioned below:

- meditation
- yoga
- taking a walk or going to gym
- listening to relaxing music

This list is not exhaustive. You may add to the list from your experience of what works for you.

UNIT 8: DEVELOPING PERSONAL POWER AND INFLUENCE



Read Text

INTRODUCTION

Unit seven focused on developing an assertive body image and dealing with anxiety. This Unit examines the development of personal power and influence. Empowerment should lead to the individual being held accountable, and acting in a responsible manner towards others. These factors will help you to encourage effective participation of your staff and showing respect for their individuality. This Unit also deals with how to express your feelings and how to overcome stress. These aspects will help to enhance your personal power and influence. This, in turn, will help to develop your leadership skills.

Alberti and Emmons, (in Phelps and Austin 1992: 11) describe the complex dimensions of assertion as follows:

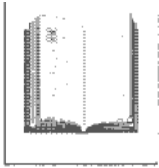
Assertive behaviour promotes equality in human relationships, enabling us to act in our own interests, to stand up for ourselves without undue anxiety, to express feelings honestly and comfortably, to exercise personal rights without denying the rights of others.

OBJECTIVES

After working through this Unit, you should be able to:

- explain what is meant by personal power and influence
- identify guidelines for developing effective leadership skills
- discuss how you could develop confidence
- explain assertiveness as a key skill
- outline the factors of accessibility
- express your feelings freely.

CONTENT



Read Text

EXPLANATION OF TERMINOLOGY

Personal power and influence form the basis of good leadership. Good leadership is a combination of personal skills, talent and character that have been shaped and nurtured over a long period. This process is developed through commitment and dedication. These unique talents and strengths that are gained, can have a positive influence both in the workplace and in your personal life.

A sense of personal power is developed by exercising authority in an effective manner, accessibility to information, assertiveness, a positive self-image and solid communication habits.

Being able to develop a sense of personal power involves developing a belief in yourself. You should believe that you can go after what you want and that you have the ability to reach your goals in your own way. A powerful leader empowers others and provides a safe environment for them to express their opinions.

CREATING A BALANCE BETWEEN HOME AND CAREER

It is a difficult challenge to balance your career and your personal life, because you want to establish a smooth flow by combining these two aspects to be truly successful. This will require you to develop personal power. Balancing a family and a career can challenge even the best leader. One must avoid trying to fall into the trap of being superwoman by learning to treat domestic arrangements as management challenges, rather than personal crises.

To overcome the challenges between home and career you could:

- hire household help if you need it
- accept the fact that there are many little things that just won't get done
- learn to be relaxed; it can set you free from worry
- develop a sense of humour.

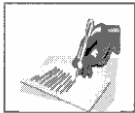
DEVELOPING CONFIDENCE

In order to be assertive you need to demonstrate some degree of confidence in your day-to-day interactions.

Confidence begins within the individual who is able to say “I can do it, I deserve success”. This kind of attitude will show outwardly as you assert your rights, and as you develop a willingness to give to others and yourself. The development of your confidence should not be seen as a threat to any of your colleagues. Instead, you could instill confidence in others by your own confident disposition. Many women are often very modest about their success and even feel embarrassed to proclaim their talents and strengths. Confidence must reflect outwardly. Consider the following points:

- proclaim your talents and strengths; do not hide them
- do not feel embarrassed to raise up your arms in victory
- stop denigrating your skills and talents
- feel comfortable with the power you have earned.

Adapted from: Manning and Haddock, 1989: 62

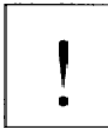


Self Evaluation

SELF-EVALUATION ACTIVITY 8.1

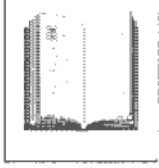
You have a close friend who has three small children and she frequently calls on you to mind them for a few hours at a time, since her job as an estate agent requires that she has to attend to potential customers at short notice.

You are again requested to look after the children on a day that you have set aside to clean out your garage and prepare for a garage sale. What would you do?



Important-take note!

Possible answers to this activity are to be found at the end of this Unit.



Read Text

ASSERTIVENESS AS A KEY SKILL

Assertiveness should not be seen as a simple, straightforward form of behaviour in life. One is sometimes inclined to stray from the path and therefore women leaders must learn to stand their ground in a positive way by learning assertiveness. You cannot be assertive at all times, but you should try your best to be assertive in most situations. We could consider the four basic **BEHAVIOURAL STYLES** as described below depending on the situation and personal factors:

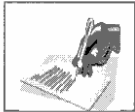
- **Non-assertive behaviour** will create a “win-lose” situation. This type of behaviour will allow the wants, needs and rights of others to be more important than your own.
- **Aggressive behaviour** is more complex and communicates an impression of superiority and disrespect. By being aggressive you put your wants, needs and rights above those of others. This type of behaviour is usually inappropriate as it violates the rights of others. No one likes a bully.
- **Assertive behaviour** is active, direct, and honest. It results in a “win-win” situation. It communicates an impression of self-respect and respect for others. You should place your wants, needs and rights on an equal level with those of others. An assertive person wins by influencing, listening and negotiating, so that others choose to co-operate willingly. This behaviour leads to success without retaliation and encourages honest, open relationships. Adapted from: Manning and Haddock 1989: 62
- **Indirect aggression** is the inability to directly express frustration, which results in a “lose-lose” situation.

GUIDELINES FOR EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP SKILLS

In order to increase your own assertiveness, it is essential to have a firm understanding of the following guidelines:

- make time for yourself which will enable you to take care of your own needs; this helps to develop self-respect

- do not be afraid to ask for help when you need it; working in a team ensures that others do not see you as working in isolation
- say “No” without feeling guilty
- do not be afraid to express your feelings openly, this involves taking risks and demonstrates a high level of integrity
- request for feedback as a way to grow and learn and this will, in turn, develop an openness to change
- develop a willingness for change
- ask for what you need and want; keep focusing on your goals and develop a sense of purpose and commitment
- strive for win-win situations.



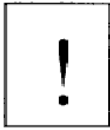
Self Evaluation

SELF-EVALUATION ACTIVITY 8.2

Read the following situational examples and place them into their respective categories: AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOUR; ASSERTIVE BEHAVIOUR; NON-ASSERTIVE BEHAVIOUR; INDIRECTLY AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOUR

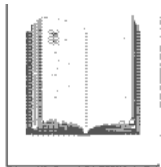
- A man and a woman, each with a full time job, live together. The woman has her share of the housework and cooking, and the man has his share of the domestic chores. She returns from work one evening quite tired and finds her mate in the study reading the newspaper. Molly sighs as she enters the study. She felt like going out to dinner and is really too tired to cook, but she doesn't say so. She 'puts a smile on her face' and asks sweetly, "What would you like for dinner?" She quietly goes off to prepare dinner pretends to feel good. Her mother phones while she is cooking and Molly complains bitterly that she has to do ALL the work.
- Zani moans about what a hard day she's had. She shouts at her mate, "If you think I'm going to cook when I feel this bad, you're mad!" She threatens to leave him if he doesn't do something about the messy house and at least take her out to a nice restaurant. She calls him a "lazy slob" and belittles him for not caring about her feelings. He responds by offering no help, goes out, slamming the door behind him.

- Ella steps lightly into the study and asks, “What would you like to do about dinner?” She wants him to suggest going out, or at least help her cook, but he’s candid and says, “I’m tired, would you mind preparing dinner tonight?” Ella makes an attempt to look even more tired and bedraggled, hoping again that he will take the hint. He doesn’t. So, she agrees to prepare dinner and proceeds to the kitchen, banging pots and pans furiously, preparing something she knows he hates. In addition, she allows the food to get burnt.
- Peggy finds her mate in the study and asks that they talk for a minute about plans for dinner. She tells him that she has had a hard day and is feeling quite tired, and asks how he’s feeling. She suggests that they either prepare dinner together or go out to eat, since he said he was feeling tired too. She understands his feelings, but does not cheat herself by hiding her own. They reach a compromise: neither feels defeated. They enjoy dinner together in a relaxed atmosphere.



Important-take note!

Possible answers to this activity are to be found at the end of this Unit.

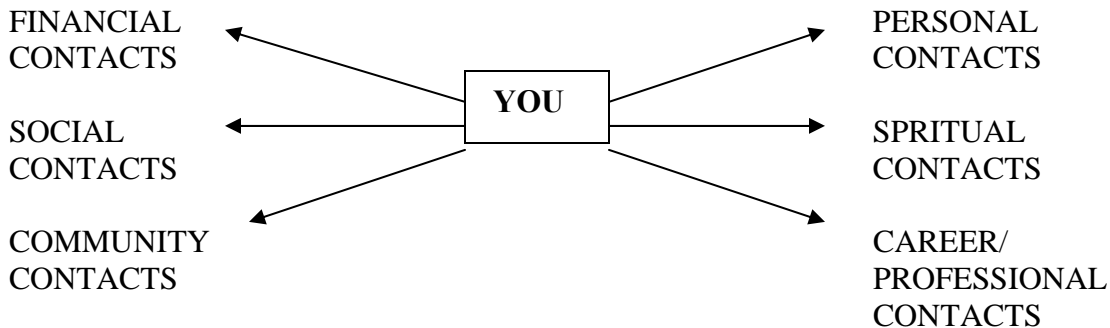


Read Text

ACCESSIBILITY

A true and effective leader knows how to make things happen. By learning to develop skills as a team player, it is possible to increase visibility so that people you work with, know you. A powerful woman leader networks easily and makes it possible for her to supply information and support to the people with whom she is in contact.

The diagram below gives us a clear indication of how one can establish and maintain contact which can help you reach your goals.



Accessibility also means letting your “world” know who you are. This world consists of:

- you
- your organisation
- your religious unit
- your professional group
- society

Adapted from: Manning and Haddock 1989: 65

DEVELOP SOLID COMMUNICATION HABITS AND INNER AUTHORITY

Non-verbal signals often say more than words do, therefore you should pay careful attention to how you speak and how you act as you speak. Your body should not be saying something different from your mouth.

Effective leaders communicate authority by projecting an image which is consistent with a strong leader. This should be evident in the language which you use. Your position also requires good telephone etiquette. When meeting face-to-face with people it is important to make eye contact when you speak to them. Handshakes should be kept firm and friendly. As it is often said, first impressions are lasting, so it is very important for you to project the best image the first time.

Good communication habits can become second nature if you try to practice the following:

- look people in the eye
- keep your facial expression consistent with your message
- stand erect and energetically
- speak with an even pace and pronounce words clearly
- use only body movements and gestures necessary to make your point, but no more.

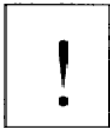
It is therefore necessary to practise projecting authority. To be a good leader you must learn to communicate clearly and directly – in writing, speaking, listening and through the professional image you present.



Self Evaluation

SELF-ASSESSMENT ACTIVITY

Your family constantly refuses, or complains about, the meals that you prepare. How would you try to overcome these frustrations?



Important-take note!

Possible answers to this activity are at the end of this Unit.



Read Text

EXPRESS YOUR FEELINGS

It is very important and healthy for you and your staff to be able to express your feelings, rather than choosing to spend years suffering in silence.

Important points are that:

- you take time to focus on what you feel is right for you
- you act in your own best interests and do not believe that you exist to provide compassionate support for others at all times

- be sensitive to, but do not become enslaved by, the demands and expectations of others.

HOW TO OVERCOME STRESS

Stress can lead to professional burnout and therefore you should be sensitive to the physiological and psychological needs of your staff members. This will motivate them and enhance their morale. Remember, that your staff has to be a catalyst of all learning and educational activities in the classroom and they need your support. However, you should take care not to be submissive to the demands and expectations of others as this could develop into stress. Stress can sometimes be a powerful generator of productivity, motivation and creativity and some people can deliver their best under some stress. Too much stress, on the otherhand, can lead to poor performance.

These are valuable points to consider when trying to deal with stress:

- Identify the potentially dangerous stress reactions: tension kept on a low level stimulates intellectual attentiveness.
- Exhaustion: Over the years demands on professionals have increased continually. Research has shown that some have already reached the threshold of exhaustion in the professional terrain.
- Burnout: If this exhaustion level continues for long periods without a holiday or leave, the danger exists that this could lead to professional burnout.

The physiological symptoms could range from continual tiredness, low resistance to illness, and sometimes to alcoholism. Psychologically, it can cause professionals to develop a negative attitude to the profession which can result in lack of commitment and frequent absence from work. These psychological symptoms or chronic behavioural attitudes could eventually lead to resignation from the profession.

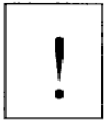
Assertiveness does not mean that a woman can legitimately express herself through serving the needs of others only. You, as a woman in leadership, should accept that you have your own needs, feelings, desires or ambitions which must also be taken seriously and respected.



Practise Activiy

PRACTICE ACTIVITY

A male teacher on your staff is absent from school frequently. The result is that the children in his class are undisciplined and lagging behind with their schoolwork. The parents are now demanding an explanation to this. Explain the process you would follow to respond to their request.



Important-take note!

Possible points to go into the answer to this activity are to be found at the end of this Unit.



Summary

SUMMARY

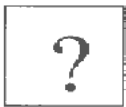
This Unit has introduced you to a number of very important aspects in the development of personal power and influence. These aspects include; definition, creating a balance between home and career, developing confidence, assertiveness as a key skill, solid communication habits, overcoming stress and being able to talk about your feelings. The activities in this Unit will equip you with the necessary tools to enable you to play your role as a manager in education in a more efficient manner.



Reflection

REFLECTION

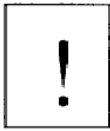
After working through this Unit, reflect on your performance as an education manager. Are you able to form opinions of what makes a successful and effective leader? Give examples from your observations and practical experiences.



Unit Test

UNIT TEST

Having worked through this Unit, define leadership from a manager's perspective and the important components which emerge from the definition.



Important-take note!

The possible answers to the Unit test are given at the end of the Unit.

SUGGESTED ANSWERS

SELF-EVALUATION ACTIVITY 8.1

Exercise your right to refuse and give yourself time to evaluate requests made to you. These are active ways to protect your resources which could be depleted in a short time. If that resource is your energy, time or love, you need to protect it as it is vitally important to your happiness. Be confident enough to say 'no' without feeling guilty, especially as the imposition can hamper your own plans.

SELF-EVALUATION ACTIVITY 8.2

After reading the situational examples you may categorise them as:

1. Non-aggressive behaviour
2. Aggressive behaviour
3. Indirect aggression
4. Assertive behaviour

SELF-ASSESSMENT ACTIVITY

Get your family's input for lunches and other meals. Your weekly shopping list should include meals to accommodate the entire family. Ask them what they would like for the week ahead and suggest that they help you to decide on future menus.

PRACTICE ACTIVITY

Answers to this activity could vary. However, you could consider the following points for your answer:

- consultation with the teacher to identify the problem
- counselling
- inform the School Governing Body
- enlist the help of other staff members for professional support.

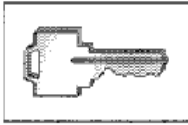
UNIT TEST

As an Education Manager you may consider the following strategies:

- Managers influence and direct the behaviour of individuals and groups in such a way that they work willingly to pursue the objects and goals of the organisation.
- Components: authority, power, influence, delegation, responsibility and accountability.

MODULE TEST

1. Consider your practical experience and describe one instance where you displayed/did not display assertiveness.
2. Describe a plan you would follow as a manager in linking the rights to assertiveness with ways of empowering aspiring managers.
3. Identify the types of barriers that exist within your work situation.
4. As a manager of your institution you always try to do your best, but your work is frequently criticised. How do you react? Do you get angry and defend yourself or do you consider the justness of the criticism and react constructively if it seems valid?
5. How can you make the assertive display of anger work positively for you as a manager?
6. You have just been appointed head of an institution where your husband happens to be working. What impact can this have in the whole institution and at home and how would you deal with it?
7. Body image can influence the creation of a positive or negative impact. Discuss how you could portray a positive body image of yourself as a manager.
8. If you, as a manager, were to run a workshop on stress management, what issues would you emphasise?



Key Words

GLOSSARY

activism	-	a policy of taking direct and often militant action to achieve an end.
alienated	-	made to become unfriendly
biases	-	influences towards or against something
bureaucracy	-	administrative systems of many officials
catalyst	-	someone/something that causes a change/event
curfew	-	rule limiting movement by people
defying	-	refusing to obey
denigrating	-	criticising unfairly
desensitise	-	react less strongly
diffident	-	shy, lacking in confidence
erupt	-	outburst of anger
etiquette	-	rules governing behaviour regarded as correct in social life
hierarchy	-	system of organising into levels
hostility	-	unfriendly behaviour, opposition
illicit	-	something not allowed by law
insubordination	-	not submissive to authority
marginalisation	-	isolation – not considered important
meditation	-	remain in a silent state for a period of time
mentor	-	person giving advice – a wise or trusted advisor or guide
mocking	-	making someone appear stupid
morale	-	mental attitude
negotiating	-	talking about ways of solving a problem
nurtured	-	process of promoting development

optimal	-	the best possible result
parameters	-	(limits) – constant or limiting factor
patronising	-	look down on, talk down to
polygamy	-	being legally married to more than one person at the same time
portray	-	make a likeness of
retribution	-	justice, repayment
sarcasm	-	use of bitter, ironic remarks
self-effacing	-	modest
spontaneity	-	to react naturally without outside influences
stereotyping	-	generalising, usually in a negative way, about all people or things belonging to a group
summation	-	result of an act or process
tantrums	-	uncontrolled temper, outburst of bad temper
terrain	-	a field of operation
utilisation	-	use of
vulnerable	-	weak, without protection
wry	-	finding a bad situation slightly amusing
yoga	-	type of exercise to improve your breathing and relax your mind

REFERENCES

Alberts E.M : (1996). Human resources management. Textbook for Technikon Students. Fundela Publishers: South Africa

Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act No. 108 of 1996.

Equity Employment Act: Act 55 of 1998.

Labour Relations Act: Act 66 of 1996.

Pedler, M. and Boydell,T.: (1985). Managing yourself. Harper Collins Publishers: London.

Phelps and Austin. (1975). The assertive woman (A new look) Arlington Books: London.

Stead B.A., (1985). Women in management. Prentice Hall: New Jersey.

The Gender Manual Consortium. (1999). Making women's rights real. Mills Litho Press: Pretoria.

Unit for Gender Research in Law-Unisa. (1998). Woman and the law in South Africa (Empowerment through enlightenment). Juta and Co. LTD: South Africa.

Urbani, G. (1987). A psychopedagogic perspective of the handicapped child's experience of his impairment. University of Zululand: South Africa.

