

Effectively Communicating with Difficult Peers

Provide your answers to these six questions **before** you read through the PowerPoint.

1. How would you define “passive”?

2. What are some characteristics that you would identify with passive communication?

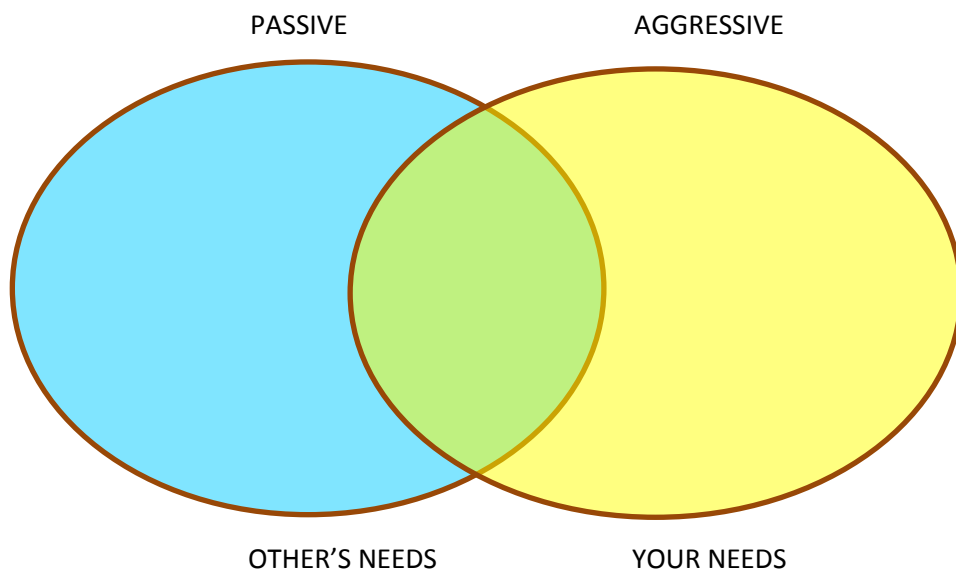
3. How would you define “aggressive”?

4. What are some characteristics that you would identify with an aggressive communication style?

5. Does your communication style fit with either of these descriptions? Why/Why not?

6. Provide an example of a “difficult” student communication style from your own tutoring experiences.

Stop here and review the PowerPoint. For the Venn diagram below, label the **green** section. Then, list 3 characteristics that fall into each category.



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Now that you have a better idea of some characteristics of passive, aggressive and assertive communication...

Imagine if you were in the middle of speaking to your group during a tutoring session and a student interrupted you with the correct answer. Then, later in the session they interrupt someone else while they were in the middle of answering a question . If you never address the issue, or “let it go”, that is a form of passive tutoring.

What do you think would be drawbacks to passive communication in this scenario?

How do you think this affects the *other* students in your session? How could this impact the tutoring environment?

Now imagine that this time when you are interrupted by the student, you snap at them. They continue to interrupt you and others and you start to lose your cool. You are showing forms of aggressive tutoring.

How are you being affected by this student? What are some of the drawbacks to aggressive communication? How are *other* students in your session being affected? How could this impact the tutoring environment?

We should learn to be assertive in our communication so that we can be open and honest without violating the rights of others. Being assertive is also important so that others do not take advantage of you, you are in control of your session, you make everyone comfortable and others understand you more clearly.

Look at the following difficult peer types. Choose two that “grind your gears” (bother you the most) and circle them.

The Interrupter

The Professor Hater

Class Clown

The Know-it-All

Mr. Crankypants

Little Miss “I JUST CAN’T DO IT”

The Proud Cheater

Mr. Lazy

I’m Above the Rules: Food, Phones, Etc.

The Unfocused Student

Mr. Why Go to Class

Other:

The Criticizer

Full of Inappropriate Comments

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For each of the “difficult peer communication” types you selected above, reflect on the following questions:

1. Why does this particular style of communication bother you?

2. Which of your values is being threatened? (E.g. When students talk poorly about professors, it threatens my value for respect since they are disrespecting the professor, one of my colleagues as a UCF employee.)

3. What would you say to them? (It can be very difficult to verbally assert yourself. Using the Keys to Assertiveness on Slide 17, produce an assertive statement you could use in this particular circumstance.)

Difficult Peer Type (Questions 1 & 2):

Assertive Statement:

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Assertive Statement:

By completing this reflection, you should be able to identify an assertive way to handle difficult peer to peer situations where you may instinctively react passively or aggressively. Knowing which types of communication are the most difficult for you will help you be prepared to face these situations head-on in the future. It is more beneficial to you as a tutor as well as for your tutee(s) if you assert yourself: Address the behavior, state how it affects you or others, and ask for what you want (a solution that respects your values).