

ASSOCIATE TIPS

Take Advantage of Your Assertiveness Spectrum

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The Assertiveness behavioural attribute is always an interesting one to explore. It is often the attribute that could cause misunderstanding as people who fall into either end of the spectrum are starkly different when it comes to communicating their opinions, dealing with conflicts or in their respective pace of work.

Here are some tips to understand Assertiveness and how we can best use our strengths to further enhance our **effectiveness!** When reading these, always start by understanding your position on the spectrum – remember that this is **your norm** and everyone else will be seen from the perspective of this position.



CONSIDER THE OTHER

When communicating or presenting, vary our actions and pace to match the other person you are speaking to. First-thirds generally prefer gentle energy and pace, whereas third-thirds generally prefer a faster pace and lively debate. **Tip: either mirror the other person or vary your energy levels.**



ESTABLISH NORMS

When dealing with difficult conversations, remember that first-thirds flourish in a safe, peaceful environment, whereas third-thirds prefer a driven, outspoken one where they can openly share their thoughts. **Tip: establish norms or rules to create a safe, non-judgmental environment that also promotes openness.**



BENEFITS OF DIVERSITY

Remember that **every team will benefit from having diversity across each attribute.** For Assertiveness, this ensures that there are peacekeepers who will strive to maintain harmony, and also drivers who will strive to make things happen. And those in the second-thirds who will strive to facilitate the interactions between the two ends of the spectrum.



BEWARE OF WRONG PERCEPTIONS

Be conscious about perceptions surrounding the thirds of the Assertiveness spectrum. First-thirds are often perceived as “doormats” without an opinion, third-thirds are often perceived as aggressive or insensitive and second-thirds are often seen as wanting to please both ends, seemingly without a “backbone”. **Once we are aware, we can do something to correct those perceptions.**



If you would like to find out more about implementing any of these Tips in a workshop or programme, please contact Colin at colin.yeow@emergenetics.com.



PERSONAL STRATEGIES

Personal strategies are... personal. What works for one person may not work for another. Generally, first-thirds could prepare ahead of time to raise difficult points or to raise them privately in order to still be heard. Third-thirds could ask for others' opinions instead of pushing their own, and maintain a steady pace. Second-thirds should make a point to also share their thoughts instead of merely facilitating.



USE BOTH THINKING AND BEHAVIOURAL ATTRIBUTES

Emergenetics provides us with the gift of **using our thinking and behavioural attributes together.** Often, our thinking preferences will provide us with insight to how we can formulate even better personal strategies – our thinking preferences may “unlock” our behaviours. For example, speaking to someone with a Structural preference in a structural manner about a structural issue may help shift his first-third of Assertiveness towards the second or third-thirds.



DOT GRAPH

Finally, a good tool to use to explore Assertiveness within a team would be the **dot graph.** Look out for large gaps between dots which might show individuals who are quite different as well as clusters which might show individuals who may be similar. They each inform us about possible team dynamics. The dot graph can also identify individuals who may be isolated because they are different from the others in the team and provide us with insights as to how we might want to better engage them.