**DIGI SCHOOL 2020-1-SK01-KA226-SCH-094350**

**Verbal communication – preparation of public speech**

**Assertive communication:**

**ASSERTIVE RIGHTS**

The word assertiveness originates from the Latin word „asercio“, or the English word „to assert“ which means „to state, to claim“.

[Assertiveness](https://sk.wikipedia.org/wiki/Asertivita) is an ability or communication skill to express one’s feelings, opinions, and needs in adequate manner when interacting with other people. It includes the ability to communicate, agree, disagree, claim, and also criticise without manipulation, aggression or passivity. An assertive person is able to clearly state his or her thoughts accepting the opinions of others, and lives in freedom without restraining the freedom of others. Assertive person states his or her thoughts in a nonaggressive manner. They know their own rights as well as needs and respect the rights and needs of others. They reach their goals and interests in a calm, open, and honest manner. They do not enforce their rights using power or violence. They respect and tolerate people around them. They are able to address other people asking them for help and cooperation. The aim of assertive communication is to reach mutual satisfaction and benefit. Assertivity is in its way a natural counterweight to egoism.

**1. A person has the right to judge their own behaviour, thoughts, emotions, and to be responsible for them**

It surely happens to you from time to time that you do not share the same opinion on certain things as other people do. May it be at work or school. If you are deeply convinced about your truth, do as you please, bearing the full responsibility.

**2. You have the right to say NO**

Often, we are afraid to disappoint other people by not obeying their requests. We are afraid that the particular person might not talk to us or might not like us. But if a person says NO thoughtfully, it is their right and as such it should be respected without unnecessary negative emotions. However, people should express their NO clearly. All those who know how to use the No properly claim that it has made their lives much easier. They have found out that they have stopped doing things that have made them exhausted.

### **3. A person has the right to evaluate to what extent they are responsible for solving the problems of others**

Subconsciously we often think of what other people say about us. Influenced by these thoughts we are prone to do things that we need not be doing. For instance, we are totally responsible for the adult family members. According to psychologists, we should take responsibility for ourselves and this is the fact we should be thinking about.

### 4. **A person has the right to change their opinion**

From the ethical point of view, it should be crucial if a person got closer to the truth by changing their opinion. We cannot, for example, consider Giordano Bruno as not being serious enough just because he changed his mind on the fact that the earth revolves around the sun or vice versa. Assertiveness goes further than that. It admits that a person can change their opinion not only under the pressure of arguments, but simply because they stopped liking something. When changing an opinion, it is appropriate to explain why we have changed it. In the eyes of others, it is considered bravery. Often, we were raised not being allowed to make any mistakes. The most recent theories however conclusively show that only thanks to mistakes we move forward. Thus, if we change our opinion after we realise and admit our mistake, it is a sign of a mature person.

The symptom of immorality is if we only pretend to have changed our opinion because it is beneficial to proclaim something similar. It is not about changing the opinion; it is simply a lie.

### 5. **A person has the right to say I DON´T KNOW**

Common social myth says that adult people have to know themselves well, so they have to know their motives, they have to be able to answer any questions connected to their behaviour. In short, if somebody does something, they know why. If they don´t, they are bad or inferior. This however is a myth that leads people to thinking that if they don't know something, they have to make up a lie. Isn´t it easier to say that we don´t know something? We don't have to know everything.

### 6. **A person has the right to be independent of the goodwill of others**

Sometimes we live with the feeling that all people we get in contact with must have a positive attitude toward us. In fact, there is no person on earth who could please everyone. There are situations when we simply cannot stand somebody. Life will be much easier if we remember that not everybody is going to like us.

### 7. **A person has the right to make mistakes and to be responsible for them**

As it was already mentioned, we can make mistakes. It is more important to admit them, learn from them, and go on with our lives. It is also good to remember that everybody makes mistakes. The only difference is that some make more mistakes than the others.

### 8. **A person has the right to make illogical decisions**

At school we were often told to stick to our common sense. If there is no logical explanation, then it is not right. From time to time, however, we have the right to make illogical decisions and listen to our hearts. We are humans, not machines. If we make illogical decisions, we have to bear the consequences for such decisions.

### 9. **A person has the right to say I DON´T UNDERSTAND**

You might have heard that if you want to get along well with your loved ones, you have to be able to empathise with their soul. You should have the capacity to predict their wishes and needs without them telling you clearly. However, the problem is that people aren't able to empathise with others all the time. They may have their own problems to cope with, they might be in pain, have some problems with their children, spouse, etc. Not to mention the fact that when empathy is requested, behind such a request an idea of compulsory adjustment to every demand may be hidden. We are not obliged to read everyone’s wishes right from their eyes and fulfil every unspoken idea on demand. We have the right to ask what exactly they want from us. At the same time, we have the right to receive a clear answer.

### 10. **A person has the right to say I DON´T CARE**

We are constantly pushed to be better and strive for perfection. We are obliged to keep trying. Mainly the people around us know the best in what fields we should improve constantly. According to common customs we should among other things try to be perfect according to somebody else's ideas.

But today's world doesn't work like that anymore. We don't have to do everything to 100% and we don't have to be interested in certain things. Others have to take that in mind. Simply, we don't have to have an opinion on everything, we don't have to be perfect and so we have the right to say: „*I really don't care*, “from time to time.

**11. A person has the right to decide whether to be assertive**

Assertive people are characterised as calm and direct communicators. They radiate calmness and self-confidence. It is reflected in their speech, mimics, and posture. They keep direct eye contact. They accept the living space of others. They speak in a calm manner and to the point. They avoid hasty judgements or superficial conclusions. They are equally good at listening as well as speaking. They have no problem finishing a conversation or taking a negative stance. They don't have to agree with everything and are able to express their disagreement in a calm and reasonable manner.

**Rhetoric – the art of speaking**

1. Language – appropriate sentence creation, construction of sentences in practical language, usage of grammatically correct language
2. Words and vocabulary – the style of speech has many genres (propagandistic, educational, ceremonial, occasional), using particular genres according to the aim of the given speech. We have to use the right citations and foreign vocabulary with the right pronunciation and meaning.
3. Speech technique – some people are naturally gifted but everything can be trained
4. Respiration – respiratory organs – it is necessary to train breathing, slowing down, speeding up during the speech. Comfortable clothing is crucial.
5. Phonation – vocal organs – vocal cords affect the tone of the voice. The tone can be intellectual (impersonal), emotional (sympathy, dissatisfaction). If you want to keep the audience’s attention during the speech, the emotional tone should prevail.
6. Articulation – wrong pronunciation, wrong articulation, or stammer can easily cause incomprehensibility.
7. Intonation – is very important. It determines the melody of speech (the emotional presentation), emphasis – stress (in Slovak language on the first syllable), speed – how fast we speak. Pauses are very important. When speaking it is crucial to make changes in the speed of speech as well as in its rhythm by alternating the elements of intonation.

**Principles of speech:**

1. Appearance adjustment - adapt to the situation.
2. Premeditated form of speech – how to speak clearly, logically.
3. Know whom to, where, when, and how long the speech will last – adjust to the topic and the audience.
4. Master the vocal and verbal forms of speech – intonation, articulation, usage of grammatically correct words.
5. Master the non-verbal forms of speech – mimics, gesticulation, facial expression
6. Avoid negative signals – hands in pockets.

**Preparation of speech:**

1. Choose the right topic and purpose, prepare the speech thesis – clarify the purpose of the speech – informative, persuasive, formulate the main thesis – main points of the speech
2. Analyse the audience – it is necessary to know the listeners whom you are about to speak to, their culture, status, attitudes, age.
3. Search and choose the support possibilities – it is necessary to be convinced of the truth of the speech, have the arguments ready as well as the visual and vocal examples, that will support the arguments in speech.
4. Choose a template, style your speech, build up the introduction, conclusion – think carefully about the speech template, e.g.: time template, topic template, problem-solution template, cause – consequence template, order of motivation. Avoid long sentences while stylisation, be intelligible. Introduction and conclusion are to be written at the end. The principle applies, first you create the conclusion and then introduction. The introduction serves to get the attention and conclusion summarizes the main points best. Do not apologize during the speech but thank the audience for their interest and attention.
5. Practice the speech, present the speech – everything has to be practiced and so does the speech, in front of a mirror or a small group of listeners. Think positive. Believe in your success and you will manage everything well.