

Communicating assertively & compassionately:

**Express yourself clearly without
harming the relationship**

Assertive communication means...

- ☐ Using “I” language
- ☐ Being specific and transparent
- ☐ Showing compassion toward both yourself and the other person
- ☐ Being curious
- ☐ Focusing on behaviours, not personality
- ☐ Bringing solutions, not just problems
- ☐ Being fair, clear and compassionate

Assertiveness is not...

- ☐ Demanding change
- ☐ Ignoring the other person’s needs or boundaries
- ☐ Always required (or always appropriate)

Being solution-focused

- ☐ Come with options
- ☐ Try: “Here’s what I think – what are your thoughts?”
- ☐ Be open to compromise
- ☐ Focus on strengths and needs
- ☐ Be proactive and future-oriented
- ☐ Avoid “dumping” concerns without possible paths forward



Compassionate communication looks like...

- ☐ Being clear and honest (clarity is kindness!)
- ☐ Offering the chance for explanation (not excuses)
- ☐ Being consistent and predictable
- ☐ Acknowledging challenges and expectations

Compassion is not...

- ☐ Being overly “nice”
- ☐ Letting things slide
- ☐ Avoiding the actual issue

We are here to help.

Situations can arise that can critically delay progress or completion of your degree program, such as personal reasons (e.g., family, health), a lack of communication with your supervisor, lack of resources that are required for you to complete the project, as well as a supervisor’s relocation to a different institution. Reach out to us.