

Assertive Communication

There are three styles for responding to difficult situations. An assertive response often offers the best results. In the example below, imagine a situation in which a co-worker says, “You are so grumpy, go back to using tobacco.” How do you respond?



Response	Result
Respond Aggressively “Get lost. You’re a creep for trying to tempt me.”	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Loss of control; increased tension.• You have an incredibly strong urge to use a tobacco product.
Respond Passively You stay silent and feel guilty about acting grumpy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Loss of self-respect; decreased confidence.• You feel as though you might as well get or use a tobacco product.
Respond Assertively “I’m trying to quit. Please be patient with me and I’ll do better.”	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• You feel good about yourself.• You asked for what you want.• You respected the other person’s feelings and your own feelings as well. The other person usually understands this is a difficult time for you.• You have avoided a potentially dangerous trigger (guilt or anger). You stay tobacco-free.

Write down some assertive ways you could respond when someone tries to get you to use tobacco again. For example, “No thanks. I’ve had enough already!”

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____