

DEAR MAN

The acronym **DEAR MAN** outlines a strategy for communicating effectively. This strategy will help you express your wants and needs in a way that is respectful to yourself and others. Using DEAR MAN will increase the likelihood of positive outcomes from your interactions.

Describe

Clearly and concisely describe the *facts* of the situation, without any judgment.

"You have asked me to work late 3 days this week."

Express

Use "I" statements to express your emotions.

"I feel overwhelmed by the extra work I've been given."

Assert

Clearly state what you want or need. Be specific when giving instructions or making requests.

"I need to resume my regular 40-hour work week."

Reinforce

Reward the other person if they respond well to you.

Smiling, saying "thank you", and other kind gestures work well as reinforcement.

Mindfulness

Being mindful of your goal means not getting sidetracked or distracted by other issues.

"I would like to resolve the overtime issue before talking about the upcoming project."

Appear confident

Use body language to show confidence, even if you don't feel it.

Stand up straight, make appropriate eye contact, speak clearly, and avoid fidgeting.

Negotiate

Know the limits of what you are willing to accept, but be willing to compromise within them.

"I'll finish the extra work this week, but I won't be able to manage the same amount of work next week."

DEAR MAN

Instructions: Choose a specific interpersonal challenge you are dealing with, or that you have dealt with in the past. Answer the prompt for each step to create a plan for communicating about the issue.

Describe: What are the *facts* of the situation? Do not include opinions or interpretations.

Express: Write an "I" statement to express your feelings: "I feel ____ when ____."

Assert: How will you tell someone what you need? Respond with the specific language you will use.

Reinforce: How will you reward the other person for responding well to you?

Mindfulness: What is the goal of your interaction? What other topics might distract from the goal?

Appear confident: Describe the posture, eye contact, and tone of voice you will use.

Negotiate: What are the limits of what you are willing to accept?
