

Being an assertive woman at work

Women are gradually working their way into key roles across many sectors, but one of the main barriers to success for women is their own view of their skills, and their lack of confidence. This is sometimes referred to as 'the imposter syndrome'.

Also, a lack of confidence can be accentuated by a feeling that they are not being heard at work (or seen), and that others are getting the limelight and taking the credit.

This course is for women who want to feel more confident and more assertive (not aggressive) in the workplace, and to make sure that they can get their voices heard around the table.

Aim

To provide participants with:

1. A safe space to explore challenges and issues at work and how to deal with them
2. Clear guidance and practice on how to behave in a confident and assertive way, particularly when there are competing voices
3. A personal toolkit to enable participants to handle the situations that they find most challenging at work
4. Tools for networking and influencing
5. A skills audit to remind participants what they do really, really well!
6. Guidance in how to get your message across, and how to work with difficult stakeholders
7. Greater personal impact at work

Methodology

The training approach to be used, which governs the design and delivery of the training is based on the following principles:

- To actively involve the participants throughout the training
- To enable participants to share their thoughts and enquiries
- The training is designed based on the needs and expectations of the participants that are reflected in the pre-training questionnaire.

Workshop methods and tools

In order to achieve the objectives of the training, the following tools and methods will be utilised:

- **Presentations:** presentations will be used in order to provide the background of each subject and create discussion and questions.
- **Discussions:** throughout the training, participants will be encouraged to contribute to discussions and share their experiences and thoughts with the rest of the group. The discussions will be facilitated and coordinated by the facilitator in order to maintain the focus in the key areas of interest.
- **Case studies:** case studies will be used so as to facilitate and trigger discussion, as well as allow external benchmarking so as to achieve competitiveness.
- **Group work:** group work will be used in order to facilitate practical understanding of the issues and in order to enhance team working, team building and cooperation amongst participants.

Sample programme

10.00 Session 1

Welcome, introductions and expectations

Looking at the Issues

- An exploration of what is currently working for you and where the main challenges are
- What is assertiveness and how to handle difficult stakeholders

Break

Session 2

Tools and testing

- Practical exercises and assertiveness techniques
- The parent, adult & child model

Looking at what gets in the way of being confident and assertive at work

12.30-13.30 Lunch

Session 3

Building your own strategy

- Models, tools and techniques to build your own strategy for success
- Testing the models with more practical exercises and scenarios
- Specific tools for networking and influencing

Break

Session 4

Surgery, Questions and Planning

- Looking at individual questions/scenarios
- Handling difficult meetings and knowing when to say 'No'
- Putting it all together and planning next steps.

16.00 Conclusions and close

Our trainer

Jo Clift

Jo started her career as a communications professional and subsequently worked at the heart of government for over 20 years, mainly at the Cabinet Office. She has worked closely with many ministers over the years, including Lord Peter Mandelson and Sir Oliver Letwin. She also worked at Number 10 in the Prime Minister's Press Office.

She has delivered a wide range of policies and advised on multiple complex communications issues. Jo has also worked across a wide range of issues including strategy, Ministerial PR and high-level Board appointments, with the common challenge being making things happen across very large and complex organisations.

Jo's government roles have included leading the Coalition government's ICT strategy, Head of Communications for the BSE Inquiry and creating a new model for corporate shared services across Whitehall. Jo also gained private sector experience as a senior change consultant at Deloitte Consulting. This enabled her to gain a great set of change skills and a valuable insight into the private sector.

In addition, she is a fellow at the Royal Society of Arts and a published writer on the Civil Service and Brexit.