Time Management Tips: 5 Assertiveness Tips for Setting Effective Boundaries

By: Paula Eder

“Time is more valuable than money. You can get more money, but you cannot get more time.”
Jim Rohn

This means you’re as rich as Bill Gates in life’s most precious commodity!

Without assertiveness, though, you often sacrifice your valuable time to others’ demands. Take charge of your time and your life right now by using these five assertiveness tips for setting effective boundaries.

Assertiveness Keeps Your Time Wealth in Your Hands

Assertiveness skills are an absolutely essential and often overlooked tool. You can develop clear priorities and create a great to-do list, but if you’re not assertive, others can and will override your time choices.

Like the kid whose lunch money is stolen by the class bully, you need to protect your time wealth in a way that keeps you in charge without needlessly antagonizing others.

Establishing and maintaining your boundaries prevents others from begging, borrowing, and bullying you to give away your time. It may feel impossible now, but with practice and determination, you will make it second nature.

5 Key Tips for Establishing Assertive Boundaries Successfully:

Assertiveness Tip One: Affirm to yourself that you make the choices. Make this your internal mantra to help you assimilate how much power you truly possess. No matter how strong the personalities of those around you, they simply cannot take time that you don’t give. Embracing this simple but transformative truth helps you claim your power.

Assertiveness Tip Two: Set the stage to assert your boundaries. Mutually schedule a time when others are most likely to be receptive. Whenever possible, meet where those you speak with are in their element. This is where they will feel the most relaxed and flexible. Use words they can hear. Then, explain your boundaries as calmly and pleasantly as you can.

Assertiveness Tip Three: Provide a context. People are much more likely to support you when they understand that your goal is not to punish or manipulate them, but to reach goals you deeply value. Warmly communicate that you would like their support, so that they feel included. Because you have reached out to them and asked their cooperation, they may even come to share some of your investment in your reaching your objectives.

Assertiveness Tip Four: Respecting your limits may require others to make fewer demands upon you. And they may resent this, no matter what you say or do. Forget fruitlessly attempting
to control their responses. Making assertive time choices calmly and compassionately and accepting others’ right to their feelings is the key to staying in charge of your time.

**Assertiveness Tip Five:** Maintain your boundaries with others consistently, even if you feel uncomfortable at times. When others resist, do your best to respond in an even-tempered way, no matter how you feel inwardly. Adjusting to changes can take time for all concerned. The longer you safeguard your limits, the less people will test your resolve.

It's always helpful, if not easy, to make your needs known and to meet them by setting boundaries. Your example may encourage others to speak up, as well. As negotiations take place, new options can be explored to accommodate everyone’s needs. Through exercising your own assertiveness, you may well open the door to more open and productive exchanges that benefit everyone.

You'll soon enjoy one of life’s great discoveries. Protecting your time feels like finding time!

Now ask yourself, what is your next step to exercise more power over your time?

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