

Use An Assertive Communication Style in Business

A Guide for Non-Native English Speakers

British Chamber of Commerce Myanmar: February 2024





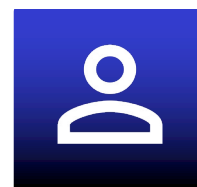
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- Masters in Education
- 35 years experience in language education & corporate training
- instructional designer, teacher trainer, lead trainer
- communication consultant –MOEA [Ministry of Economic Affairs in Taiwan]

ABOUT US

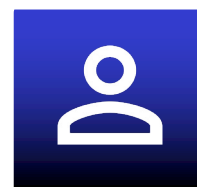
NextGen Corporate Language Training



Deliver business communication skill training programs for clients in Asia



Design specialized training content for specific industries & job roles



Provide face2face, virtual training, webinars & eLearning



BCCM webinars vs.
NextGen Training

Who is this webinar for?

Assertive Communication Skills to Actively Participate

Non-Native Speakers

Professionals who want to gain valuable insights and learn useful communication skills for business.

Upper-Intermediate Level

Individuals with an upper-intermediate level of English will benefit most from the event.

Global Business Environment

People who work, or plan to work in a global business environment will benefit most

Employees, Team Leaders, Managers

Team members with 3/5 years of experience working in global business, team leaders, junior managers



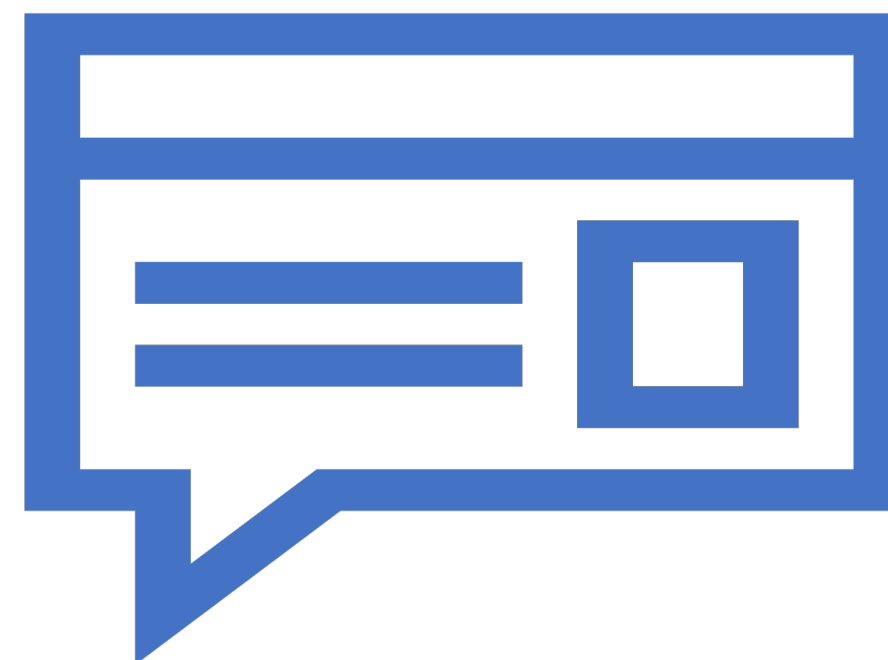
Get involved!

- Leave a question or comment in the chat box.
- Raise your hand.
- Unmute your microphone to ask a question or make a comment

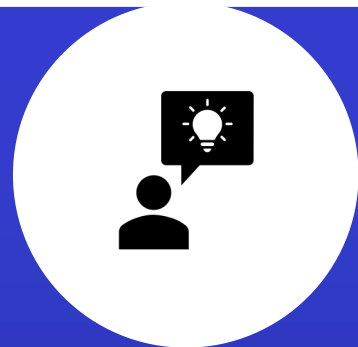
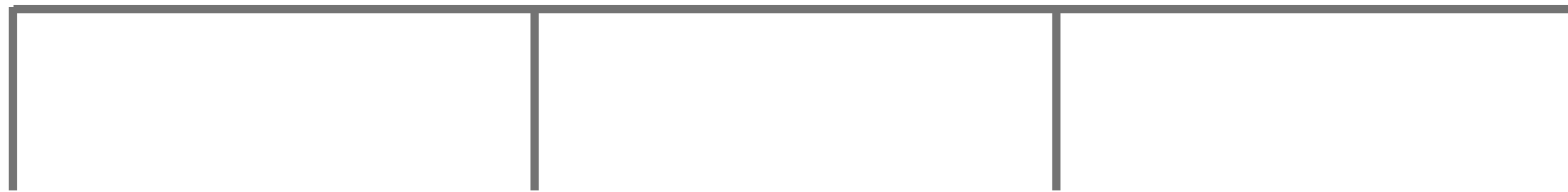


Get involved!

Say hello in the Chat box now!



DIFFERENT LEVELS OF PARTICIPATION, INTERACTION & LEADERSHIP



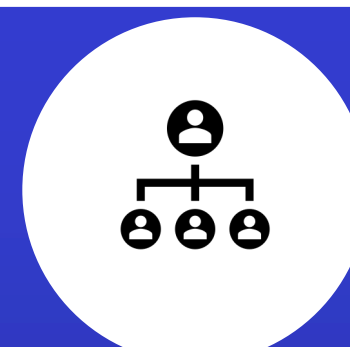
PARTICIPATE

ask questions, make
comments
clarify and confirm
avoid and deal with
misunderstandings



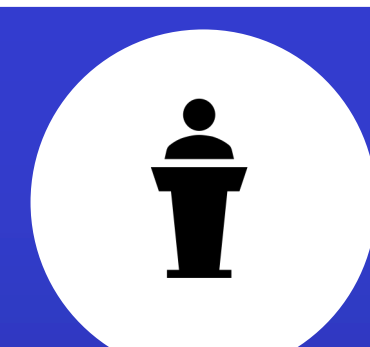
DISCUSS

express ideas in different
situations
challenge ideas
agree and disagree
maintain and support ideas



FACILITATE

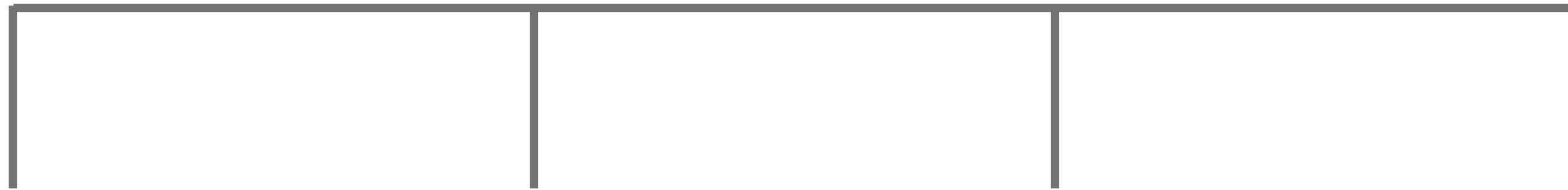
encourage and manage
interaction and contribution
manage viewpoints
handle conflict, build
consensus



LEAD

direct discussion
lead, guide, support,
question ideas
achieve results through
discussion

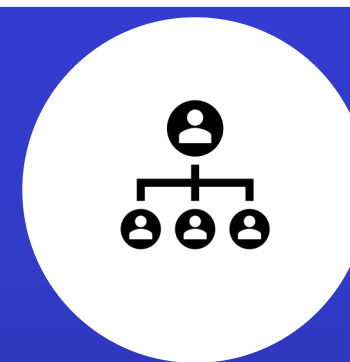
DIFFERENT LEVELS OF PARTICIPATION, INTERACTION & LEADERSHIP



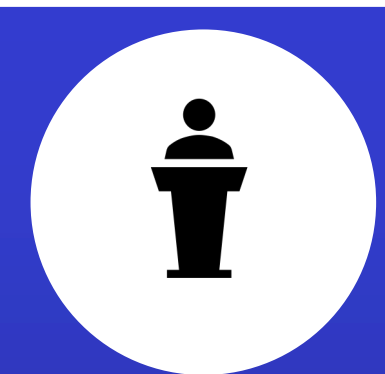
PARTICIPATE



DISCUSS



FACILITATE



LEAD

WEBINAR OUTLINE

Be Proactive & Assertive

01

The characteristics of a passive, aggressive & assertive communication style

02

Actively participate: Ask Questions & Make Comments

03

Maintain leadership: Proactively Handle Questions & Comments

04

Demonstrate confidence: Confirm & Clarify Questions

05

Stay Engaged: Confirm Details & Clarify Ideas



PART 1

The Characteristics of a Passive, Aggressive & Assertive Communication Style

COMMUNICATION STYLES



Passive

- feelings of being misunderstood and not really heard
- may feel that no one really listens to you or values your input.
- Passive communicators believe in avoiding conflict at all costs.



Aggressive

- make others feel that you judge them
- you aren't interested in their opinions
- you are confrontational
- Aggressive communicators value winning at all costs



Assertive

- communicate feelings, thoughts and ideas in an open, honest way without negatively impacting others.
- Assertive communicators believe in being open, honest and respectful at all costs

How about you?





PART 2

Actively Participate:
Ask Questions & Make Comments

How would you define a formal and an informal business situation?



formal vs informal

Formal:

1. senior people in your organization
2. important clients
3. meeting for the first time in business

Informal:

1. colleagues
2. clients you're familiar with
3. senior people you know well

personalities – nationality - corporate culture - industry



Scenario: Asking Questions

You are in a meeting with Ms. Jenny Lin, a senior manager in your company. She just described the sales strategy for 2024. She also outlined the company's marketing strategy. Then, she explained the new talent acquisition strategy for 2024.

You'd like to know how much the social media marketing budget is.

How would you ask this question?



Scenario: Asking Questions

You are in a meeting with Ms. Jenny Lin, a senior manager in your company. She just described the sales strategy for 2024. She also outlined the company's marketing strategy. Then, she explained the new talent acquisition strategy for 2024.

You'd like to know how much the social media marketing budget is.

How about this?
Yes or No?

What's the social media marketing budget for 2024?



Formal Business Situation

“

Excuse me. Could I just ask a quick question?
[Wait] Sure. Go ahead.
Earlier you mentioned our marketing
strategy.
Could you tell me what the social media
budget for 2024 is?

”

3-Step Communication Strategy

[formal]

Get attention:

Excuse me. Could I just ask a quick question?

Be specific:

Earlier you mentioned our marketing strategy.

Use soft language:

Could you tell me what the social media budget for 2024 is?

Scenario: Asking Questions

[informal]

You are in a meeting with Tina, one of your colleagues who has just described the sales strategy for 2024. She also outlined the company's marketing strategy and she explained the new talent acquisition strategy for 2024.

You'd like to know how much the budget is for social media marketing.



Informal Business Situation

“

I'd like to ask a question here. [Don't wait]
Earlier you mentioned our marketing
strategy.
Could you tell me what the social media
budget for 2024 is?

”

3-Step Communication Strategy



Get attention



Be specific



Use soft language



Scenario: Make a comment [formal]

You are in a meeting with Mr. Green, the APAC Marketing Director, who described challenges you are facing in the market. He's also talked about opportunities and he outlined the new product launch timeframe.

You'd like to make a comment about the opportunities. You believe that the market will continue to grow in SE Asia and you believe there are huge opportunities in Myanmar.

How would you say this?



3-Step Communication Strategy

[formal]

Get attention:

Excuse me. Could I just make a quick comment here? [wait]

Be specific:

You described opportunities in the market in SE Asia.

Use soft language:

I'd just like to say that I believe there are huge opportunities in Myanmar. There is a lot of potential for growth in that market.

3-Step Communication Strategy

[informal]

Get attention:

I'd just like to add something here
[don't wait]

Be specific:

You described opportunities in the market
in SE Asia.

Use soft language:

I'd just like to say that I believe there are
huge opportunities in Myanmar. There is a
lot of potential for growth in that market.

Professional Language Support

“

1. Excuse me. Could I just ask a quick question? [wait]
2. Earlier you mentioned
3. I'd like to know

”

“

1. I'd like to ask a question here. [don't wait].
2. A few minutes ago, you described
3. Could you tell me?

”

“

1. Sorry to interrupt, but I have a question about this. [don't wait].
2. In your presentation, you outlined
3. Would you mind explaining / describing / sharing?

”

BUSINESS SCENARIO

[optional]



“

1. Excuse me. Could I just ask a quick question? [wait]
2. Earlier you mentioned
3. I'd like to know

”

“

1. I'd like to ask a question here. [don't wait].
2. A few minutes ago, you described
3. Could you tell me?

”

“

1. Sorry to interrupt, but I have a question about this. [don't wait].
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3. Would you mind explaining / describing / sharing?

”



PART 3

Maintain Leadership:
Proactively Handle Questions &
Comments



Scenario: Handle a Question

You are on a conference call with the APAC team. You have been describing business opportunities in Asia, when one of the meeting participants from Taiwan asks you how you plan to drive revenue growth in Myanmar in 2024.

How would you answer this question?

[some ideas]

1. Launch innovative new products to gain market share
2. Hire a new sales director and expand the sales team
3. Invest in online marketing



Why do many professionals
get very nervous when they
are asked questions?



Why do many professionals get very nervous when they are asked questions?

- Give up control
- Unpredictable
- Can't really prepare
- Fear of not knowing the answer
- Fear of not understanding the question



Scenario: Handle a Question

You are on a conference call with the APAC team. You have been describing business opportunities in Asia, when one of the meeting participants from Taiwan asks you how you plan to drive revenue growth in Myanmar in 2024.

That's a great question. I'm glad you asked me about that.
Let me answer your question by saying this.

1. First, we plan to launch innovative new products to gain market share, which will help us increase our revenue.
2. Second, we're going to hire a new sales director and expand the sales team. This will allow us to expand our customer base.
3. And finally, our plan is to invest in online marketing, so that we can increase our website traffic and attract more sales leads

I believe that answers your question.

Now, I'd like to get back to my point about opportunities in Asia.

.....



Handling Questions: Communication Strategy:

Maintain your leadership role

Be proactive

That's a great question. I'm glad you asked me about that.

Be assertive:

Let me answer your question by saying this.

Answer the question:

- Launch innovative new products to gain market share
- Hire a new sales director and expand the sales team
- Invest in online marketing

Confirm & Move on

I believe that answers your question.
Now, I'd like to get back to my point about



Handling questions is a key leadership skill

Handling questions well:

- demonstrates confidence
- positions you as an expert
- shows your leadership potential

Handling Complex Questions

1

So, you're asking me how I plan to drive revenue growth in Myanmar in 2024?

2

That's an excellent question.
I was hoping someone would ask that.

3

So, let me answer your question by making three points.

4

1. Launch innovative new products to gain market share
2. Hire a new sales director and expand the sales team
3. Invest in online marketing

5

Does that answer your question?
Great. Now, I'd like to move on to my next point about





Handling Comments: Communication Strategy:

Maintain your leadership role

Be proactive

That's a great point.

Be positive [elaborate – optional]:

Thanks for bringing that up.
In fact, let me just elaborate by saying

Move on

Now, I'd like to get back to my point about



Communication Insights



“That’s a great question”.

- encourages participation
- creates a positive environment
- supports teambuilding



“Let me answer this way”.

- buys you time to think
- buys you time to organize your answer
- demonstrates your communication skills



Key Takeaways

What are some of your key takeaways so far?



Something valuable that you can use immediately in your work.



Something that you didn't realize was really important.



Anything else that you'd like to share with others.



PART 4

Demonstrate Confidence:
Confirm & Clarify Questions

Scenario: You don't understand the question

You are presenting an idea during a virtual meeting with the APAC team when one of your colleagues or customers asks a question. You don't understand the question.

How would you handle this situation?



Confirm a Question

You think you understand, but you want to be sure

“

I'm afraid I don't **quite** understand your question.
Are you asking me about the market in Japan or Taiwan?

”

I'm sorry, but I don't **fully** understand your question.
Do you want to know about the product features or pricing?

“

So, if I understand you correctly, you are asking me about the revenue in Q1. Is that correct?

”

So, just to be clear, your question is about our sales strategy in Japan. Right?

Clarify a Question

You really don't understand what the speaker is asking you

“

I'm afraid I don't **quite** understand your question. Would you mind clarifying it please? Thanks.

”

“

I'm afraid I don't **quite** understand. Could you repeat the question? Thanks.

”

“

I'm sorry, but I don't **completely** understand. Would you mind rephrasing the question? Thanks.

”

- Don't embarrass the speaker asking the question.
- Take personal responsibility for any misunderstanding.
- Clarify vs. Repeat vs. Rephrase

Confirm & Clarify Questions

It's critical that you take time to clarify the question. Your international colleagues, clients or managers will appreciate it when you take time to clarify a question because:

1. it shows everyone you are listening and focused
2. it shows that you have the courage and confidence
3. it demonstrates respect, because you want to make sure you understand and answer your colleague



PART 5

Stay Engaged:
Confirm Details & Clarify Ideas

Confirm Detailed Information

If you think you understand, but you want to be sure - confirm

“

Sorry. I'm not sure I heard you correctly. Are you saying that the marketing budget will increase to US\$5,000?

”

Sorry, but I'd like to be clear on this. Did you say that the marketing budget will increase to US\$5,000?

“

So, Just to be clear. You are saying that the marketing budget will increase to US\$5,000. Is that right?

”

If I understand you correctly, you said that the marketing budget will increase to US\$5,000. Right?



Clarify Ideas [formal & informal]

- Get attention
- Be specific
- Use soft language

“ Could I just check something here? [Wait]
I’m not sure I (completely) understand your point about
marketing strategy.
Could you go over that part again briefly? Thanks. ”

“ Sorry to interrupt, but I’m not sure I understand your
point about marketing strategy.
Would you mind explaining part again briefly? Thanks ”



Paraphrase

How to Avoid Misunderstandings

“

Jack, I'd just like to make sure I understand you clearly. Basically, what you said is that we plan to launch our new product on July 1st. You also mentioned that we'll launch this product in Japan, Korea and Taiwan. And you outlined our marketing strategy. Have I missed anything?”

”



Summary

Ask questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could I ask a quick question? [wait] Earlier you mentioned I'd like to know • I have a quick question about this. [don't wait] Earlier you outlined Could you tell me ...?
Handle questions	<p>So, you're asking me about our sales strategy.</p> <p>That's a great question. Let me answer by saying this. [answer] I believe that answers your question. Now, I'd like to get back to my point about</p>
Make a comment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could I make a quick comment here? [wait] Earlier you mentioned I'd like to point out that • I'd like to add something here. [don't wait] Earlier you outlined I just want to explain that
Handle a comment	<p>That's an interesting point. Thanks for bringing that up. Actually, let me elaborate by saying Now, back to my point about</p>
Confirm a question	<p>I'm afraid I don't quite understand your question.</p> <p>Are you asking me about the market in Japan or Taiwan?</p>
Clarify a question	<p>I'm afraid I don't quite understand.</p> <p>Could you repeat the question? Thanks.</p>
Confirm detailed information	<p>Sorry. I'm not sure I heard you correctly. Are you saying that the marketing budget will increase to US\$5,000?</p>
Clarify ideas	<p>Could I just check something here? [Wait]</p> <p>I'm not sure I (completely) understand your point about marketing strategy.</p> <p>Could you go over that part again briefly? Thanks.</p>
Paraphrase	<p>Jack, I'd just like to make sure I understand you clearly.</p> <p>Basically, what you said is that we plan to</p> <p>You also mentioned that And you outlined our marketing strategy.</p> <p>Have I missed anything?"</p>



Key Takeaways

What are some of your key takeaways so far?



Something valuable you learned from the content.



Something that you didn't realize was really important.



Anything else that you'd like to share with others.



Summary

01

The characteristics of a passive, aggressive & assertive communication style

02

Actively participate: Ask Questions & Make Comments

03

Maintain leadership: Proactively Handle Questions & Comments

04

Demonstrate confidence: Confirm & Clarify Questions

05

Stay Engaged: Confirm Details & Clarify Ideas

A photograph of a large crowd of people at a concert or event. Many people have their hands raised in the air, suggesting they are cheering or dancing. The scene is dimly lit, with some light reflecting off the raised hands. The background is dark, and the overall atmosphere is energetic and lively.

Q&A

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Thank you



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www.nextgenclt.com



www.facebook.com/nextgencorporatetraining



[linkedin.com/nextgencorporatelanguagetraining](https://www.linkedin.com/company/nextgen-corporate-language-training)