



## **Guidelines for Objectives Effectiveness: Getting What You Want (DEAR MAN)**

A way to remember these skills is to remember the term **DEAR MAN**:

Describe  
Express  
Assert  
Reinforce  
(Stay) Mindful  
Appear Confident  
Negotiate

### **D**escribe

Describe the current SITUATION (if necessary). Stick to the facts.  
Tell the person exactly what you are reacting to.

“You told me you would be home by dinner but you didn’t get here until 11.”

### **E**xpress

Express your FEELINGS and OPINIONS about the situation.  
Don’t assume that the other person knows how you feel.

“When you come home so late, I start worrying about you.”

Use phrases such as “*I want*” instead of “*You should*,” “*I don’t want*” instead of “*You shouldn’t*.”

### **A**ssert

Assert yourself by ASKING for what you want or SAYING NO clearly.  
Do not assume that others will figure out what you want.  
Remember that others cannot read your mind.

“I would really like it if you would call me when you are going to be late.”

### **R**einforce

Reinforce (reward) the person ahead of time (so to speak)  
by explaining positive effects of getting what you want or need.  
If necessary, also clarify the negative consequences of not getting  
what you want or need.

“*I would be so relieved, and a lot easier to live with, if you do that.*”

Remember also to reward desired behavior after the fact.

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(Stay)

**M**indful

Keep your focus ON YOUR GOALS.  
Maintain your position. Don't be distracted. Don't get off the topic.

“Broken record”: Keep asking, saying no, or expressing your opinion over and over and over.  
Just keep replaying the same thing again and again.

Ignore attacks: If another person attacks, threatens, or tries to change the subject,  
ignore the threats, comments, or attempts to divert you.  
Do not respond to attacks. Ignore distractions.  
Just keep making your point.

“I would still like a call.”

**A**pppear confident

Appear EFFECTIVE and competent.

Use a confident voice tone and physical manner;  
make good eye contact.

No stammering, whispering, staring at the floor, retreating.

No saying, “I’m not sure,” etc.

**N**egotiate

Be willing to GIVE TO GET.  
Offer and ask for other solutions to the problem.  
Reduce your request.  
Say no, but offer to do something else or to solve the problem another way.  
Focus on what will work.

“How about if you text me when you think you might be late?”

Turn the tables: Turn the problem over to the other person.  
Ask for other solutions.

“What do you think we should do? . . . I can't just stop worrying about  
you [or I'm not willing to].”

Other ideas:

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