

CHALLENGING TRAIT NAVIGATING CHALLENGES

You are competitive and self-interested. As an independent person, you are not motivated by getting along with the group and are even willing to upset others to pursue your own goals. You are often independent in your thoughts, and you ask questions, especially to protect your self-interest and make sure you are right. You are disinterested in compromise and do not get satisfaction out of helping others. However, God doesn't make mistakes in how He hardwires people and often asks us to stand independently and persistently against the 'wisdom' of the world.

Challenges You May Experience from Yourself and Others

Your interpersonal skills and ability to work as part of a team can be critically important to your success at work. Companies often adopt a team approach to nearly every aspect of their business including sales, operations, administration, etc. Since you are not innately 'wired' to be a team player, you may at times come across to others as hostile, rude, aloof, self-centered, arrogant, hard-headed or combative. It's helpful to be aware of how your interpersonal style at work can be perceived by others so that you can monitor your behavior.

How to Effectively Manage Challenges

- **Assertiveness with diplomacy:** While not naturally inclined to prioritize harmony, assert yourself confidently while remaining respectful and diplomatic in your interactions with others.
- **Collaborate strategically:** Recognize the importance of teamwork in achieving common goals and actively participate in collaborative efforts when necessary, focusing on achieving objectives efficiently.
- **Practice active listening:** Demonstrate genuine interest in others' perspectives and opinions, even if you may not always agree with them. This helps build rapport and fosters effective communication.
- **Manage conflict constructively:** When disagreements arise, approach them with a problem-solving mindset rather than becoming defensive or combative. Focus on finding mutually beneficial solutions.
- **Set boundaries:** Clearly communicate your boundaries and expectations to others, and assertively uphold them when necessary. This helps prevent others from taking advantage of your assertiveness.
- **Seek feedback:** Actively solicit feedback from colleagues to ensure your assertiveness is perceived positively and to identify areas for improvement.
- **Cultivate empathy:** While not naturally empathetic, make an effort to understand others' perspectives and feelings, which can help improve your interpersonal relationships.

Jesus' Teachings

By integrating these teachings into your approach, you can navigate interpersonal challenges more effectively. Emphasizing respect, active listening, and empathy can help balance your assertiveness, leading to more positive interactions and a more cohesive team environment. This alignment with Jesus' principles not only fosters personal growth but also reflects a commitment to building harmonious relationships.

- **Assertiveness with Diplomacy:** Jesus demonstrated assertiveness with love and respect, as seen in Matthew 5:37, where He advised, "Let your yes be yes, and your no be no." Approach your interactions with clarity and confidence, ensuring that you express your thoughts while maintaining respect for others' opinions.
- **Collaborate Strategically:** Jesus emphasized teamwork among His disciples, encouraging collaboration for a common purpose (e.g., Luke 10:1). Recognize the value of working with others to achieve shared goals, and be willing to engage in collaborative efforts, even if it's not your natural inclination.
- **Practice Active Listening:** Jesus was attentive to those around Him, often asking questions and encouraging dialogue (e.g., John 4:7-26 with the Samaritan woman). Make a conscious effort to listen actively to others, demonstrating interest in their perspectives, which can help build rapport and trust.
- **Manage Conflict Constructively:** In Matthew 18:15-17, Jesus provided a framework for addressing conflict directly and constructively, emphasizing reconciliation. When disagreements arise, adopt a problem-solving approach, focusing on constructive outcomes rather than defensiveness or aggression.
- **Set Boundaries:** Jesus established boundaries, often withdrawing from crowds to recharge and focus on His mission (e.g., Mark 1:35). Clearly communicate your boundaries to others, ensuring that you uphold them assertively while maintaining respect for their needs.
- **Seek Feedback:** Jesus welcomed questions and feedback from His disciples, encouraging growth and understanding (e.g., Matthew 16:13-20). Actively solicit feedback from colleagues about your communication style and assertiveness, using it as an opportunity for growth and improvement.
- **Cultivate Empathy:** Jesus showed compassion and understanding towards others, such as in Matthew 9:36, where He had compassion for the harassed and helpless. Make a concerted effort to understand the emotions and perspectives of others, which can enhance your interpersonal relationships and create a more collaborative atmosphere.

Notes
