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Questions/Answers

Q 2) Provide a short summary of the concepts or topics you learned about today" (minimum 300 characters)

A 2) One of the key concepts I learned in the assertive communication class is that assertive communication is a way of communicating feelings, thoughts, and beliefs in an open and honest manner without violating the rights of others. It emphasizes expressing oneself clearly and confidently while still showing respect for the other person. This definition highlights that effective communication is not simply about speaking one's mind but also about maintaining mutual respect and preserving healthy relationships. Another important lesson from the class was understanding the four main communication styles: passive, passive-aggressive, aggressive, and assertive. Each style differs in how individuals express themselves and how they prioritize their own needs in relation to the needs of others. The passive communication style involves being respectful and appropriate but not direct or honest about one's own thoughts and feelings. As a result, the needs of others often become the priority, while one's own needs are overlooked. In contrast, the passive-aggressive communication style lacks respect, honesty, directness, and appropriateness. This style often results in indirect expressions of frustration or resentment, meaning that neither person's needs are effectively met. The class also explored the aggressive communication style, which is characterized by being direct and honest but lacking respect and appropriateness. In this approach, individuals focus primarily on satisfying their own needs, often at the expense of others. While the message may be communicated clearly, the manner in which it is delivered can damage relationships and create conflict. Finally, assertive communication was presented as the most effective communication style because it combines respect, appropriateness, honesty, and directness. In assertive communication, the needs of both individuals are considered equally important. Rather than avoiding difficult conversations or dominating them, assertive communicators express themselves clearly while remaining mindful of the feelings and rights of others. Overall, my understanding of assertive communication is that it means being comfortable saying exactly what you want or need, but doing so in a way that does not hurt the other person's feelings or diminish their rights. It promotes openness, mutual respect, and balanced relationships.

Q 3) What is the most important concept(s) that you gained for today's Live Class? (minimum 300 characters)

A 3) The most important concept I gained from today's live class was learning how to use "I" messages instead of "you" messages when communicating with others. This approach stood out to me because it provides a practical way of expressing thoughts and emotions without causing the other person to become defensive. Rather than sounding accusatory or placing blame, "I" messages encourage open and respectful communication by focusing on one's own feelings and experiences. I learned that an effective "I" message should include four key components: stating the emotion being experienced, identifying the specific behaviour, describing the specific situation in which the behaviour occurred, and clearly expressing what is wanted or needed. This structure allows the speaker to communicate honestly while maintaining respect for the other person's feelings and rights. Since "I" messages usually begin with the phrase "I feel," they help shift the focus away from criticizing the other person and instead communicate the impact the situation has had on the speaker. As a result, the listener is more likely to respond with understanding rather than defensiveness, making it easier to resolve conflicts and strengthen relationships. Another important concept I gained from the class was the importance of paying attention to non-verbal communication. Communication extends beyond spoken words, and body language, facial expressions, eye contact, tone of voice, posture, and gestures all influence how a message is received. I learned that verbal and non-verbal communication should be consistent so that the intended message is communicated clearly and sincerely. It is equally important that non-verbal communication is neither aggressive nor passive. Aggressive non-verbal behaviours, can cause the other person to become defensive and less willing to engage in meaningful conversation. Conversely, passive non-verbal behaviours, may give the impression of disinterest or uncertainty and can leave the other person feeling ignored or undervalued. Therefore, using confident, respectful, and appropriate non-verbal cues supports assertive communication and helps create an environment that encourages openness, understanding, and productive dialogue.

Q 4) How would you apply what you learn today to improve your life of work? (minimum 300 characters)

A 4) The concepts I learned from the assertive communication classes will significantly improve my effectiveness as a Head of Department. In a leadership role, communication is at the heart of building positive relationships, managing conflicts, and ensuring that departmental goals are achieved. Applying assertive communication will allow me to express my thoughts, expectations, and concerns openly and honestly while maintaining respect for the rights and feelings of others. One of the most valuable concepts I will apply is the use of "I" messages instead of "you" messages. As a Head of Department, there are times when I must address issues such as missed deadlines, concerns about performance, or disagreements among team members. Rather than making teachers feel blamed or criticized by using statements that begin with "you," I will use "I" messages to express how a particular situation affects the department. By stating my emotions, identifying the specific behaviour, describing the situation, and communicating what I would like to happen, I can encourage open dialogue without putting staff members on the defensive. This approach is more likely to result in cooperation, understanding, and positive behavioural change. I also intend to be more intentional about my non-verbal communication. I recognize that my facial expressions, tone of voice, posture, eye contact, and body language communicate just as much as my words. As a leader, I must ensure that my non-verbal cues are neither aggressive nor passive. Aggressive non-verbal behaviours could intimidate teachers and discourage honest communication, while passive non-verbal behaviours may give the impression that I am uninterested or lacking confidence in my leadership. Instead, I will strive to maintain calm, confident, and respectful non-verbal communication that reinforces the message I am conveying. Additionally, I will adopt an assertive communication style when interacting with teachers, students, parents, and members of the school leadership team. By balancing honesty with empathy and respect, I can foster a culture of trust, collaboration, and mutual understanding within my department. This approach will also enable me to manage difficult conversations more effectively while preserving positive professional relationships. Overall, the knowledge gained from these classes has reinforced that effective leadership depends not only on what is communicated but also on how it is communicated. By consistently applying assertive communication, using "I" messages, and demonstrating positive non-verbal communication, I will be better equipped to lead my department, resolve conflicts constructively, and create a supportive environment that promotes teamwork, accountability, and continuous professional growth.

Q 5) Independent Research: AIU Live Classes are a starting point for further learning beyond the class. Search similar content either online or in the AIU online library and review it then share the name or link here. If its from AIU Library copy the Source or ISSN, [show me how?](#) (can be a video, academic publication, web site. lecture or book) (minimum 10 characters)

A 5) Assertive Communication: Tools for Leaders and Bosses by DJ Smart