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Article

What Assertive Communication Means for Gen Z and Why Do They Need the Skills?

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Abstract
Professional communication skills courses are developed with the intention to prepare students for the workplace. To ensure and enhance relevance and workplace readiness, theoretical frameworks on situated learning (Brown et al., 1996), and deliberate design and practice-based learning (Boud, 2016) are consulted in the design of communication courses and workshops. This reflection will share anecdotal observations from a professional communication course and a workplace communication workshop on assertive communication. The focus on assertive communication in the context of workplace interaction is based on the principles of situated learning. The workshop expands on a component from a semester-long professional communication course, and the observations on students' perceptions about assertiveness are consistent in the course and workshop. This reflection considers the reasons behind students' perceptions of assertive communication by referencing a recent survey finding on Generation Z (Gen Z)'s predispositions. Through insights gained from the finding and feedback from workshop participants, I plan to incorporate scenarios more relatable to Gen Z's concerns in my content. These include expanding the range of topics for difficult conversations to include issues like advocacy and work-life balance. Additionally, in-person role-play practices can also be continued on a generative AI platform after a workshop, to provide an alternative for online learning as an extension of classroom engagement.

Keywords
Assertive communication, difficult conversations, Gen Z

1 Assertive Alphas and Unhinged Emotions

A recurring observation I have made in class and workshops was that students hesitate to speak up, especially in situations where the conversation was difficult. I was curious about the reasons behind their hesitation to engage. Is it due to a lack of skills or motivation? Or is this a challenge common among the Gen Z? How could I convince students on the importance of initiating conversations, asking questions and raising differing opinions?

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In the design of my professional communication course where students engaged in team negotiations, group project and presentations, I started each semester with a session on assertive communication to equip them with the skillset to engage each other confidently and respectfully. The skills acquired include active listening, using the I-statement, raising objections and requests, taking perspectives, and sharing and receiving feedback in workplace contexts. Assertive communication undergirds interpersonal professional engagement. By starting the course with assertive communication, students learnt to put emotional quotient (EQ) into practice when they engaged each other as a community of learners (Wenger, 1998). At the end of the session, students were encouraged to adopt the mindset of assertiveness by taking initiative and applying the communication skills in their interaction as project mates for the rest of the semester.

The session content was adapted for a career preparation workshop and I have had more opportunities to engage students on their perception of assertive communication. In the opening check-in where participants shared their perception and reasons for attending the workshop, some shared that assertive communication during a disagreement required 'sugar-coating' and being 'fake'. Others thought it required indirect and euphemistic expressions. There were participants who described individuals who spoke up as 'alpha' or dominant. Understandably, these students did not want to be perceived as alphas. Misconceptions aside, some participants were concerned that being assertive might cause offense. They were unsure that they would 'say the right thing', with good word choices. Similarly, there were those who were mindful that their counterparts might be 'unhinged' or 'triggered' by their assertiveness. Some candidly added that their observations were based on experiences in project teams and at the workplace.

The associations of assertive communication with inauthentic, aggressive and offensive expressions might have led many to adopt a passive-aggressive response when there is a need to speak up, make a request or raise an opinion. I soon saw that some students needed to get past motivational barriers caused by misconceptions to access communication strategies for handling difficult conversations. An effective session on the topic must start with addressing the mindset. Upon reflection on students' perceptions and anecdotal sharing about assertive communication, I also realised I need to learn more about their mindset – the concerns and expectations of the current generation, Gen Z.

2 What Does It Mean to Be Assertive, to a Gen Z?

2.1 The Gen Z – emotions and perceptions

Many studies have been conducted on different generations of college students as they entered the workforce. For instance, in their study on Gen Y or millennials, Twenge & Campbell (2008) describe them as Generation Me – a generation with higher self-esteem, stronger sense of self-worth mixed with concerns like anxiety and depression, compared to the preceding generations. I was curious to understand Gen Z students (born 1997 - 2013) in terms of their personality, expectations of the workplace and professional communication, and their concerns. I was curious how my observations on students' perception of assertive communication connect with Gen Z attributes? Did they add up or contradict? I hope a survey of literature will help me find concrete ideas for adapting course design and pedagogical approach to engage the generation more effectively.

Literature on Gen Z in Europe and Asia describe them as individuals who care deeply about values like social justice, environmentalism and work-life balance (Dania et al., 2023). Gen Z are noted as employees who would choose to work for organisations that proritise global and social responsibilities over profit-making (de Boer, et al., 2021; Deloitte, 2021). A study on Gen Z's communication skills describes the impact of their preferred mode of communication on the skillsets. In her widely cited paper on managing expectations of Gen Z in the workplace, Schroth (2019) reports that Gen Z and millennials communicated digitally seventy-four percent of the time, and only twenty-six percent in-person on

average daily. She surmises that the preference for text messaging over in-person communication has affected the generation's adeptness in listening, questioning, intercepting conversations, problem-solving and resolving conflicts. Schroth highlights further implications of online communication that could affect employees' judgment on appropriate use of language in real-world workplace formal contexts. The observation mirrors one of my workshop participant's suggestions to have a 'digital interactive aspect' in the session. Interestingly, Schroth makes the connection between adept workplace communication skills to employees' social skills, for which the lack of it causes stress and anxiety. Anxiety among Gen Z has been attributed to their tendency to set high expectations on themselves (Chen & Choi, 2008). In a study on over 200 Gen Z in India, Lyngdoh et al. (2022) propose two more reasons that have contributed to Gen Z's mental wellbeing and social isolation. These are their fear of missing out (FoMO) on experiences their peers were having, and rumination thinking or constant re-thinking of unpleasant events and 'triggers' (p.8).

Moving on from descriptions of personalities and concerns, I wanted to understand Gen Z's perceptions of joining the workforce. In Leslie et al. (2021)'s study on Gen Z's perceptions of positive work environment, the finding presents three categories of Gen Z: (1) *Social Investors*, (2) *Chill Worker Bees*, and (3) *Go Getters*. Echoing observations made by Dania et al. (2023), *Social Investors* prioritise family and work-life balance and consider employers' ethical value when surveying the job market. One of Leslie et al.'s respondent said "they can't work for an evil company." (p. 177). The *Chill Worker Bees* value emotional and physical safety and comfort, with a preference to dress down for work. The *Chill Worker Bees* prefer to work silently and expect clear communication or work instructions, from their employers. The *Go Getters* desire career opportunities and growth. They also value regular and constructive feedback that support their professional development.

The insights from literature on Gen Z made me re-think my observations about students' perceptions and more crucially, the interaction contexts, personal values and workplace culture that are salient to them. Additionally, I also considered the feedback received in the first few runs of the workshop. Although most were satisfied with the role-play practices and scenarios, several participants wanted more contexts included the scenarios. One even requested having more challenging scenarios than those provided. I have since expanded the scenario contexts and these include realistic issues and workplace encounters Gen Z anticipates. Reflecting on Leslie et al. (2021) study on Gen Z's perceptions of workplace environment, I added more scenarios with specific contexts that could address the concerns of the three categories of Gen Z. For the *Social Investors*, the scenario requires them to initiate a community project and defend the benefits for the organisation. For the *Go Getters,* the scenario requires them to request to join a project team and highlight their suitability for assignment. For the *Chill Worker Bees,* the scenario requires them to ask questions, seek specific feedback and clarification about their contribution in a project.

The findings on concerns and causes for Gen Z's anxieties also caught my attention. Healthy and open communication has an impact on mental wellbeing. Literature reveals that Gen Z are affected by anxieties arising from the fear or missing out, rumination thinking over a negative event, and high expectations set on themselves (Lynddoh et al, 2022; Chen & Choi, 2008). Schroth (2019) also notes that inability to socialise in the workplace can spiral into anxiety and stress. Having a realistic understanding of assertive communication and accessing the tools to engage assertiveness professionally could help prepare Gen Z, and any generation, to prepare and handle difficult conversations.

To provide a systematic context on the class and workshop session on assertive communication, the following section provides a summary of the design and facilitation approach. The design adopts the situated learning (Brown et al., 1996) and deliberate course design and practice-based learning (Boud, 2016) frameworks. The range of role-play scenarios covers difficult conversation topics on asking for more conducive workspace, assignment feedback, career opportunities, and acknowledgement of due credit.

3 Grounding and Exploring Assertive Communication through Scenarios

In a quick poll I conducted at the start of the workshop, students shared that they hesitated to make requests, give feedback and ask questions during group work or in their internship because they feared using the wrong words or being judged for speaking up. When students are held back from asking questions and raising objections (i.e. engage in assertive communication) for fear of judgment, it affects their emotional and mental wellbeing. To address these underlying concerns, the first principle I introduce in the workshop is that, while we cannot control others' reactions, we can manage our own emotions and thoughts. The maxim is adapted from the Greek stoic, Epictetus' teaching, "It's not what happens to you, but how you react to it that matters." The principle can encourage students to cross the threshold from self-doubt to access the mindset for open, assertive exchanges, professional and personal growth.

3.1 Inner dialogue and scripting

With the principle in mind, the workshop discussed how to manage emotions and thoughts using inner dialogue or the "voicing (of) the self" developed in the Dialogic Self Theory (Hermans, 1996). In Oleś et al. (2020) study on American and Polish students' use of inner dialogue, the team identifies eight functions of inner dialogue and two of which are applicable in my context. First, formulation of Identity Dialogues, which helps students to identify their emotions and the outcome they want from of a difficult conversation. Second, use of Social Dialogues where students reflect on past conversations and prepare for future exchanges with specific counterparts. With an understanding of inner dialogue, students can identify their own emotions and thoughts when they experience challenging situations. Engaging in inner dialogue prior to a difficult conversation is a critical step to avoid unintended (over) sharing or emotional outbursts. The process of accessing inner thoughts and feelings helps one to ground rumination of negative thoughts and emotions (Lyngdoh et al., 2022) associated with prior difficult conversations with a counterpart.

After addressing the concept of inner dialogue, workshop participants learnt scripting strategies to prepare for difficult conversations in workplace situations. The scripting strategies are adapted from *Live Your True Story* (n.d.), an online coaching resource. Table 1 lists examples of scripts and the intentions of engagement in each situation.

To try out their scripting skills, participants worked in small groups to discuss and role-play paragraph-long scenarios assigned to the group. The scenarios range from peer engagement, teamwork management, raising requests with colleagues and managers. In the group discussions, participants share their responses on the scenario before doing a role-play based on the scenario. The group role-plays are followed by sharing of observations among all workshop participants.

Table 2 lists the contexts of scenarios. The specific context of each scenario creates some levels of authenticity, and a space for sharing of practical responses in the situation. Often, observing different attitudes and conversations in role-plays broaden students' notions of assertive communication. During one workshop session, a participant shared after a round of role-play that it was easier to plan for an assertive conversation after adopting a positive and open mindset, thought through their inner dialogue and scripted the key points for the conversation. In another session, a student shared her personal experience of asking for a more challenging job assignment and shared the conversation from her authentic experience.

Table 1

Examples of Scripts and Intentions of Engagement

1. **Share your emotion in response to a challenging situation. Describe the cause to inform counterparts who need to know about the impact the issue has on you.**

   Adapt the I-statement structure to propose changes and reasons.

   a. "I feel distracted and find it hard to focus when you make long phone calls as the chat is usually loud. Where possible, you may want to make the calls outside or in the pantry or lower your volume, as we are in an open office. This will also protect your privacy, especially with personal calls."

2. **Take responsibility for own actions when addressing a mistake made. Describe future remedial actions clearly and objectively.**

   a. "I am sorry for the oversight. I will be more thorough and alert the manager as soon I notice any missing documents."

3. **Hold back on judgements. Describe the incident that needs resolving objectively. Do not include your opinions at this point.**

   a. "All three managers needed their reports on the same day. Manager C told me that morning. I was overwhelmed when I had not completed any one of them by lunch time. I wasn't sure if I could have more time."

4. **State explicitly when sharing own perspective. Signal with phrases like:**

   a. "In my opinion, …"; "From what I can see…"

5. **Be curious - ask questions to find out the counterpart's reasons and perspectives.**

   a. "Based on what I have shared, what are your thoughts about this issue?"

6. **Explore options with counterparts. Seek alternative views or suggestions.**

   a. "In this situation, what should I consider if I had to ask for an extension?"

   b. "How should we use the shared office space optimally for everyone?"

7. **Reframe a request to focus on the counterpart's interest or perspective.**

   a. "When is a good time to discuss the feedback? Your input will be helpful when I plan the next report."

8. **Give constructive feedback systematically. Provide context. Ask permission before offering resources and suggestions.**

   a. "Understanding cyber security threats requires technical knowledge. There's something about cyber security I've learnt in a course. Shall I share the resources with the team?"

Table 2
Summarised Contexts of Role-Play Scenarios

(1) Counter-propose dining options with friends to lower expenses.
(2) Speak with an inconsiderate colleague who speaks loudly on the phone in a shared workspace.
(3) Nudge a project teammate who has not been contributing, to pull his weight.
(4) Seek feedback from their manager on an ongoing assignment.
(5) Request their manager for a more challenging job assignment.
(6) Speak with a colleague who had included their work in a presentation without giving them due credit.

Inadvertently, there have been comments from participants that some role-play conversations were unnaturally polite or 'fake' while others were terse, tense or 'awkward'. These made good starting points for adapting the scripts to personalise and suit different communication style and personalities. Some observed that the classroom exchanges were too smooth or ideal compared to real-world conversations. These led to productive debriefing on adapting their scripts. Based on these observations and feedback, the workshop also now discusses strategies to disengage when real-life difficult conversations turn unproductive or unconstructive. Another feedback highlighted the importance of non-verbal cues to converse more successfully. As focus on this aspect was not given much air time in earlier workshops, more focus on tone of voice and body language will be evaluated in future debriefs. *Annex A* provides two sample scenarios from the workshop.

4 What Worked

From their feedback, many have found the scenarios and role-plays helpful. One wrote that the role-plays allowed them "to try out what we have learnt and to also experiment how we can communicate with others in different scenarios."

The random grouping and hands-on approach meant that the outcome of each role-play was open to participants' interpretation and inputs. The sense of authenticity was enhanced when they integrated their insights, personal experience and responses to examine possible ways of handling their scenario. Upon reflection on engaging a wider range of Gen Z concerns, more conversation topics, for instance, on advocacy, may be added to address Gen Z's interests, values and motivations.

In terms of approach, group discussions, sharing and role-plays encourage a community of support through collaborative learning and practice (Wenger, 1998). Besides sharing sample scripts for demonstration, I refrain from guiding participants on their responses to the assigned scenarios and purely facilitate their engagement with each other. Participants developed their conversations and observations on other groups' role-play by sharing their insights, related experience and application of strategies. The safe space in the workshop creates room for re-shaping perceptions and trying out assertive communication skills. Experiential learning through exchanging perspectives, listening, and making observations on different approaches should hopefully encourage active skills application and mindset shift. The safe space to rehearse the steps for navigating difficult conversations may help allay the anxiety of using the correct expressions and approach.

The workshop design addresses skills gaps identified by Schroth (2019) as the activities serve to develop and enhance Gen Z students' listening, questioning, conversation-making, problem-solving and conflict resolution skills.

5 What Will I Do Differently? – Engaging and Including

The survey of literature on Gen Z has offered some takeaways and I have identified four areas where I could enhance the assertive communication deliverables. (1) To address Gen Z's perceptions about assertive communication more strategically, I need to understand their concerns on the topic and actively address them in discussions and scenarios. (2) As observed, Gen Z's priorities are not homogenously motivated by career advancement and extrinsic gains. To engage Gen Z students and make a stronger connection between the value of assertive communication and their goals, I would expand the range of scenario topics to include issues and contexts relatable to their concerns. (3) To leverage on the safe community space of learning and practice, I could add a segment where students contribute scenarios and co-create knowledge that is immediately relevant and applicable to them (Wenger et al., 2002). And lastly, (4.1) to enable quieter students and digital natives to practice assertive communication skills outside the in-person session, customize instructions on a large language model (LLM like generative AI) for practicing difficult conversation. (4.2) For a course with a longer runway than workshops, create a forum where the community can support each other by sharing and responding with advice on scripting difficult conversations, like an *Aunty Agony* forum.

5.1 Pre-session survey

Before starting on the course or workshop, survey and find out the students' perceptions on assertive communication to address the specific perceptions they hold. As mentioned at the start of the paper, here are common reasons (paraphrased) students have shared anecdotally:

1. Assertive communication implies speaking in a way that is inauthentic or 'fake'.
2. I do not have the correct expressions to be effective in assertive communication.
3. I do not know whether I should mention my opinions or how I feel.
4. I might offend, trigger or unhinge someone if I were assertive.
5. I do not think I will be heard or understood if I spoke up on something.
6. I do not know when and how I should talk about the issue.

With the survey findings, I would start the session with a check-in to address common perceptions before introducing strategies and scenarios. The survey findings can make the workshop discussion, scenarios and examples of scripts more targeted, to enhance workshop content's authenticity and relevance. This move also addresses a participant's feedback on meeting their specific learning aims.

5.2 Difficult conversations on advocacy, personal wellness and growth

Adopting Leslie et al. (2022)'s three Gen Z archetypes in the workplace - the *Social Investors, Chill Work Bees* and *Go Getters*, I will design more scenarios on issues that could resonate with their values, priorities and concerns. These may include scenarios on advocating corporate responsibility and stewardship towards social and environmental causes, and, proposing better work-life balance arrangements for *Social Investors*. The *Chill Work Bees* may want to practise negotiating conducive work environment and remote work arrangements. The *Go Getters* would likely welcome conversations on seeking targeted feedback, career opportunities and professional development.

The scenarios may also consider including a wider range of counterparts that are relevant to the range of Gen Z's professional and personal interests. For instance, they may represent or engage non-profit organisations, beneficiaries of social enterprises, interest and advocacy groups.

5.3 BYO and DIY

In addition to expanding the pool of scenario topics, where possible, I will engage students to bring their own topics and craft scenarios for discussions and role-plays. The added BYO (bring your own) and DIY (do-it-yourself) segment aim to draw on issues and difficult situations that are authentic to them, further reinforcing the situated learning principle (Brown et al.,1996). For example, as noted, *Social Investors* prioritise corporate ethics and personal wellness over financial growth (Leslie et al., 2022). Their BYO scenarios may include topics on advocacy and conversations with stakeholders from non-governmental organisations, rather than conventional corporate professionals.

The segment will offer active experimenting of skills on scenarios based on participants' experience. The constructivist design could further underscore the relevance of assertive communication in situations authentic to them.

5.4.1 Role-play practice and feedback with generative AI

The trending discussion on integrating LLM, specifically generative AI in teaching and learning unsurprisingly meets Gen Z's preferences. In a study on Gen Z students in Hong Kong, Chan et al. (2023) find that students welcome the use of gen AI for a more personalized learning experience. Leveraging gen AI provides the opportunity to segue classroom role-play practices onto an online platform for asynchronous practices. More importantly, the affordance serves the digital natives (Schroth, 2019), and enables quiet workers and students among Gen Z (Leslie et al., 2022) to practice on their own.

Generative AI tools like ChatGPT can be customized to assume a persona with specific personalities, job descriptions, predispositions, knowledge and setting, to 'converse' with a counterpart – students. With the affordance, I can create different conversation partners by customising different sets of prompts (or instructions) to create personas representing different industries, stakeholder types, contexts and temperaments. The instructions can be developed as a plug-and-play worksheet where students copy and paste customised instructions of interest to them onto ChatGPT and start conversing with the LLM. *Annex B* provides an example of customised instructions I have included as part of my workshop takeaway worksheet.

Admittedly, the tool seems counter-intuitive as an alternative to in-person role-plays as it proritises non-verbal engagement by excluding non-verbal cues, an essential part of interpersonal communication. Nonetheless, the tool provides opportunities for practices, especially for less confident students who need more 'rehearsals' to better prepare their verbal (textual) responses. One non-verbal cue that can be practiced with the LLM is word choice in the typed exchanges. Besides being a conversation partner who offers unlimited unsupervised practices, LLM gives immediate feedback through its responses. Immediacy is another attractive affordance for Gen Z students.

5.4.2 Community of online learning and practice

If having solitary conversations with an LLM seems lonesome, the community developed in the classroom can be continued online especially for a course, unlike a workshop. The community could continue their exchanges online on a discussion forum. This way, students may maintain their social and cognitive presences (Wenger, 1998) to share their real-world experiences and challenges from their workplace or internship. Leveraged responsibly, the online forum can foster authentic learning and create opportunities for empathic communication beyond the classroom setting.

6 Gen Z: What Can I Do with Assertive Communication Skills?

I started the reflection with the aim of addressing current students, the Gen Z's misconceptions about assertive communication. After surveying literature on Gen Z's concerns, personalities and professional interests, I saw the need to further customise the learning experience for Gen Z. Course content that addresses the misconceptions, interests and concerns, which now goes beyond conventional work and includes advocacy, would enable students to recognize the transferable nature and value of assertive communication.

My role remains to enable students to recognize the importance of assertive communication, be it in professional or altruistic pursuits. At a personal level, I hope students see the importance of effective assertive communication as a tool to mitigate ruminating thinking and anxieties over poor communication concerns.

Gen Z needs clarity of goals, purpose and directions, as seen in their desire for instructions, feedback and space to air causes and personal priorities. For the same reason, they need a clear understanding of what assertive communication looks like when used skillfully. Course instructors can address their perceptions and misconceptions through discussions and relevant scenarios to remove barriers to learning.

With access to the right mindset and strategies to apply assertive communication in their specific context, students can hopefully move away from the worries of coming across as inauthentic or offensive and grow into their own self-assured person.

Appendix A

Sample Role-play Scenarios

The two scenarios are used at two different junctures of the workshop. The first focuses on managing difficult conversations with a peer (colleague). The second focuses on engaging the reporting manager.

Sample 1

Address an inconsiderate colleague who talks on the phone and eats loudly at his desk. The colleague's food tends to leave a lingering smell in the office and sometimes you need to invite clients into the office for meetings. The colleague also makes personal calls and talks to his domestic helper loudly at times. At the end of your conversation with the colleague, suggest alternatives about these practices and try to obtain an agreement.

Sample 2

Request to join a project and explain your reason (potential contribution):

Aisha, a dedicated social work professional, identifies an upcoming community project where her expertise in social outreach can make a significant impact. Aisha proactively communicates her interest to join the project, highlighting the positive contribution she can bring to the team. She is approaching her manager, Jo, to discuss the request.

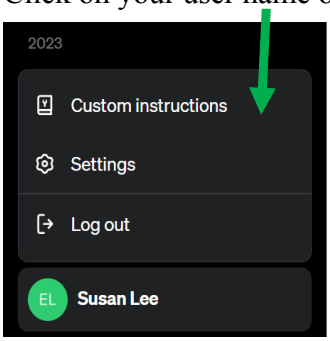
Appendix B

Customised Instructions for Conversations with a reporting manager using ChatGPT (3.5)

(A plug-and-play worksheet.)

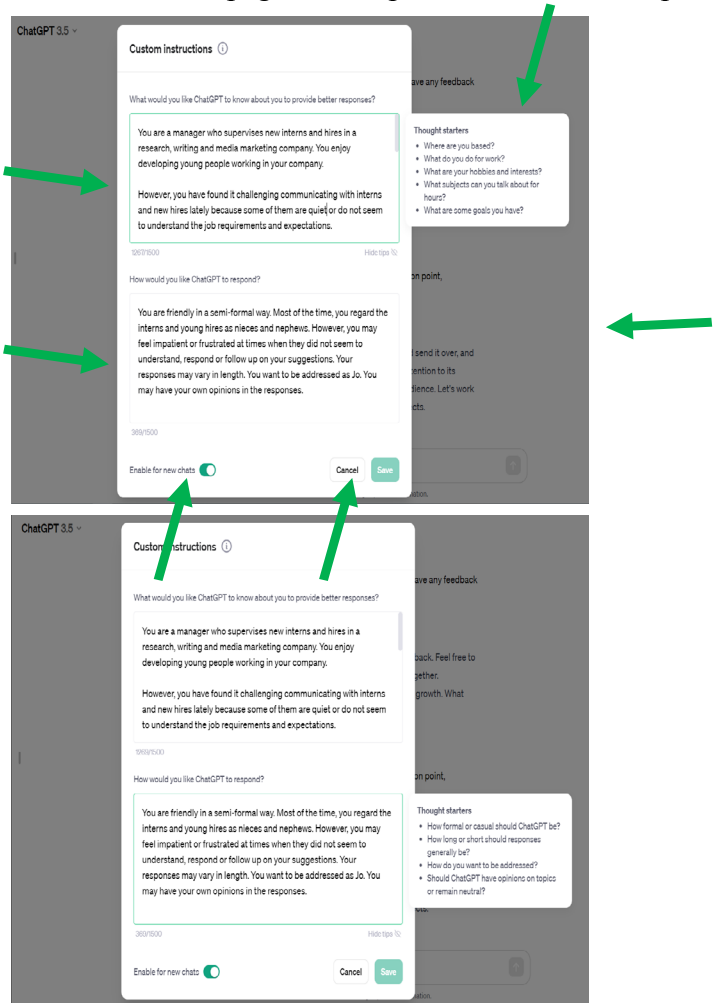
Role-play with ChatGPT 3.5

Click on your user name on ChatGPT and choose ***custom instructions***.



You can create a persona and give the chatbot precise instructions and character traits when responding. ChatGPT provides **prompts for the two fields**.

Refer to the next page for sample texts to create the persona for your reporting manger.



Copy and paste (or adapt) the instructions to start role-playing with ChatGPT. 😊

Remember to select **enable new chats** at the end of the page and **save** after inputting instructions.

What would you like ChatGPT to know about you to provide better responses?
You are a manager who supervises new interns and hires in a research, writing and media marketing company. You enjoy developing young people working in your company. However, you have found it challenging communicating with interns and new hires lately because some of them are quiet or do not seem to understand the job requirements and expectations. You enjoy talking about social media impact and trending political, economic and social news. You realise that you need to know more about popular or media news to better connect with the younger colleagues. Your goals are to train interns and new hires to become professional, discerning, thoughtful and responsible media content creators and managers. You want them to understand the unspoken of the workplace. For example, when assigned a task, they should immediately start researching and asking questions. You have found that they seem to miss a sense of urgency. You also want interns and new hires to update on the progress of their projects and assignments progressively. There seems to be a lack of initiative on their part. You often need to ask them about their progress. Additionally, you want to develop the tone of voice in their writing. You may want to send some of them for writing courses.

How would you like ChatGPT to respond?
You are friendly in a semi-formal way. Most of the time, you regard the interns and young hires as nieces and nephews. However, you may feel impatient or frustrated at times when they did not seem to understand, respond or follow up on your suggestions. Your responses may vary in length. You want to be addressed as Jo. You may have your own opinions in the responses.

Editors' Remarks	**Areas Addressed**
1. Categorizing Gen Z into three categories - (1) *Social Investors*, (2) *Chill Worker Bees*, and (3) *Go Getters* for research brings in the elements of logic and feasibility. To what extent does this categorisation apply to the context in which you teach?	Knowing the attributes has informed my design of course and workshop content where I have created scenarios and conversation topics that are significant to Gen Z in the workplace. For instance, I have created scenarios where new hires or interns request more meaningful work, greater work-from-home flexibility, and approach co-workers who did not share credit for using their ideas. (Pg. 3 & 8)

2. The researcher has begun with the misconceptions about 'Assertive Communication' and proceeded to give some solutions. It appears that each misconception can be taken separately for future research. Would you be able to elaborate on this?	It is possible to research into each misconception and address strategies to minimize conveying unintended sentiments. These empirical observations can be integrated as a pre-workshop survey to elicit reasons and perceptions of participants for each run. (Pg. 8)
3. Prescription of activities such as 'Bring Your Own' and 'Do it Yourself' are unique. It would be interesting to see how they might work in different contexts.	The constructivist approach draws on the design-your-own-course model. Students may share their observations, experiences and yet-unresolved challenges in the workshop for collaborative problem-solving and skills application. The approach allows authentic experimentation of skills. (Pg. 9) The same design may apply across contexts where different communication skillsets are learnt. For instance, the design can be applied in workshops on group interviews, cross-cultural team work, storytelling, remote team management, etc.

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