



Dealing with Unreasonable Requests

Asserting Yourself Effectively

You're presenting the draft marketing plan for a new product at your team meeting. As you talk, you notice the encouraging gestures of your colleagues and supervisor. But one colleague withholds approval, listening with a steely stare.

After you finish, he proceeds to deliver a withering critique of your ideas and approach – each point of which, you feel, is patently wrong. As he talks, you feel the blood rise to your face and your heart pound. Now all eyes are on you. What will you say?

Or another scenario: for a year, you work hard toward meeting your professional goals. Things are going well, you're meeting your targets, and team morale is high. Then the hammer drops: at your one-on-one annual review, your boss expresses disappointment in you. Despite all indications to the contrary, you're suddenly in the hot seat – and your boss is telling you so to your face.

What we've seen here are two cases of unfair criticism – one from a colleague, and one from a boss. What do you do now? How you react to it can have a tremendous impact on your career. Emotionally charged, your instincts may not be the best guide to follow.