There are three parts of each assertive intervention with an optional fourth

1. **Empathy/Validation**: Try to say something that shows your understanding of the other person's feelings. This shows them that you're not trying to pick a fight, and it takes the wind out of their sails. For example, "I know that you get anxious when you're all ready to go and I'm not ready yet."

2. **Statement of problem**: This piece describes your difficulty/dissatisfaction, tells why you need something to change. For example: "…but when you do that, I get all flustered and take even more time."

3. **Statement of what you want**: This is a specific request for a specific change in the other person's behavior. For example, "From now on, let's be sure we know what time we want to leave, and if you're ready before I am, will you please just go to another room and read the paper or watch TV?"

4. **Consequences**: This states either in positive or negative terms what will happen if the matter is not satisfactorily resolved. For example, "I know I’ll be a lot happier" or "By the time we get in the car, we’re mad at each other and not much in the mood to have a good time."

---

†Adapted from: Vivian Barnette, Ph.D., Assertiveness Training Institute of America
http://www.bakercommunications.info/articles/assertive_communication.html