

Advocating for Yourself in the Workplace

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As a result of attending this workshop you will be able to...

- Identify 2 things you need in the workplace to thrive
- Name one strategy for advocating for yourself or others in the workplace

What are you hoping to leave today's presentation with?

What is self-advocacy?



Consider this questions for yourself.

Share with someone next you.

Then we would like 2 people to share aloud to the whole group.

- Self-advocacy means taking the initiative to communicate your needs and wants to others in order to support your overall well-being.
- Self-advocacy is standing up for yourself and demanding your worth. It's having the belief that you and your opinions matter. To self-advocate means to speak up and promote your best interests. Advocating for yourself is becoming your biggest ally.
- Self-advocacy at work is about gaining access to opportunities and resources that serve you and the future you want, and surfacing your contributions (especially those that might otherwise fly under the radar) to your team and your company. Put another way, it's mindful and deliberate participation in your own future.

Disclaimer:

Remember that harassment, bullying, and retaliation at work, whether individual or systemic, are not personal challenges to overcome – they're abusive – and sometimes illegal – behaviors. If you're experiencing this kind of mistreatment, document as much of it as you can, and seek help.

If you feel comfortable going to your HR, People, or Employee Relations team, that can be a good place to start, or visit [EEOC.gov](https://www.eeoc.gov) (US) [Fairwork.gov](https://www.fairwork.gov) (AUS), or the ILO (global) to learn more and access resources.

Factors for Self-Advocacy



**Identify
Needs**

Barriers

**Tools and
Strategies**

Imagine your dream work environment. What are some of the characteristics?

Share in a small group.

What are my needs in a workplace?

- Values Match
- Supportive Environment
- Supervisor Invested in your Development
- Inclusion
- Shared Goals
- Psychological Safety
- Etc.

Name a word that comes up for
you when you think about
advocating for a workplace need.

Share aloud with the room.

Barriers for self-advocacy in the workplace

- Power Dynamics
- Confidence v. Arrogance
- Systemic –isms
- Conflict Avoidance

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Tools for Self-Advocacy

- Hype- Journal
- Coalitions and Allies
- Unions
- Goal Setting
- Clear Expectations
- Documentation
- Mentorship
- Therapy/Mental Health Resource

Power Dynamic

- You are in an all-staff meeting and your supervisor – Patrick- shares your idea as his own. Patrick's supervisor – Sasha – is at the meeting and praises him for such a great idea.
- What feelings come up for you in this situation?
- How does it relate to your workplace needs?
- What do you do?

Confidence

You are working with a team on a group project for your internship this summer. You tell your team about this great research paper you wrote this past spring and how it relates to your project. Your fellow interns tell you to “stop bragging” and “no one likes a know it all” as they continue to plan without considering your idea.

- What feelings come up for you in this situation?
- How does it relate to your workplace needs?
- What do you do?

Systemic -isms

Your supervisor shared in a staff meeting that a new position is opening that will take on some new leadership in the office. During your next 1:1 with them, you share your interest. Their response, “Oh, I didn’t think you’d be interested.” When you share you are they say, “I don’t think you have the skills to lead a team.” You later overheard them talking to your colleague about what a “great fit” they would be for the job even though you know your colleague hasn’t been meeting performance standards. This colleague has multiple privileged identities that you do not hold.

- What feelings come up for you in this situation?
- How does it relate to your workplace needs?
- What do you do?

Conflict Avoidance

You share with your supervisor that you want to leave 30 minutes early on Monday to attend your brother's soccer game. They tell you no because they "don't want to set a precedence that allows others to leave early for similar reasons." But they say, "I am on vacation that Monday so if you did leave early, I'd never know" and winks. As you pack up to leave early on Monday, a colleague notices and asks if you are "sneaking out early since the boss is away?"

- What feelings come up for you in this situation?
- How does it relate to your workplace needs?
- What do you do?