



Effective Self-Advocacy

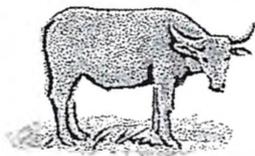


The manner in which you approach someone is **tantamount** to becoming an **effective self-advocate**. There are three main approaches we can take when we need help.

1. **Passive** – Not an active participant; Being acted upon.
2. **Aggressive** – Exhibiting aggression or hostility.
3. **Assertive** – Showing a confident manner of self-expression.



A *Passive* person will not ask for what they need. This type of person may be too shy or embarrassed to ask for help when they need it. The *passive* person will remain quiet, complain in private or withdraw from an activity, program or employment situation without trying to correct the problem. A *passive* person will probably not find success because they will not seek out the help or request an accommodation that they need in order to be successful.



An *Aggressive* person will demand what they need. This type of person is 'pushy' and **overbearing**. An *aggressive* person tends to be unreasonable, stubborn and annoying. It is important to distinguish between *an aggressive person* and an angry or hostile person. An angry or hostile person may yell or behave in an angry and hostile way; for example, slamming doors, pointing fingers, banging

desks, pushing chairs, etc. Whereas, an *aggressive person* is someone who
“wants-what-they-want-when-they-want-it”, sometimes regardless of the
situation. They are difficult to negotiate with and usually will not easily
compromise.



An *Assertive* person will confidently ask for what they need. This type of person is an effective self-advocate. They are calm, pleasant, courteous, patient, polite, and thoughtful of what they say. They can express themselves clearly and are more easily understood. An *assertive person* will listen to others and is willing to negotiate and compromise. An *assertive person* will ask a question, seek out information and move from a position of knowledge, or a position of strength, in order to get what they need or want.

An effective self-advocate is not passive. And, an effective self-advocate is not aggressive. This does not mean that an effective self-advocate does not get angry or complain in private. What it does mean is that they control their anger so that they can *communicate* their needs and wants more effectively and more clearly to others. Effective communication increases their chances of being listened to and of getting what they need or want, rather than ‘suffer in silence’.



To become effective self-advocates, you must learn how to distinguish between being passive, assertive and aggressive.



Think About It!



What is a “*Position of Knowledge*”?

Your Turn!

Read the following scenarios below.

*Indicate whether the speakers are
Assertive, Aggressive or Passive.*

1. Jose got a poor final grade in his English course. He went to discuss it with his teacher, but he got nervous and just left the room. _____
2. On, Monday, Akane called in to request a course change. The person told her to call back on Thursday. Sandy demanded that the course be changed today because she wanted to go to the beach on Thursday.

3. Julie complains that she can't find a job. She buys the paper everyday, but leaves it on the table. Her mother takes it to work before Julie can read it. _____
4. Bryann needs some help in math. He made an appointment with the math teacher to discuss his tutoring needs. He showed up on time and explained the nature of his problem. _____
5. Cory want to buy some new clothes. He borrowed money from some of his friends to catch a sale. When his friend asked for the money back,

Cory started yelling that he **just** wasn't making enough money to pay him back today and that he would have to wait until his next **pay**.

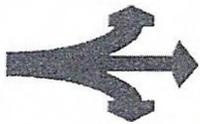
6. Desmond wanted to ask Teisha for a date. When he approached her, he noticed she was on the cell phone, so he **just** walked away. _____
7. Kelly thought that her friend Jean was telling stories about her. When she saw Jean on the bus reading, she walked over and demanded that she explain why she was spreading stories about her. _____
8. Micheal wanted to talk to her counselor, so she went to her office and scheduled an appointment. _____
9. Stuart called the Happy Day Camp regarding a summer **job**. Since she knows she gets nervous on the phone, she made a list of key points that she wanted to discuss. _____
10. Jennifer needed a letter from his counselor. She called and left a message, asking for the letter the next day. When her counselor returned the call saying that she could not accommodate her, she hung up the phone. _____



So Many Choices - How Will I Know?



Have you ever had to write a paper on a topic that was so diverse you couldn't narrow it down to one thing? Sometimes choosing a career can be as difficult to narrow down as that paper. With so many choices, *How Will You Know What Choice Is Right For You?*



Well, there's no magic formula that will tell you exactly what direction to follow or what path to take. You should be aware that there is not **just** one answer for a career choice. There may be several career possibilities that you can be successful in.



Successful career people are **not** just born- *They Are Made*. You control the amount of success you experience in your career **LATER** based on the decisions you make **NOW**. Your career decisions should be based on real things that are important to you, now and tomorrow.

Remember: The key to successful decision-making lies in **Planning**.

Think About It

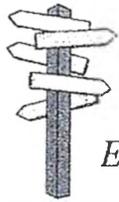


Important decisions **don't** have to be so hard!!

Planning makes the difference.

Have you thought about your plans for the future?

Your Decision



Your choice of a career should be based on several important factors. These factors include your *Interests*, *Strengths*, and *Experiences*. These factors, coupled with your *Knowledge Of The World Of Work*, help you to determine what decision is best for you. Your Needs and Values also play the important part of helping you decide **HOW** you will go about meeting your goals.

Review the following definitions before moving on.



Interests - things you like to do or enjoy doing.



Strength - things you are good at or that come easily to you.



Experience - knowledge that is gained from areas other than the work place, i.e., volunteering, working in a family business or helping at home, participation in school internships, Co-op programs, or community involvement.

raising a family, moving) or even just a change in our interests and goals. We can enter a job and discover other opportunities within the office or career that we would like to pursue.



Sometimes our career change is the result of evolution or promotion. We may enter a company in one capacity and promotion enables us to explore and acquire other skills.

You choose your second career the same way that you went about choosing your first career. In other words, you look at what you are currently doing or what you now have an interest in and create new Long- and Short-Term Goals that will help you to achieve your new goal.



Terminology

Look up the definitions of the following words, then place the correct word in the sentences below.

Career - _____

Strength- _____

Planning- _____

Interests- _____

Choice- _____

Constant- _____

Experience - _____

1. A _____ is your professional course of action you undertake throughout your lifetime.
2. Something that does not change or that is persistent and reoccurring is called a _____.
3. When you select something, you are making a _____.
4. The things or areas that you are good at are called your areas of _____.
5. When you map out a course of action that you follow in order to reach a certain goal you are _____ for your future.

6. Things that you like to do or your _____ must be taken into account when deciding a career goal.
7. _____ is when you know how to do something.

