SELF-ADVOCACY

HOW DO WE HELP OUR STUDENTS STICK UP FOR THEMSELVES?

SARAH GOLDAMMER

SOUTHERN ILLINOIS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CENTER - PART OF ICCB SERVICE CENTER NETWORK
SELF-ADVOCACY

- speaking up for oneself
- making your own decisions
- standing up for your rights
- requiring respect from others
- looking out for yourself while still respecting and valuing the role others may play in your life

http://strengthofus.org/pages/view/156/
SELF-ADVOCACY

- Need to know what you want if you presume to actually get it
- Adults are expected to speak up for themselves
- Feel empowered
- Open communication - People often will help if they know what is needed
- Be able to make good decisions
EXIT 137
NORTH UNDECIDED SOUTH
WHY MIGHT OUR STUDENTS CHOOSE NOT TO DISCLOSE?

- Hidden disability – decide “to be or not to be”
- People with disabilities are employed at less than half the rate of their non-disabled peers (Erickson, Lee, & von Schrader, 2011)
- Common concerns include lowered expectations, lack of respect, isolation from -workers, decrease in job responsibility, and being passed over for promotion (Dalgin & Bellini, 2008; Dalgin & Gilbride, 2003; Madaus, 2008)
WHY MIGHT OUR STUDENTS CHOOSE NOT TO DISCLOSE?

- Cornell study – nearly 75% of respondents indicated risk of being fired/not hired
- Concerns of limited opportunities for advancement (Schrader, Malzer, Erickson, Bruyere, 20)
- “I want to be normal.”
SELF-ADVOCACY/SELF DETERMINATION NEEDS

- Decision-making skills/accept consequences
- Knowledge of rights and responsibilities
- Knowledge of own accommodation needs
- Knowledge of general laws
- Properly request reasonable accommodations
KNOW SELF

- Learning style
- Strengths
- Challenges – any disabilities?

- Aptitude test
- Achievement test
- Test of memory
- Test of phonological processing
DECISION-MAKING SKILLS/ACCEPT CONSEQUENCES

Factors that influence decision making:
What has been modeled to you growing up?
Have you had good experiences in your past decision making opportunities?
Do you like making decisions (from the start some people like to “go for it” others don’t)
Were you allowed to make decisions in the past?
Do we feel we deserve positive outcomes?
FEELINGS OF INADEQUACY, DIRECTIONLESS. IT’S A CLASSIC CASE, YOU NEED GOALS!
DECISION-MAKING SKILLS/ACCEPT CONSEQUENCES

Strategies for Decision Making
1) Identify goal
2) Identify options
3) Choose from among options

David A. Welch
Decisions, Decisions, The Art of Effective Decision Making
KNOWLEDGE OF RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

What is reasonable to ask?
Don’t ask for what you don’t need
Do your part – work hard
Be willing to compromise
"All I ask for is an unfair advantage."
PERSON’S RESPONSIBILITY

Present request & documentation if requested
Follow protocol set by postsecondary or training environment and/or employer
Choose & agree to reasonable alternative as presented & appropriate
Use the approved tools & accommodations
Assist in making suggestions & providing information
Not using the disability as an excuse

Nancie Payne LDA - 2011
KNOWLEDGE OF OWN ACCOMMODATION NEEDS

Accommodations are tools to help accomplish a goal that do not change the integrity of the task.

Modifications are alterations to assignments that do change the overall task.
ADVICE FROM MY FAVORITE DISABILITY COORDINATORS

- The more they know about what their disability is and its impact the better
- Share what works
- Facilitate successful learning experiences so they can build on those
- Focus on strengths rather than weaknesses

Susan Cunningham, Disability Services Coordinator, Rend Lake College, Ina, Illinois
ADVICE FROM MY FAVORITE DISABILITY COORDINATORS

- Asking for accommodations is student’s responsibility – not the schools
- Encourage registering even if not planning to use services
- Tell students to get to know their teachers and ask for help

Alice Daniels, Project Advisor, Rock Valley College, Rockford, Illinois
## COMMON REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Common Reasonable Accommodations</th>
<th>Details</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consistent attendance</td>
<td>Flexible leave, making up time, later start time</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dealing with change</td>
<td>Open communication, regular meetings with supervisor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interacting with others</td>
<td>Mentor, team leader, participate in team activities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Time management</td>
<td>Electronic calendar, e-mail, daily/weekly goals, mentor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Organizing Information</td>
<td>Assistance in prioritizing tasks, written to-do list, divide tasks, personal data assistant</td>
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<td>------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Handling stress</td>
<td>Short breaks, positive reinforcement, support person</td>
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<tr>
<td>Concentration</td>
<td>Quiet location, space enclosures, headset/white noise</td>
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KNOWLEDGE OF GENERAL LAWS

Right to equal treatment regardless of:

- Race
- Color
- Religion
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation
- National origin
- Disability
Section 504 – Rehabilitation Act of 1973

- A CIVIL RIGHTS LAW

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)
  - Reauthorized in 1997 and again in 2004, Public Law 105-17 (Originally passed in 1975 as P.L. 94-142 – Education for All Handicapped Children Act (EHA)

- AN EDUCATION ACT

Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 amended in 2008 (ADA)
- A CIVIL RIGHTS LAW
PROPERLY REQUEST REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS

- Clearly know and be able to state what is needed
- Remember perspective – why should this person do what you’re asking?
- What is your voice, your body language saying?
- Stay calm
- Practice, practice, practice!
“You don’t always get what you ask for, but you never get what you don’t ask for... unless it’s contagious.”

- Franklyn Broude
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