

Soft Skills Training for the Workplace

Module 455:

Self-Advocacy & Disclosure

Steps to Self-Advocacy

Complete the table for yourself.

1. Awareness of strengths and challenges	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	
2. "Rack up" strengths and challenges	Strengths <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	Challenges <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
3. Nonjudgmental comparison with others and potential role models	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	
4. Present the label summarizing the condition	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	

Meaningful Disclosure

Case Study: Disclosing what autism means to Ted

27 year old Ted has been asking why co-workers make fun of him during breaks, sees an occupational therapist weekly, takes an 10 full minutes address an envelope legibly , and to explain his general clumsiness at work. You notice that over the last month Ted's questions have become more frequent.

Additionally, Ted no longer goes to the movies with you – his only friend – and has lost interest in train-spotting downtown, and generally seems listless.

Ted's supervisor indicates he no longer helps his coworker Deb in mathematics in exchange for her assistance in drafting memos. Somehow, Deb has the ability to help Ted organize his thoughts for writing these messages to clients in a way no one else can.

Use the four-step disclosure process to help Ted understand what having autism means to him. Emphasize his characteristics while honoring his strengths. Complete the table for Ted.

1. Awareness of strengths and challenges	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	
2. "Rack up" strengths and challenges	Strengths	Challenges
	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
3. Nonjudgmental comparison	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	
4. Present the label summarizing the condition	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	

Self-Advocacy

Case Study 1: Helping Dot Advocate for Herself

Having just been moved from barely tolerable distraction of a shared office space to a cubicle of her own, 18-year old Dot is very proud of her new “digs.” However she quickly realizes the productive work will be impossible for her due to her fluorescent light sensitivity.

Her supervisor, while impressed with her work, does not know that Dot has Asperger Syndrome; and with it a sensitivity to fluorescent lights.

Help Dot work through and develop a three-step advocacy plan.

Scan

Sensory, cognitive, and/or socio-emotional

Advocate

Explain her needs so that the other can understand and assist

Disclose

Give a partial or full reason why

Case Study 2: Help George plan his disclosure and self-advocacy

The best teller in the bank, George never uses a calculator and has cashed out to the penny for the past 15 months. He is also the first to help others having difficulties balancing their books, much to his coworkers’ gratitude – especially to Jane who is the bank’s star person to go to when there is a customer dispute.

However George has dozens of notes stuck chaotically all over teller window and workspace.

Conversations with his supervisor about an orderly workspace result in George indicating the necessity of these notes for remembering complicated bank procedures. Given his great efficiency and good nature, the branch supervisor leaves George to his work, albeit mystified.

A manager from corporate headquarters is coming next week. As a result, the supervisor has asked George to make an appointment with him to discuss the necessity of a clean, organized work space.

Until now, George has never felt a need to disclose having autism to anyone. Given the recent turn of events, George now realizes perhaps this time has come.

Help George understand his needs using the steps of self-advocacy. Then, help him work through and develop a three-step advocacy plan.

<p>1. Awareness of strengths and challenges</p>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	
<p>2. “Rack up” strengths and challenges</p>	<p>Strengths</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p>Challenges</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
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