

Youth Self-Determination (YSD)

Preparing for Work: Communication and Soft Skills

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Ground Rules



Cameras on when possible



Use chat or raise hand to talk (Zoom or actual hand)



Listen to better understand



Ask questions

Introductions in Chat

Your Name



City or Town-Where you Live



**Do you have a dream job? If so,
what is it?**



What We Will Do Today

- Talk about self-determination, soft and hard skills, teamwork, accepting feedback, asking for help, clarifying with questions
- Answer questions in chat
- Watch one or more videos
- Get practice activities to do before next time

Preparing for Work Topics

1. Communication and Soft Skills

2. Knowing Myself and what I Need

3. Support Network, Tools, and Resources

4. Getting a Job



SELF-DETERMINATION

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graph TD; A[SELF-DETERMINATION] --> B[SELF-ADVOCACY]; B --> C[Communication]; B --> D[Soft Skills];
```

SELF-ADVOCACY

Communication



Soft Skills



SELF-DETERMINATION



Self-Determination Means...



Knowing what **I** need to be
in control of **ME** and the
decisions **I** make!

Self-Determination



Is very important
for more
independence
for work!

SELF-DETERMINATION



SELF-ADVOCACY



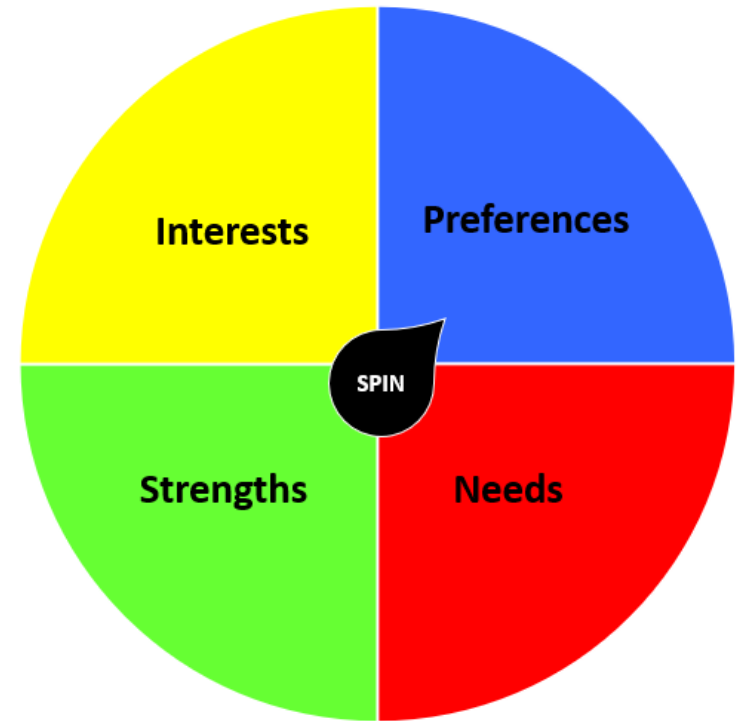
Self-Advocacy



- Speaking up for yourself and your rights, needs, hopes, and dreams
- Communicating what you need
 - "I am not sure I understand, can you say that slower?"

Self-Advocacy at Work Means Knowing...

- How to name your strengths, preferences, interests, needs (SPIN)
- What you need to do your job (e.g., headphones, task lists, low lighting, etc.)
- When you need more information (clarifying) and asking for it
- Who to get help from



SELF-DETERMINATION



SELF-ADVOCACY



Communication

Communicating at Work

- Disclosure
- Small talk
- Feedback-getting and accepting feedback and help
- Co-workers
- Supervisor or boss
- Teamwork



Question

Letting other people know about something that is private or personal to you is called:

- A. Taking a break
- B. Disclosure



Disclosure



- Letting other people know about something that is private or personal to you
- YOU decide to share information about our disability-not required
- To get an accommodation



We will discuss disclosure more related to employment!

Accommodations

- Something that supports you in your job.
- Know and communicate what supports you need
- You must disclose (share information about) your disability to receive accommodations at work

checklist



We will discuss accommodations more next time!

Small Talk

- Polite or friendly conversation
- Topics are neutral and not risky topics (like politics, religion, money, or other comments about people)
- Used with people you don't know well
- Low-pressure, fact or interest-related with no social or emotional demands
- Ask questions and make comments about a topic
- Examples:
 - Weather, current activities happening in your community: festivals, fairs, sports, etc.)
 - Things happening at work that are neutral (luncheons, parking, etc.)





Small Talk: Like a Bridge!

THE SMALL TALK FORMULA

1



ASK A QUESTION

Ask a question to start the conversation.

2



LISTEN

Listen with attention and show you're paying attention.

3



SHARE SOMETHING RELATED

Share something about yourself that relates to the conversation.

4



ASK A FOLLOW-UP QUESTION

Ask another question to keep the conversation going.

5



WHEN DONE

Give a parting phrase like "I have to get going," turn and walk away.

Is this good small talk?

What do you like to do for fun?

- Yes!

How much money does your family make?

- No—too risky!

What's your favorite food?

- Yes!

Who did you vote for?

- No—too risky!

Do you have any hobbies?

- Yes!



Small Talk Example 1

You are talking to a co-worker you work with at a restaurant about what they did last weekend.

- You ask a question: *Did you end up going to the movie this weekend?*
- Co-worker asks you a question: *Yea, it was okay, I'm glad I saw it. What did you do over the weekend?*
- You make a comment: *Just worked, I had to finish getting a count on the plates and forks we have at the restaurant.*

Small Talk Example 2

You are talking to a co-worker about your work schedule.

- You ask a question: *Are you working over this coming weekend?*
- Co-worker asks you a question: *I took Saturday off because my grandmother is visiting. Are you working over the weekend?*
- You make a comment: ***What could you say?***
 - *You: Yea, I'm working 20 hours, I'm glad I have Friday off though.*

Small Talk Example 2

You are talking to a co-worker about lunch.

- You ask a question: *What are you eating for lunch today?*
- Co-worker asks you a question: **What could the co-worker say?**
 - *I brought a turkey sandwich and fruit, what did you bring?*
- You make a comment: **What could you say?**
 - *You: That sounds good...I brought macaroni and cheese, which is one of my favorites!*

Small Talk Example 3

You are talking to a co-worker about lunch.

- You ask a question: *Can you believe this rain?*
- Co-worker asks you a question: **What could the co-worker say?**
 - *I know! I was supposed to leave for camping, and it will probably be rained out. Can you believe this?*
- You make a comment: **What could you say?**
 - *You: Oh, that would be a bummer...I hope it clears up and you have a good weekend to camp.*

Small Talk Review

Put the small talk formula in order below:

- A. Ask a follow-up question
 - B. Say "I have to get going"
 - C. Listen
 - D. Share something about yourself related to the topic
 - E. Ask a question related to the topic
- Step 1
- Step 2
- Step 3
- Step 4
- Step 5
-
- ```
graph LR; A[A. Ask a follow-up question] --> S5[Step 5]; B[B. Say "I have to get going"] --> S1[Step 1]; C[C. Listen] --> S2[Step 2]; D[D. Share something about yourself related to the topic] --> S3[Step 3]; E[E. Ask a question related to the topic] --> S4[Step 4];
```

# Getting Feedback

- Getting input from your boss on how you are doing your job
- What is going well and what needs more work
- May discuss mistakes
- Meant to help you improve and not upset you



# Question

Getting feedback is meant to help you improve.

A. True

B. False



# Accepting Feedback

- Can be hard to hear
- Better understanding of expectations
- Not a personal attack on your character, intelligence, or values
- Meant to help you improve
- May need an accommodation



# Strategies for Accepting Feedback

- ☐ Ask for an accommodation or feedback in writing (i.e., steps) for next time (if you disclosed disability)
- ☐ Take time to process and think about how feedback can help
- ☐ Ask for examples
- ☐ Set up check-in meetings, i.e., weekly, with the person giving you the task
- ☒ Request “concrete” (specific) information, like breaking tasks to smaller steps





# Strategy: Requesting Concrete (Specific) Information

- Supervisor says: *please get the conference room ready for today's meeting.*
- Employee (is not sure what to do)
  - Asks: *Can you tell me exactly what needs to be done and what order I should do it in?*
- Supervisor says sure:
  1. Wipe down the table
  2. Push in all chairs
  3. Put a notepad and pen at each seat
  4. Turn the turn the television on
  5. Let me know when you finish



# NOT Requesting Concrete (Specific) Information-Not Clear on What to Do

- Supervisor says: please get the conference room ready for today's meeting.
- Employee says *Okay* (does not ask questions or think about *what get the room ready* means)
  - Employee only pushes the chairs up to the table
- What happens next?
  1. The table is not cleaned
  2. The television is not turned on
  3. The supervisor now has to explain the task
  4. The employee feels frustrated



# Mistakes at Work

- Accept feedback when you make a mistake
- Apologize for making the mistake
- Try not to make the same mistake again
- You may need to ask for help or an accommodation
- Know what is expected in the future
  - Request concrete (specific) information (strategy for accepting feedback!)





# Teamwork

- Working with other people
- Taking turns by letting others talk and do their work
- Share ideas, ask questions, and make suggestions, solve problems
- Work on a shared goal and everyone gets to give input
- Communication skills such as listening, reading body language, sharing conversations



# Communication with Co-Workers

- People you work with most days
- May work as a team
- Not a friendship, in the beginning
- May be able to help with questions
- Give them space
- Have small talk
- 2-message rule



# Communication with Boss

- Directs your work
- Gives accommodations or help
- Provides your work or job feedback
- Sets your schedule
- Deals with issues or concerns

| EMPLOYEE | MON        | TUE        | WED        | THU        | FRI        | SAT        | SUN        |
|----------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| ANNA     | 9AM - 2PM  | OFF        | 9AM - 2PM  | 9AM - 2PM  | 4PM - 9PM  | 10AM - 4PM | OFF        |
| JACK     | OFF        | 4PM - 9PM  | 4PM - 9PM  | OFF        | 4PM - 10PM | 4PM - 10PM | 4PM - 9PM  |
| MIA      | 10AM - 4PM | 10AM - 4PM | OFF        | 10AM - 4PM | OFF        | 10AM - 4PM | 10AM - 4PM |
| SAM      | 4PM - 10PM | OFF        | 4PM - 10PM | 4PM - 10PM | OFF        | 4PM - 10PM | 4PM - 9PM  |
| LILY     | OFF        | 9AM - 2PM  | 9AM - 2PM  | OFF        | 9AM - 2PM  | OFF        | OFF        |

Please check your shifts! ☆

TEAMWORK MAKES THE DREAM WORK! ♥



# 2-Message Rule



If you have asked or messaged your co-worker something 2 times, and they do not respond, go to another co-worker or your boss to help answer your question.

# Asking for Help

- Everyone gets stuck at work sometimes
- Know who you should talk to for help
- Think about the problem, and try to solve it first
- Keep a list of questions and answers so you don't ask the same question over-and-over





**“Soft” Skills**

# “Soft” Skills and “Hard” Skills

## Soft Skills

- Think: *how I act at work*
- How you work with people and handle different situations
- Harder to learn

## Hard Skills

- Think: *what I do at work*
- The tasks you learn to do
- Learn by practice

# Types of Work for Each

## Soft Skills:

- Being polite
- Communication
- Teamwork
- Listening
- Asking questions
- Being on time
- Solving problems
- Regulating emotions

## Hard Skills:

- Using a cash register
- Stocking shelves
- Cooking food safely
- Using a computer
- Counting money
- Scanning barcodes
- Following a recipe



# Video: Hard and Soft Skills

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0FFLFCB9xfQ>



*What is 1 thing you heard in the video you think is important?*

# Soft Skill or Hard Skill Question 1

If your coworker says, "*These cans go on the top shelf,*" and you listen, ask questions if you are confused, and say "*Thanks for showing me,*" are you using soft or hard skills?

- Soft Skills



# Soft Skill or Hard Skill Question 2

If you work at a grocery store and know where to put the cans correctly, this is a hard or soft skill?

- Hard Skill



# Soft Skill or Hard Skill Question 3

You are playing a video game and you know which buttons to press and how the game works. Is this a hard or soft skill?

- Hard Skills



# Soft Skill or Hard Skill Question 3

You work at a store with 3 other people and you are frustrated because the scanning equipment is not working. You stay calm and ask for help when you get stuck. Is this a hard or soft skill?

- Soft Skill







# Self-Check

## Soft Skills

- Do I ask questions when I need help?
- Can I accept feedback without getting upset?
- Am I respectful and responsible?
- Do I communicate clearly?

## Hard Skills

- Do I know how to do the task?
- Have I practiced it?
- Can I do it by myself?

# Home Activities

## *(Review Next Week)*



## Complete the Week 1 Checklist

- a. Complete **Accepting Feedback Practice** worksheet
- b. Complete the **Small Talk Conversations** worksheet
- c. Review the **Resources** for the topics this week with your parents



## Preparing for Work-Home Activities Checklist

### Session 1: Communication and Soft Skills

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Use the checklist below to work through the assigned home activities for Session 1.  
We will discuss the home activities from Session 1 when we meet for Session 2.

| Done | Activity                                                                           |
|------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|      | <u>Activity 1</u><br><br>Complete Activity 1: Accepting Feedback at Work Worksheet |
|      | <u>Activity 2</u><br><br>Complete Activity 2: Small Talk Conversations Activity    |
|      | Review the Week 1 resources provided                                               |

# Home Activities Checklist

## Out of Class Activities

- Start with your Home Activities Checklist
- Work with your parents on this if you have questions



# Accepting Feedback Practice-Longer Worksheet

## Accepting Feedback at Work Worksheet

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Why Is Feedback Important?

Feedback helps me learn new skills and become more successful at work. Feedback is not meant to hurt my feelings. It is meant to help me improve.

### My Feedback Strategies

Read each strategy and check the box if you want to try it.

☐ **1. Ask for an accommodation for feedback in writing so you know the steps for next time.**

Example: "Can you write down the steps for me so I can remember them?"

☐ **2. Take time to process feedback.**

Remember: Feedback is not always criticism. It is information that helps me improve.

☐ **3. Request concrete (specific) information.**

Ask for tasks to be broken into smaller steps.

☐ **4. Ask for examples of what to do and what not to do.**

☐ **5. Set up regular check-ins.**

Example: Meet with your supervisor once a week to ask questions and get feedback.

## Home Activity-1

- Work with your parents, a peer, or mentor to complete if needed

# Accepting Feedback Practice-Shorter Worksheet

## Accepting Feedback at Work Shorter Worksheet (Visual)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Helping communication supports at my job

Circle or check what might help the most.

- ☐ 1. I need more time to think about it.



- ☐ 2. I need a checklist



- ☐ 3. I need my AAC



- ☐ 4. Say: "Say it again" or "repeat" (I don't understand)



- ☐ 5. Say: "I don't know"



## Home Activity-1

- Work with your parents, a peer, or mentor to complete if needed



# Small Talk Conversations

## Small Talk Conversations-Information & Practice

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### What is Small Talk?

Small talk is a short conversation made up of questions and comments people use to get to know each other or be friendly. Small talk usually focuses on **safe, neutral topics** that most people can talk about. They usually aren't conversations that talk about specific people.

**Examples of neutral topics** (*neutral means they are low-pressure topics with no social or emotional demands*):

- Weather
- Favorite foods
- Hobbies
- Pets
- Music
- Movies or TV shows
- Sports
- School classes
- Weekend plans
- Favorite seasons

### Conversation Formula

A simple way to make small talk:

1. Ask a question
2. Listen carefully (look at the person when they are talking)
3. Share something about yourself that relates to the topic
4. Ask a follow-up question
5. When done, give a short parting phrase like "I have to get going or"



## Home Activity-2

- Work with your parents, a peer, or mentor to complete if needed

# We are here to support you!



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