



10TIPS

for Taking Charge of Your Own Career



Building confidence in self-advocacy helps you take charge of your career journey.

Developing strong self-advocacy skills are valuable for ongoing career growth, even with a supportive workplace team in place. Changes to roles, teams, and workplaces are natural parts of this journey. Here are a few tips to help you advocate for yourself and actively shape your career path.

1. Workplace Adjustments

Having a workplace adjustment in place can really help to remove barriers:

- It is helpful when you are working with several managers or if your manager changes. You won't have to keep explaining things.
- You can also change your adjustments at any time.
- You can have multiple adjustments if you need to.

2. Expand your networks

Don't just rely on your manager:

- Try talking to more colleagues.
- Join online networks internally (e.g. a Disability Employee Network) or externally (e.g. groups on LinkedIn).
- Ask if you can get a coach or mentor.

3. Be pro-active

Don't always wait for others to help:

- What can you do to progress things? Ask someone to brainstorm ideas with you.
- Can you shadow a colleague or ask for some work experience?
- What goals can you work on by yourself? Soft skills are good for this.

4. New challenges

Stay open-minded and try new things:

- Tell people that you are open to trying new things. If you don't say anything they won't know.
- Do something out of your comfort zone, even something small like proposing a new idea or giving a talk to your team.

5. Working style

Knowing how you work best can help you work better with your manager and colleagues:

- Try to find out the working styles of your team. Being aware of everyone's working styles can help to work better as a team.
- If your working style and preferences help you to do your job better, you can request them as a workplace adjustment (for example: I like to have a checklist when I am working on a task to keep me on track).

6. Support

Who else can help you?

- Are there any other managers or leaders in your team or department that you can talk to?
- Make sure you know how to contact your People & Culture team.
- Are there online chats or channels where you can ask for guidance or advice?
- Note the contact details for your Employee Assistance Program.

7. Personal Development Plan (PDP)

Having a record of your career goals helps to guide you and your manager

- If you aren't offered a PDP, ask if you can have one.
- Record your work goals (try to have a mix of long term, short term, and soft skills such as collaboration, time management, or problem solving).
- Find out how often you will catch up with your manager to discuss your PDP.
- Prepare for your PDP catch ups; what questions do you want to ask?

8. Create structure

Having structure creates certainty:

- Be clear about expectations – make sure that your understanding of tasks and goals matches your manager's understanding. This includes being clear on what the expected outcome looks like.
- Make sure you're aware of timeframes or deadlines. Ask for a mid-way check-in if this possible to make sure you're on track.
- Ask for set work patterns where possible: for example, start and finish times, and same days of the week.

9. Opportunities

Seek out different ways of progressing:

- If you want to learn something new: are there internal courses you can take? There are lots of free courses, podcasts, books (from the library) you can also access outside of work.
- Be aware of requests for volunteers needed for projects/working groups/consultations etc this might be advertised online or in a team meeting. Put your hand up to get involved.

10. Review and reflect

Take time regularly to think and reflect on how you feel about your progress.

- Note any feedback you have received and record your achievements.
- Remember to share things you think are important at your catch-ups with your manager.