



Self-Advocacy Toolkit

CAREER RESOURCES
FOR LEARNERS WITH
DISABILITIES
Humber Advising &
Career Services

HOW TO USE THE SELF-ADVOCACY TOOLKIT

Your Self-Advocacy Toolkit is a set of personalized statements designed to help you clearly communicate your strengths, needs, and unique value in academic, workplace, and community settings. You can use these statements together to create a full self-advocacy pitch or individually depending on the situation—whether you're in a job interview, meeting with a professor, or having a conversation with an employer.

Each statement in this toolkit is **learner-informed**, built directly from learner feedback. Every template includes clear, step-by-step instructions to guide you through the process. You'll find:

- A simple **formula**
- An example demonstrating the formula in action
- A **fillable template**
- Additional examples for current students, summer jobs, Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) opportunities and first professional roles (included where applicable for each statement type)

To help you understand how each statement is put together, the **formula and example** are colour-coded so you can clearly follow the structure and build your statements step by step.

What's in Your Toolkit?

- 1. Strength Statements (Module One)**
Describe your natural talents, learned skills, and insights gained through your lived experience with disability.
- 2. Challenge / Solution Statements (Module One)**
Frame challenges objectively while offering practical, thoughtful solutions.
- 3. Disability Positive Statements (Module Two)**
Highlight how your disability enhances your performance, creativity, or problem-solving.
- 4. Workplace Preferences & Constraints Statements (Module Two)**
Identify the conditions that help you thrive—and those that may limit your success.
- 5. Personal Access / Needs Statements (Module Three)**
Explain the supports or adjustments that enable you to do your best work.
- 6. Professional Value Proposition (Module Four)**
Summarize the unique value you bring to a team, role, or project.
- 7. Disability Edge in the Workplace Statements (Module Four)**
Showcase how your disability gives you an advantage or a distinctive perspective.

NORTH CAMPUS: Academic & Career Success Centre, Learning Resource Commons, First Floor, 416.675.5030

LAKESHORE CAMPUS: Student Welcome and Resource Centre, First Floor, WEL 105, 416.675.5028

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Using AI to Personalize Your Toolkit

AI tools like **Copilot**, **ChatGPT**, or **Gemini** can help you polish your statements, explore alternative wording, or adapt your message for different audiences. Think of AI as a creative partner that helps clarify your strengths and needs—while keeping your authentic voice at the centre.

Employers expect students and graduates to use AI, but they also expect your statements to sound genuine and reflect your lived experience.

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Sample prompts you can try for each part of the toolkit:

- 1. Strength Statement:**
“Rewrite this to sound confident but approachable: I’m good at organizing tasks.”
- 2. Challenge / Solution Statement:**
“Help me frame this challenge positively with a solution: I struggle with time management.”
- 3. Disability-Positive Statement:**
“Make this more empowering: My ADHD makes focus hard sometimes, but I’m great at multitasking.”
- 4. Workplace Preferences & Constraints:**
“Suggest alternatives for: I work best in quiet spaces.”
“Phrase this constraint positively: I can’t work with constant interruptions.”
- 5. Personal Access / Needs:**
“Make this more concise and professional: I need written instructions and extra time for complex tasks.”
- 6. Professional Value Proposition:**
“Adapt this for an interview in a creative field: I bring strong problem-solving skills.”
- 7. Disability Edge Statement:**
“Rewrite this as a competitive advantage: My dyslexia helps me see patterns others miss.”

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Self-Advocacy Action Plan

Put your toolkit into practice by following these steps:

- 1. Finalize Your Toolkit**
Personalize each statement until it reflects your strengths, needs, and authentic voice.
- 2. Practice Your Message**
Build confidence by rehearsing with a friend, classmate, mentor, or Student Success Advisor
- 3. Choose the Right Moment to Speak Up**
Look for a setting where everyone can focus and have a productive conversation.
- 4. Communicate Clearly and Confidently**
Use respectful, direct language. Avoid apologizing for your needs—they are valid.
- 5. Follow Up and Build Relationships**
Self-advocacy is an ongoing dialogue. Check in, share updates, and strengthen professional connections.

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Need Support?

To book a session with **Student Success Advisor, Elaine Belanger-Porter**, log into **Humber Polytechnic – Career Connect**, select **Book an Advising Appointment**, and choose a time that works for you. Elaine can support you at any stage—from drafting your statements to practicing your advocacy pitch.

You've got this!

Every time you speak up for yourself, you're not just communicating a need—you're building confidence, shaping your future, and demonstrating the distinct value you bring to any space.

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