

Mental Health Advocacy

2018 HOPE Conference



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WHAT IS ADVOCACY:

Dictionary Definition:

- The act or process of supporting a cause or proposal
- <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/advocacy>



SELF-ADVOCACY

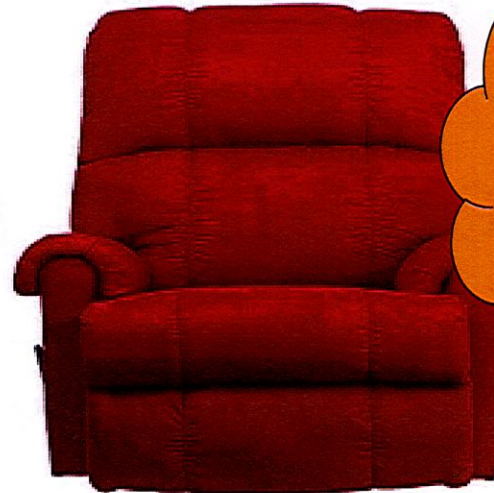
1. What is the problem you want to address?
2. Just as important, what do you want to see as the solution to the problem.

How important is the problem to YOU

Everyone is different, so some people might not care if their recliner gets delivered in a different color but will care very much about getting the wrong coffee or vice-versa. So it's very important to define what the problem is AND whether its something you want to try and address.



Uh,
but I
ordered
Decaf.



Uh, but I
ordered
green.

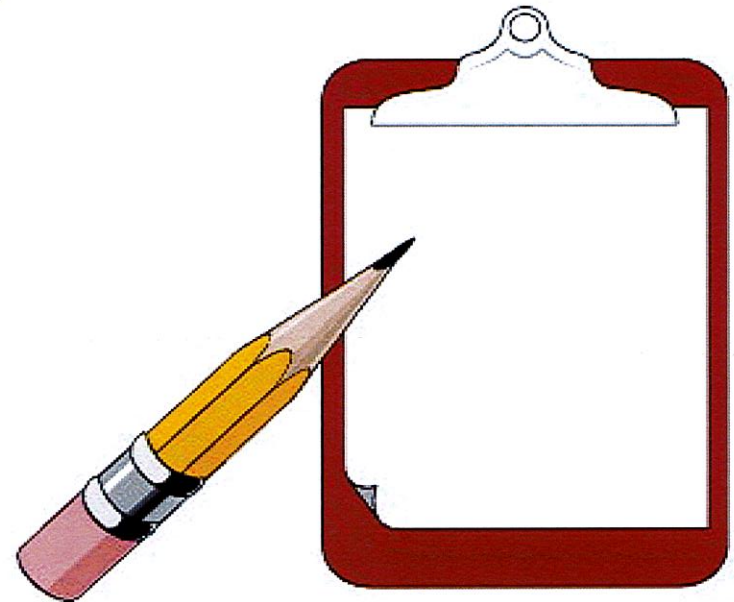


UNDERSTANDING THE PROBLEM

- ❑ Was it a one time incident?
- ❑ How serious was it?
- ❑ Does the problem happen a lot?
- ❑ Is the problem something you can do anything about?

Once you have decided to take action: BE PREPARED

- Are there laws or regulations that govern the conduct of the person or organization you are dealing with?
- If so be prepared to quote them when you are presenting your complaint.



BEING PREPARED AHEAD OF TIME WILL CATCH THE PERSON WHO IS HANDLING YOUR COMPLAINT OFF GUARD AS THEY USUALLY ARE NOT USED TO IT.

I'm sorry sir, a deal is a deal. You signed a contract for that set of encyclopedias.



BEING PREPARED AHEAD OF TIME WILL CATCH THE PERSON WHO IS HANDLING YOUR COMPLAINT OFF GUARD AS THEY USUALLY ARE NOT USED TO IT.

Not true. Under Maine law I have 3 days to rescind that contract I signed with your door to door salesman.



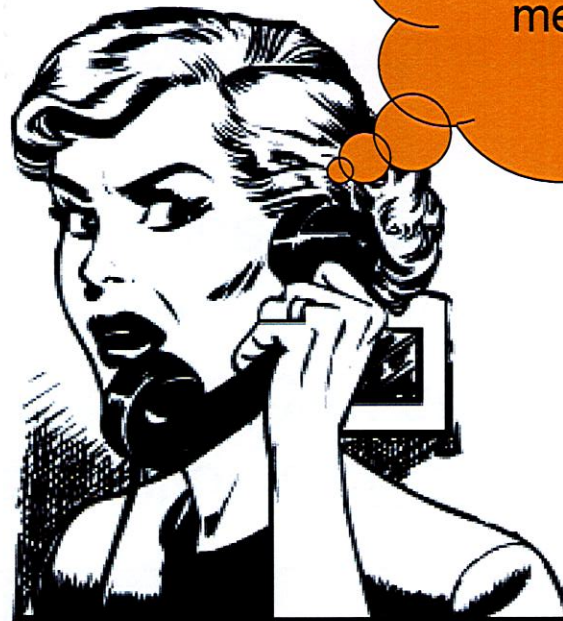
I hate it when they know their rights!

KNOW WHAT YOU WANT: DESIGN A SOLUTION

- Provide a roadmap for a solution BEFORE you raise a complaint, so that it is clear what you are asking for.
- When thinking about a solution think of reasons why it is a good solution for the other side as well.
 - ❖ Make it possible for them to avoid future injuries?
 - ❖ Save money?
 - ❖ Save time?
 - ❖ Avoid a negative licensing action?

“WIN-WIN SITUATION”

So, if you let me rescind the contract, there would be nothing for me to complain about to the the Attorney General's office, and nothing for me to post a bad review about your company.



Hm., well that makes sense for me.

You can also be open and/or propose alternative solutions that might work.

Look, I don't have any bookcases big enough to handle all those books.



How about I throw in for free a bookcase, will that work?





There are formal and informal ways to a resolution

- An informal conversation
- A scheduled conversation
- A more formal meeting
- An informal letter
- A formal grievance
- Mediation
- Litigation



OVERVIEW: HOW TO SET OUT ISSUES

- State the relevant facts
-
- State how you were harmed.
-
- State why you think something was wrong – the rule, policy, law or regulation that was broken.
-
- State what you want and why it is a good resolution.

FORMAT OF PRESENTATION IS IMPORTANT.

Keep the Audience in Mind

Don't put them to sleep or confuse them

Don't make them angry

Well, it's not that I don't like encyclopedias, I do. In fact I had a set as a kid. My dear dog Fluffy would often times come into my bedroom while I was reading them. I always knew when he would be coming because we had these beautiful pine floors and I could hear the clicking of his nails and....



ZZZZZZZZZZZZZZ
ZZZZZZZZZZZZZZ
ZZZZZZZZZZZZZZ

MAKE SURE YOU EXPLAIN HOW YOU WERE HARMED

- It helps others understand why you are complaining
- It may be a physical injury
financial loss, emotional injury,
serious inconvenience or
embarrassment

GENERAL STRATEGIES

- Always ask and write down the names of people who you talked to on the telephone. Also keep track of the dates and times you called. You can refer to these people in the event you have to make multiple calls or talk with a supervisor
- Try and not get angry with the person over the telephone (this can be very difficult). If you are getting nowhere ask to speak with a supervisor. **EVERYONE** has a supervisor.
- If you are putting your complaint in writing make sure you have the correct address and contact person to send it to.

SYSTEMIC ADVOCACY

What is Systemic Advocacy?

Systemic advocacy refers to advocacy that is required to bring about change(s) to an organization or system. Systemic advocacy focuses on representing the rights, interests and viewpoints of a group who are similarly affected by an issue(s) and seeks to identify potential solutions to the issue(s).

Systemic advocacy focuses on influencing practices, policies and legislation to benefit and enhance people's lives.





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