

## Self-Advocacy Strategies

Students who advocate for themselves may do so in a variety of situations. But they always come prepared with a **strategy**.

Some ways to be prepared are to

- make a list of what you need
- practise what you are going to say to the person
- have a back-up plan to deal with “bumps.”

### Strategy 1: Make a List

Making a list helps you think about what you want to ask for. It also helps ensure that you have covered all the points you want to make. Number your points so that you can re-read your list or refer to any point easily.

If you are describing a problem, your list could take the form of the “Five W’s” (who, what, when, where, and why). That way, you give your listener a quick overview of the problem without focusing on one detail.

At the end of your discussion, it is a good idea to say, “I think I have covered all the points I want to make, but just let me check my list.” Then, do your check. If there is an important point you have not yet covered, raise it now.

### Strategy 2: Practice Makes Perfect

Rehearse what you are going to say by role-playing with a friend or parent or by practising in front of a mirror. This will help you hear what you sound like. It will also help you imagine how the other person might respond to what you are saying and how you are saying it.

### Strategy 3: The Back-up Plan

What if you get nervous or angry, or the other person doesn’t seem to respond? You need a strategy to keep yourself going. It can be as simple as having a water bottle handy so that you can pause to take a drink. Pausing will let you focus on your goal, not on your nervousness or anger. After you have had a sip of water, return to one of your points.

**strategy**  
a way to plan something

#### WISE WORDS

Luck is when opportunity meets preparedness.

— Old saying

