

ADVOCATING FOR YOURSELF

Helen Baxter-Crawford Women in Engineering Summit 2025





14 - 16 October 2025 Sydney | Australia

Build skills, break barriers & achieve engineering excellence



Definition:

Knowing your needs and rights:

Understanding what you need and what you are entitled to is the first step in advocating for yourself.

Communicating clearly:

Expressing your needs and desires in a way that is easily understood by others.

Being assertive:

Standing up for yourself and your beliefs while respecting the boundaries of others.





"I want \$2k more or I'm not hopping on the plane to site tonight."





"You need to learn to delegate and you need to learn to ask for help"

How, when the project allows only for those specifically signed into the project, you are considered the lowest rung on the ladder, all your requests to management for staffing are ignored?





"What salary are you thinking?"

Come prepared.

Not just with the annual base, but the annual including super, the hourly rate, everything.





"No one (in this global company) knows who you are outside of the project you have spent the last two years working on"





"We don't know her."

Fellow sporting parents reasoning why I shouldn't be accepted for the volunteer position of club secretary - despite being the only candidate and mandated as being accepted based on the clubs constitution.



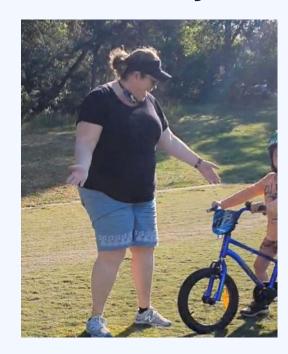


Develop your team – internal and client/joint venture





Fat bias – or any other bias







Self care.

I don't take lunch breaks as I want to get back to family sooner than later. But I DO take gym breaks. My first boss set this example, going swimming at lunch most days - no matter what the deadline.





"No" is a complete answer.

"I don't know" is also a perfectly acceptable answer you shouldn't be afraid to use





For 75 years, SMEC has built a reputation as a trusted partner on major Transport, Water and Energy projects around the world.

SMEC is committed to positively impact the people, the environment and the clients and communities we serve. Through our network of global specialists, our specialist teams draw on deep expertise and systems thinking to simplify the complex and deliver integrated engineering solutions across a range of diverse environments.

Thank you