

## The Benefits of “I” Statements

### Purpose:

- “I” statements are not about being polite, rude, in charge or to affix blame.
- “I” statements are used to provide clear communication. A calm confident statement of your ideas, needs or preferences can reduce conflict and promote cooperation.
- “I” statements help the speaker to focus on the issue and can be “openers” to greater understanding.

### Goals for “I” statements are to:

- Open lines of communication
- Resolve problems or improve relationships
- Help others see another perspective / point of view
- Avoid negative feelings
- Promote cooperation and consensus
- Avoid an argument or defensive behaviors (Avoid the use of ‘you/your’ in the ‘I’ statement)

### Remember:

1. Seek first to understand, then to be understood. Listen carefully to others before you speak. Be sure others are open to your input.
  2. Focus on the issue. Restate the other person’s position. (Example: I heard you say ...) using an “I” statement.
  3. State your need or idea in a positive non-threatening way. (Example: I believe it might be beneficial ...)
  4. When referring to a behavior, focus on the specific act (such as yelling or forgetting to inform you of a change) and next, make an “I” statement as to how it makes you feel. (Often, people try to expedite a situation by remaining in one point of view. Adding another perspective often takes more time but gains greater rewards in building relationships and clear communication.)
- Examples:
    - “I feel frustrated when changes are made without being informed.”
    - “I’m interested in hearing the information in a respectful manner.”
    - “Due to my full schedule today, I will need more time to complete this task.”