

Influencing Upwards

Some difficulties we may face:

- Bringing difficult authority relationships from the past (parents, teachers etc) into the present
- Seeing in authority figures the personal qualities we are unwilling to see in ourselves, e.g. judgemental, critical, uncaring
- Using patterns of behaviour, we learned in the past to deal with authority, e.g. rebellion, compliance, attention seeking, passivity
- Limiting our choices in dealing with authority by creating rules for ourselves about how we should be with them... 'seen and not heard', 'do what you are told', 'don't disagree', 'be quiet'
- Using the authority figure as a way of putting ourselves down, and being in some way 'in awe' of their influential position



Some choices for influencing authority figures:

- Be aware of your old patterns of behaviour with authority figures – how well are they serving you today?
- Give yourself permission to use new choices
- Don't put yourself down or put them on a pedestal
- See them as imperfect human beings – as they really are, rather than as you imagine them to be
- Take your time
- Stay in 'Adult' – don't become the child wanting to please or trying to rebel
- Be aware of what's you and what's them
- Make clear, simple statements and requests
- Recognise your own strengths
- Communicate in a style that they find persuasive
- Know and understand their goals – what's important to them?

How do you perceive authority figures?

What rules have you created about how you should behave around authority figures?

What will you take from the tips above that you will use next time you are with a senior manager?