

# Advocate for What You Want

*Carolyn Allen*

**BEFORE YOU READ:** What does *advocate* mean? Share a time you had to advocate for something.

At my last job, we had a big problem. The place was never clean. The bathroom was nasty and smelled terrible. The guy who was supposed to clean it never did. He just walked around the warehouse as if there was nothing to do. The kitchen was a mess. The refrigerator had things growing inside it.

I got some women together and we went to see the supervisor. We went to him and asked him to talk to the janitor about the health of the people in the warehouse. I was a little nervous that he would not listen to me, but he did.

After our talk with the supervisor, things got better. Our bathroom and lunchroom were clean. It felt so good to have a clean refrigerator that I went and bought some food just to put it inside. The floor was so clean you could eat off of it.

We had a problem at my workplace, and we advocated for a change. We asked our supervisor for a cleaner warehouse, and we got it. Soon after, however, the supervisor got laid off and so did I. The company went out of business

It was a new experience for us women that the bathroom and lunchroom were clean.

*Carolyn Allen is a student at Brooklyn Adult Learning Center, where she has gotten her confidence back and is eager to gain knowledge and receive her GED. She has always been a hard-working, loving, dependable mother and wife. Her goal is to become a social worker in the future. This piece was originally published in Issue #36, "Good Jobs, Not Just Any Jobs," p. 36.*



## Taking Action at Work

Problem:	What Can You Say?	What Can You Do?

**Fill out the chart.** Name some problems you have had at work and some things you could say or do about that problem.