

# Locus of Control

---

Some people have a general “victim” attitude — other people and circumstances beyond their control caused things to happen, *caused* them to feel the way they feel. “THEY did it to me!” People who have this style of interpreting their experiences are said to have an external locus of control.

The flip side of this attitude is one in which individuals *perceive themselves to be in control*. These people are said to have internal locus of control. “I perceive my circumstances to be within my control. I believe that what I do has an effect.” Even when things don’t turn out “right,” an internal person will evaluate present circumstances in terms of what they can do to improve the situation. They take *response-ability* for making things happen.

<i>External:</i>	<i>Internal:</i>
No one told me.	I didn’t ask.
He doesn’t listen.	Next time I’ll make sure I have his attention.
She talked me into it.	I agreed to go along with it.
She doesn’t understand	I’m not communicating.

Each of these statements is a different view of the same problem the external person complained about earlier. Both views of the problem are “true” — it’s simply a matter of how you chose to approach the world. You can whine or take control.

For internal people, problems are lessons. To external people problems are an intrusion on their lives. When they experience a problem they quickly determine how the other person needs to change in order for their own lives to improve.

**Exercise:** Reframe each statement so that it sounds like you believe you are in control:

*I don’t have time.*

Restatement: \_\_\_\_\_

*We don’t get the right kind of employees.*

Restatement: \_\_\_\_\_

*People ask me questions to which they should already know the answers.*

Restatement: \_\_\_\_\_