

Communicating in Different Career Pathways, Part 2

The last *Career Headlines* highlighted communication dilemmas in six different career pathways. Today, we are describing dilemmas in six additional pathways. Even if none of these is your preferred pathway, you are likely to run into similar communication situations in your own pathway.

Family Counselor: Maggie Lamb is a sales representative. She worries that her occasional depression will create problems at work, and she's afraid her coworkers will find out if she follows my suggestion to see a psychiatrist. Even though I assure her that all medical information is confidential, I can't convince her to make the appointment. I need to find a way to build her trust in me.



Water Department Engineer: We're going into our fifth week without rain, and my boss has asked me to write an announcement for our website telling the community to limit water usage. Everyone is to stop watering flowers and lawns because of drought conditions. I'm a technical person, not a writer, and I can't get started with the announcement. The boss says the note should sound friendly.

Historic Site Tour Guide: I've been hired as a tour guide at the boyhood home of one of our U.S. presidents who served in the mid-1800s. I will wear a period costume and hat and will describe the home and grounds. I'm to start by meeting visitors at the front door and inviting them in. The head guide directed me to add body language as I talk to show the good manners of the time. Her only instruction was "be original."

Architect: My boss is a benevolent dictator. That means he's a very nice person who knows what he wants done and how he wants it done. He has let me make a few decisions about the projects I work on, but I'm having a hard time building a relationship that shows him I have good ideas and can contribute more to the firm. I know communication builds relationships, but I'm stumped about how to approach him about my taking on more responsibility.



Cosmetologist: One of my clients has been coming for hair color once a month for ten years, but she goes to another stylist for haircuts. When I asked her to let me cut her hair, she said, "I know how I like it, so I don't think so." That hurt my feelings and I didn't know what to say back to her.

Administrative Assistant: The vice president I work for leaves about 3:00 every day and piles me up with work before she goes. Almost every night I have to stay an hour later. I need to put together a plan of things to say to her so I get my point across without looking like a whiner.

Action: Choose one of the communication dilemmas above and describe what you would say, do, or ask to be an effective communicator.

Note to teachers: **Job Ready Career Skills** includes a category entitled **Communication Skills** that contains ten lessons each in the following topics: Communicating at Work, Listening, Nonverbal Communication, Presenting Yourself and Speaking one-on-one and in groups. Click on the icon below to try one sample student lesson from each of the five topics.

Competitive Advantage contains four modules on communication, including Workplace Writing, Workplace Reading, Gathering Information, and Organizing Your Writing.