

# Communication Audit: Difficult News Statements

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Topic: \_\_\_\_\_ Rater: \_\_\_\_\_

## A. Content & Argument Impact:

1. Hold statement's objective/purpose until you've introduced your argument/reasoning first	1	2	3	4	5
2. Anticipate & address typical audience questions /concerns (see Comm. Planning Tool).....	1	2	3	4	5
3. Provide compelling, but brief, support for claims to help people see company's reasoning.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Create concrete, specific images in the reader's mind by providing particulars/details.....	1	2	3	4	5
5. Stress the future, & focus the bulk of your message on giving reader hope/opportunities...	1	2	3	4	5
6. Close by directly asking reader to take the specific action you desire (tell them what to do).	1	2	3	4	5

## B. Structural & Organizational Impact

7. Open by indicating (i.e., warning) you have difficult news to share, but hold the news back	1	2	3	4	5
8. Organize your statement in historical/logical sequence, using audience's questions.....	1	2	3	4	
9. Prepare and deliver only 3-5 significant/major points--avoid overwhelming the reader.....	1	2	3	4	

## C. Tone & Credibility Impact

10. Adopt a sincere, respectful, compassionate tone as when you share bad news with family	1	2	3	4	5
11. Apply the conversational tone test: When reading sentences aloud, is it conversational?	1	2	3	4	
12. Help reader find a way to feel as comfortable as possible about themselves/the decision....	1	2	3	4	
13. Choose each word carefully since people become hypersensitive when receiving bad new	1	2	3	4	

## D. Writing Style Impact

14. Delete unnecessary words/phrases/sentences to create complete & concise paragraphs...	1	2	3	4	
15. Write ideas and content in parallel form (or structure like in resumes).....	1	2	3	4	
16. Use the active voice with an actor or agency as the subject performing the action.....	1	2	3	4	
17. Chose strong action-oriented verbs, replacing weak verbs like "is, was, are, have, has, be"	1	2	3	4	
18. Use the inclusive "you/your/our" writing attitude to create a person-to-person/team style	1	2	3	4	
19. Check mechanics: use only standard grammar, syntax, spelling, and punctuation.....	1	2	3	4	

## E. Layout & Design Impact

20. Include a SUBJECT: message line in letter above Dear Ms. Doe line to telegraph topic.	1	2			
21. Add reader's name, a page number and date in the header on each additional page.....	1	2			
22. Select a readable-sized serif font to slow eye movement & increase reader comprehension	1	2			
23. Use sentences with 20 words or less to allow readers to rapidly parse & store idea in STM.	1	2			
24. Use paragraphs with 2-6 sentences to allow reader to rapidly parse & store ideas in LTM...	1	2			
25. Use single spacing between lines in your paragraphs & skip a space between paragraphs.	1	2			
26. Use <i>Left-Margin</i> or <i>Center-Margin Alignment</i> with standard letter salutation & closing....	1	2			
27. Make margins 3/4" - 1" wide & leave right margin ragged (unjustified) to reduce eye strain	1	2			

Communication Audits model specific communication behaviors designed to strengthen communication abilities.

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Total = 100