BREAKING UNPLEASANT NEWS

If you give bad news unfeelingly, insensitively or put off doing it altogether, the repercussions will be far worse than the news itself! The following list of bullet points contain ways in which you can break unpleasant news (or indeed negative feedback) more effectively!

- Check all the facts – reasons behind the decision – know why the alternative courses of action were rejected – anticipate questions and objections and prepare your response

- Admit your fears to yourself – this can prevent them getting in the way at the interview

- Think through how to remain as neutral as possible

- Break news at the beginning of the meeting clearly and unambiguously

- Get to the point quickly

- Give news coolly, firmly and remain neutral – restate claim if necessary

- Allow the individual to offer their understanding of the situation

- Provide specific examples of actions and words that contribute to the situation and their effect on you and others

- Respond to anger with calm gestures and language – lower voice; don’t take their anger personally. Take a break if necessary

- Encourage the individual to consider alternative courses of action

- Clearly state standards and behaviour expected in the future and agree a review date

- Stress positive side of achievement – let them know they have your support, offer constructive advice for the future