



# Practical Plans for Difficult Conversations in Medicine: Strategies That Work in Breaking Bad News

*Robert Buckman*

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## **Practical Plans for Difficult Conversations in Medicine: Strategies That Work in Breaking Bad News**

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Although they receive extensive clinical training, medical practitioners are given little or no instruction about the best way to break bad news. In this book and DVD set, Robert Buckman, author of *How to Break Bad News*, offers solid, practical, and practicable guidelines for such conversations as the diagnosis of a serious or fatal illness, the death of a loved one in the hospital, or a disclosure of medical error.

This is a book about communication techniques that work in everyday clinical practice. It is not a series of prefabricated scripts but a collection of strategies and approaches that any clinician can use to effectively communicate with patients. Using basic, honest communication tools, Buckman shows doctors how to approach conversations dealing with the most sensitive medical topics. He explains what to anticipate in various situations and provides guidance on keeping the discussion as constructive as possible.

For each of several scenarios, Buckman supplies alternative responses, indicating which can work best and why. Each protocol is given an acronym to provide a mnemonic aid to help clinicians respond quickly and effectively. The accompanying DVD illustrates the protocols with recordings of unscripted and unrehearsed conversations with standardized patients, showing how the strategies can actually work in real situations in a realistic time frame.

Based on sound, proven strategies and peppered throughout with illustrative examples, *Practical Plans for Difficult Conversations in Medicine* provides the tools and knowledge necessary to start and sustain a genuine conversation at a moment when the first thought is "I have no idea what to say now."

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