

# ROADBLOCKS TO COMMUNICATION

## 1. ORDERING, DIRECTING, COMMANDING

Telling others to do something; giving orders or commands.

*Hidden Message:* “I have power that you don’t have.”

## 2. WARNING, THREATENING, PROMISING

Telling others what consequences will occur if they do something.

*Hidden Message:* “I have the authority to reward or punish you.”

## 3. MORALIZING, PREACHING, SHOULD AND OUGHTS

Telling others what they “should” or “ought” to do according to your own standards.

*Hidden Message:* “I have answers or solutions to all your problems.”

## 4. ADVISING, GIVING SOLUTIONS OR SUGGESTIONS

Telling others how to solve a problem; giving advice, suggestions, answers or solutions.

*Hidden Message:* “You’re too dumb to figure this out, so I’ll tell you what to do.”

## 5. JUDGING, CRITICIZING, BLAMING, STEREOTYPING

Making negative judgments or evaluations of others; making them feel foolish; putting them into categories; shaming them.

*Hidden Message:* “There’s something wrong with you.”

## 6. INTERPRETING, ANALYZING, DIAGNOSING

Telling others what their motives are; analyzing why they are doing or saying something.

*Hidden Message:* “I have you all figured out.”

## 7. SMOKE-SCREENING, CONDESCENDING, PATRONIZING

Trying to avoid the problem; distracting or pushing the problem aside; trying to talk others out of their feelings or make their feelings go away.

*Hidden Message:* “It’s too risky to deal with you.”

## IN CONTRAST: DOOR-OPENERS

### *Invitations to say more:*

“Tell me about it.” “I’d like to hear what you’re thinking.”

“I’m interested in what you have to say.” “Let’s discuss it some more.”