Let's Talk! What do lab scientists have to say?

Why is it important to talk in these programs?
- Verbal summaries can help you to review and learn
- When graduated, you will work on a team (colleagues, supervisor, other health care providers)
- When graduated, you may work with patients

Read the scenarios below. You will have twenty minutes to think about what you’re going to say. You can take notes if you wish. Then you’ll be asked to say it!

Scenarios

1. You have to draw blood from a child. He starts crying as soon as he sees you. What will you say?

2. Your lab partner is nervous about decanting. She says she isn’t sure what to do. You find the information in your lab manual:

**Decanting Tips!** Take the head out of the centrifuge without shaking it. At the sink at the end of the bench, hold the head by the ring at the bottom and in one fluid motion, quickly turn the head upside-down over the sink. **Be confident, your samples will not come out!** Wait until the saline has all drained out of the tubes and give the head a quick jerk in an up-down motion. Turn the head right-side-up and gently shake to re-suspend the cell button.

What will you say?
3. You are doing some ABO typing and have come up with a result that you didn’t expect. Your lab manual states:

**Discrepant results**: Results that do not meet the expected reactions are considered to be discrepant and must be investigated. Reasons for discrepancies include: technical errors, the presence of cold agglutinins, weak sub-groups of A, acquired B phenomenon, transfusion with group O emergency cells, bone marrow transplant, patient age, unexpected alloantibodies.

You’re not sure what happened, and decide to discuss the results with your supervisor. What will you say?

4. You and your lab partner are preparing cell suspensions using the following instructions.

**Preparing a suspension directly from a blood sample.**

1. Label a 10 x 75 tube with patient ID.

2. Using a pipette, dispense 1 drop of blood from the packed cells (or 2 drops of whole blood) of the sample into the labelled tube.

3. Add 19 drops of saline.

4. Mix gently with a new pipette to create a homogenous mixture.

5. Compare the suspension to a commercially prepared cell suspension (3-5%). Adjust your cell suspension accordingly.

   a. If too dark, add more saline.

   b. If too light, centrifuge tube for 1 minute at 3400 rpm. Decant the supernatant and add enough fresh saline to produce the correct color.

Your lab partner keeps getting results that are too light. She wants to know how to prevent this in the future and what she can do to correct this particular suspension. What will you say?