



COMMUNICATIONS PROJECT: BREAKTHROUGHS

Paul researches new ways to model energy systems. Like most engineering researchers, he must communicate his work to, for example, politicians and the government, people in industry and the general public. There are lots of ways to do this, such as formal reports, journals, newspapers, TV programmes, public lectures ... even going into schools.

PUPILS TAILOR A PIECE OF SCIENCE COMMUNICATION TO A SPECIFIC AUDIENCE

Have you ever wondered ...

... how scientists tell other people about their research?

Imagine ...

... you have been working on a successful engineering research project that has huge potential impact on society. And now you need to tell people about it. The breakthrough could even be fantasy – the important thing is that it's a new, exciting idea. You decide to use your communications skills to explain your research (and its potential impact on society), compare ways that science is communicated, and decide the best method to communicate your research to your intended audience.

Some things for pupils to think about

- What was/is the aim of the research? What experiments were done? What was the outcome?
- Who is your target audience? In other words, who could benefit from the research? Are they a scientist, a business person, a member of the general public? Might anyone be concerned about your work?
- How do scientists tell the public about their research, compared with how they tell other scientists?
- What medium would be best to communicate with your audience? Think about how much they already know. A scientist might read a journal article, but a greengrocer may be less likely to.

Suggestions for supporting pupilsx

Students may need some direction from the teacher on researching their breakthrough – appropriate websites for example, which contain reliable information. Depending on the communication method they use, they may require access to equipment such as recording equipment.

Possible equipment, materials and resources

Paper and pens for designing a poster; access to a computer for designing a presentation; recording equipment such as a video camera; Internet access