

# When the urge to rant strikes, know your audience

**Q:** "In my performance review, my supervisor wrote that I lack patience. She based this conclusion on some comments I made about our CEO during a recent project. The CEO would tell me to do things one way, then suddenly change his mind and ask for something completely different.

"This was extremely frustrating, so I often wound up venting to my boss. Although she seemed sympathetic, she now says that I was impatient. I reminded her that I was just using her open door policy and that the real problem was the CEO's inconsistency. My overall review was good, but I am very upset about this comment."  
*Misunderstood*

**A:** I don't know how patient you are, but I do think you need to be more politically astute. "Venting" to your boss is seldom wise, even under aggravating circumstances. When talking with the person who evaluates your performance, you always want to appear professional and businesslike.

If you need to discuss a difficult issue, focus on strategizing, not complaining. For example: "I'm hoping you can help me understand the CEO's expectations about this project. He frequently shifts direction, so I'm not sure what he really wants. How should I handle this?"

Whenever management truly begins to drive you bonkers, feel free to rant and rave with family and friends. But at the office, keep your emotions in check. Politically intelligent people understand that "open door policy" does not mean "come on in and say whatever you're thinking."

*If you want to stay out of trouble at work, here are some things not to say: [Eight Topics to Avoid at the Office](#).*

© Marie G. McIntyre, All rights reserved.