Scientific Communication for Diverse Audiences

Bruce H. Mandt, Ph.D.
Director, Career Development Office
CDO Communication Series

These workshops will cover . . .

- CVs and Resumes
- Cover letters
- Science Communication
- Interviewing – informational and formal
- Networking

Keep an eye out for future offerings and perfect your style!
Workshop Objectives

- Why science communication is important
- Reflect on different audiences
- Develop your science analogy and story
- Tailor your science story
- Receive feedback on your story

*NOTE: This is only the start ...
Our mission is to bridge the communication gap between scientists and the public by giving researchers the tools and opportunities to foster public interest in scientific research.

ProjectBridgeCO@gmail.com
Facebook.com/ProjBridgeCO
Why is Sci Comm important?

- Science is publically funded.

National Institutes of Health Budget, 1998-2017


Why is Sci Comm important?

- Regardless of your title, you’re a teacher ...

Engaging with non-scientific audiences

Scientists

Supporting Information/Methods

Results/Conclusions

Non-Scientific Audiences

Results/Bottom Line

So What?

Supporting Information

Background/Introduction
Engaging Your Audience

- Plan ahead – what might they care about?
  - Be empathetic; Challenge your assumptions
- **Listen first** – ask questions, find your starting point and start to build trust
- Stick to the big picture and let them dictate depth
- Use humor – it’s a great connector
- Continuously assess your delivery – read expressions, watch body language, ask more questions and create dialogue
Exercise 1: Understanding Your Audience(s)

(Pairs/small groups) – 15min: You have three tasks by yourself, which you’ll then discuss with a partner:

1. Identify potential engagement objectives. What might you hope to accomplish from your interaction.

2. Create a list of what you think your different audiences might care about.

3. Create a list of what you think they may feel about scientists ...
Creating Accessible Language

- Goal is to engage, excite, and *start a conversation*.
- Avoid jargon and determine what counts as jargon (e.g., DNA? Maybe ...).
- Make a human connection – emotion is important for memory.
- Explain upfront *why* they should care
  - Your hook: question, imagery, experience, stats
When can you use it?

- Social situations
- Poster presentations
- Networking
- Informational interviewing
- Job interviews
- Teaching/Mentoring, etc.
- Advocating for funding
- … and on and on
- Different versions for different audiences
Exercise 2: Non-science Analogy

1. (Ind.) Create a non-scientific analogy for your research – 10min

2. (Pairs/small groups) Alternate delivering your non-science analogies and providing feedback – 20min
Exercise 3: Science stories for different audiences

1. (Ind.) Complete the science story worksheet and write out your story for the different audiences – 20min

2. (Pairs) Alternate delivering your stories and providing feedback – 20min