

The elevator pitch



“What do you work on?”

- asked in elevators, while walking across campus, during lunch, etc.
- and you have to have a good, short story

- Deans
- Faculty
- Grad Students
- Undergrads
- Others

Good stories have an arc

- Beginning - middle - end
- Randy Olson, Don't Be Such a Scientist
 - We have a tendency to tell A, A, A stories, but most narratives are A, B, T

AAA?

- And, And, And
 - We drone, focus on details, construct a linear storyline.

ABT?

- And, But, Therefore
 - Tell a story in 5 seconds
 - “But” as a source of tension
 - Josh Schimel, Writing Science
 - Use OCAR: Opening, Challenge, Action, Resolution

What do you need to communicate?

- What's your field?
- What do we already know?
- What is your question?
- Why does it matter?
- What's a really cool thing you found by answering your question?
- How did you figure that out?
- How does it change what we knew?

It's all about the **Audience**

- Colleagues in your discipline
- Academic search committee
- Colleagues outside your discipline
- A Dean or Provost
- Students (grad or undergrad)

General Tips:

- Avoid jargon
- Short sentences, first person
- Explain relevance or significance

- Eye contact
- Smile, posture
- Vary tone of voice and pause / breathe
- Show passion and excitement

Draft an elevator pitch before tomorrow, first thing:

- Audience: Academic Deans, scientists, not in your field
- Setting: at an academic job interview
- Prompt: “Tell me a bit about your recent research”
- Aim for 100-120 words (write something out, but then put it away)
- Time limit: 60 seconds (practice!)

- Small Groups