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