



Tips for MedPhys Slam Finalists

Direct questions to MedPhys.Slam@gmail.com

Bottom line: *Communicating with non-specialists (aka, those not familiar with your work, scientists and nonscientists alike) is different from communicating with medical physicists*

Communicating with scientists generally follows a pyramidal structure. When you communicate your research at a conference, you're probably used to starting your talk with the clinical background and technical foundations of your project before moving on to methods, results, and conclusions. There's nothing wrong with this approach, except when you're conversing with non-specialists.

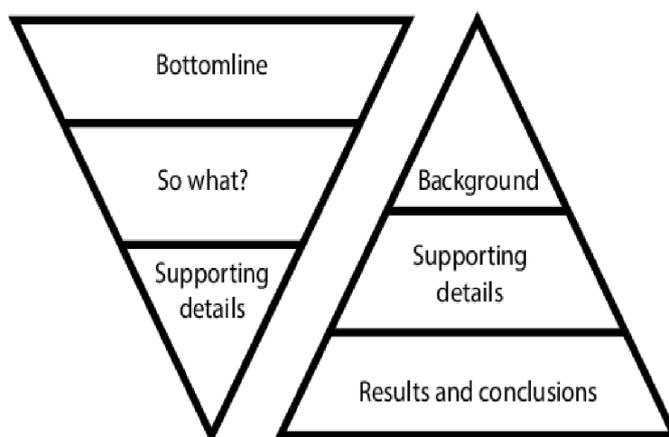
Communication with non-specialists follows an "inverted pyramid" style. In MedPhys Slam and similar communication venues, begin with the "So What?" of your research to grab your audience's attention. This may be a clinical scenario; alternatively, it might be a reduction in cancer mortality or disability. Having established why your work is important, then, and only then, do you move on to reference the other aspects of the research (Problems, Solutions, Benefits) according to the audience's interests. For practice, try filling out the COMPASS Message Box (see below) before starting/refining your own Slam presentation. Tips for filling out the message box can be found [here](#).

What does this mean for MedPhys Slam?

Your audience is the judging panel. Find out as much about the judges as you can before you present. This will help frame and guide your presentation. Questions you might consider are: Do they like music? What is their profession? How much do they already know about science, physics, or the health issue you are trying to address?

Looking for other SciComm (science communication) tips and resources? The 3MT (three-minute thesis) competition off which MedPhys Slam is based has been around since 2008, so there are plenty of resources in this SciComm space alone for you to begin practicing and improving your SciComm skills. For example, check out 3MT (three-minute thesis) and SciComm resources, freely available online. Watch [videos](#) of successful 3MT presentations, and take note of presenters' style, cadence, and slides.

The inverted pyramid



Usual communication by scientists

Image from Figure 2 of "Geoscience on television: a review of science communication literature in the context of geosciences"

MESSAGE BOX

Audience: _____

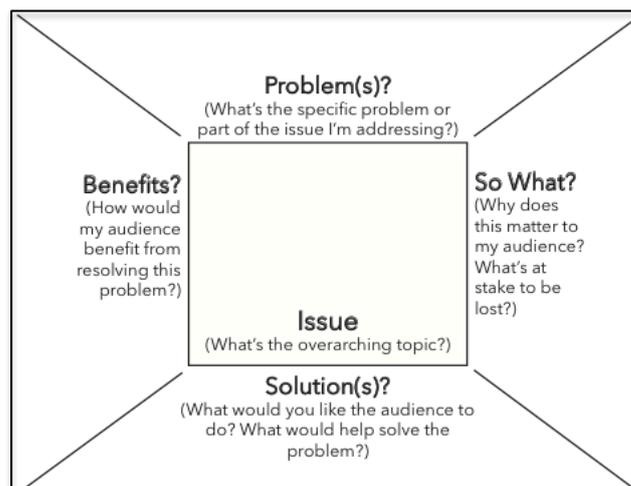


Image from <https://reefresilience.org/communication/communication-planning-process/messages/>