Getting to Yes!
How to Successfully Communicate Your Ideas

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Co-authors Championing Science – Communicating Your Ideas to Decision Makers
Ideas must be heard and understood to drive action.
What gets in the way of effective communication?
Paradigm
Paradigm

The sum of information that scientists associate with a topic
For instance, **Mid Ocean Ridge Basalt**
To me, **Mid Ocean Ridge Basalt** conveys the entire structure of the earth

Spreading ocean basins
Subduction zones consuming the crust
Volcanoes building new land
Grandeur of plate tectonics
But for most people, rocks are something you find in a stream.
When you don’t share a paradigm:

You don’t have the ability to understand the same things,
You don’t even have a framework for understanding,
You can’t translate the words.
How to Bridge Paradigm Gaps

Use clear, common language

Use mixed phrasing for mixed audiences

Anchor to an iconic analogy
Fewest words to provide a high level explanation
Five Slide Approach
Five Slide Approach

1. The problem
2. The technical gap
3. How to fill the gap
4. Why you or your team are right for the job
5. The ask

What’s at stake?

Why does this work matter?
What do we need to learn or understand?

What keeps us from achieving our goal or solving the problem?

Five Slide Approach

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Why is this problem well suited to your skills, reputation, and facilities?

What else have you done in this area?
What do you want your listeners to do?

How can you enlist listeners to help advance your work?

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Unexpected Opportunity

Elevator Pitch Approach
Strategic Communication

Focus on your listeners
Effective communication is not just talking. It’s strategic!

Research
Observation
Analysis
Testing
Logic
Understand Who’s Listening

What They Know
How they Prefer to Get Information
Areas of Interest
Mindsets
Observe

Eye Contact
Facial Expression
Body Position
Changes
Tone/Pace
Telling Stories

Engage in memorable ways
How often have you heard this structure?

"I work on this topic."

“And I observed this thing.”

“And this thing.”

“And this thing.”

“And this equation describes them.”

“And this is another equation that describes them.”

And on and on and on until the conclusion is,

“And this is the work I would like to do.”
Learn to deliver a compelling narrative

Our brains are wired for story
Warning – This Did Not Work

Hooray – This Worked as Predicted!

Serendipity

This is My Story

And, But, Therefore

Engage the modern story venue with \textit{scientific} story forms.
Randy Olson’s And But Therefore – via Trey Parker of South Park.

“I work on this topic.”

“And I observed this thing.”

“And this thing.”

“And this equation describes them,”

“But there is clear mismatch with the equation,”

“Therefore I believe we need to try this.”
Map Out Your Message

Orient to the desired outcome
What do you want your listeners to think, feel and do?
Purpose of Communication

- Determine desired impact

Take Stock of Current Beliefs

- Identify point of view

Start from where your listeners are
Remember This
• Overarching Main Idea You Want to Reinforce

Understand This
• Topic Specifics in Clear Language

Believe This
• Claims that Can Be Supported

Messages
The most important ideas to convey that are tailored to your listeners
Extract the essence of your argument or ideas.

Distill into well-constructed, carefully chosen phrases.

Bring your ideas to life with clear and compelling language.
Influence

A process that takes time
Remember that in front of a decision maker, you are not defending
You are teaching and influencing
Influence is a Process

The Need

Create Interest

Discuss Idea

Seek Buy-in

Proposal

Ideas Have to Fit in Context
Infuse your ideas – then let them evolve organically
Sphere of Influence

- Decision Maker
- Advisor
- Trusted Party
- Experts
A trusted third party endorsement can be powerful.
Influence Styles

- Asserting
- Inspiring
- Connecting
- Negotiating
- Rationalizing
- Advocating
- Uniting
Influence Styles

Advocating

Asserting

Rationalizing
Influence Styles

Uniting

Inspiring

Connecting
Which of styles do you use most often?

1. **Asserting** – Insist your ideas are considered

2. **Rationalizing** – Use logic and reason to convince others

3. **Inspiring** – Encourage others with a shared sense of purpose and what’s possible

4. **Connecting** – Use relationships to advance your goals
Getting to Yes!

Excited about your work

Confident that what you told them is true

Able to take action
MAKE YOUR IMPACT

Learn More at
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