



WORKSHEET: ONE-LINE STORIES

Communicating science in a clear and engaging way is an important skill for science students and scientists. This worksheet provides a technique to improve your research presentations or public talks - presentations of any kind really!

When creating a new presentation, we often spend a lot of time creating slide content, but perhaps not enough time thinking about the links between the slides or how the words we say when transitioning between slides can hugely improve the narrative of our presentations and the engagement, enjoyment and understanding of our audiences.

Exercise

1. Sketch out your presentation by creating a template for your slide deck and choosing your font styles (ideally no more than two), font sizes (larger one for slide headings and then maximum of two sizes for slide content), and colour schemes (hot tip, use one of many website resources that can help you to pick some lovely colours that work well together,¹ and then check that your colour palette is accessible²).
2. Think carefully about the story that you want to tell in your presentation. What are the three most important pieces of information you would like to share with your audience? How will you start and end your presentation?
3. Map out your content by creating some slides with draft titles. The titles should be short and punchy and they could be humorous or not even suitable for your audience at this stage - it's just important that they clearly convey the content you would like to cover on each slide. As a rough guide, create one slide (and not more than two) per minute allocated for your talk.

SLIDE 1: Opening Title	SLIDE 2: Clear and Snappy Title 1	SLIDE 3: Clear and Snappy Title 2
SLIDE 4: Clear and Snappy Title 3	SLIDE 5: Clear and Snappy Title 4	etc...

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4. Next focus on the lines that you will say when transitioning between the slides to ensure that the narrative arc of your presentation is strong. One to two sentences is more than enough, but focus on how you will link the content from one slide to the next.
5. Now that you have written the draft script of your lines between the slides, it's time to focus on the opening to your talk and then your closing words before your acknowledgements. The opening and closing to your talk are really important, so make sure you practice these and feel really confident about how to start your science story and how to close.
6. Read through your script aloud, ideally with a friend or partner. At this stage it should just be the opening and closing of your presentation with the lines between the slides.
7. Once you have refined your script and are happy with it you can start to add the content to your slides and think about what you will say to accompany your images/data/figures etc. Remember to keep the text on your slides to a minimum - the slides are there to support you and not the other way around.
8. When practicing your final talk work to refine the opening, close and lines between the slides, as your work through different drafts and iterations.
9. Remember that your 'lines between the slides' are the key to maintaining a clear narrative arc and to tell the story that you want to tell.
10. You can practice this technique for meetings, interviews or other complicated conversations. As well as knowing what you'd like to discuss, practice the lines between those topics or the lines that lead you out of challenging conversations or that steer the meeting back on track.
11. Good luck! And feel free to let us know if this worked for you!

References

1. www.coolors.co
2. Colour Contrast Analyser, developed by Jun of the Web Accessibility Tools Consortium in collaboration with Vision Australia and Steve Faulkner of [The Paciello Group](#), **Vision Australia**, <https://www.visionaustralia.org/services/digital-access/resources/colour-contrast-analyser>

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