**Esther’s Guide to Pitching**

* Subject lines. Pitch: No Big Words. Tease Them a Little.

Start your subject line with “Pitch:” It lets the journalist know immediately what they’re looking at. Do not use complicated terms. Don’t make it too long. Make them want to read the actual email.

* Keep it short. Journalists don’t have a lot of time to read wordy emails. Four to five sentences is ideal. Two paragraphs is the absolute max.
* Relate the research to topics in the news, such as antibiotic resistance, climate change, species extinction, etc. If the reporter has recently written about that topic, you can reference and link to their story. “Hey [Name], I saw your recent story on [Topic], [Insert headline with embedded link]. I thought you might be interested in a new study coming out next week…
* Tell the reporter what you have. If you have photos, videos, audio, mention that at the bottom of the pitch. Mention that you or the lead investigator are available for interviews.
* Wrap it up with a question. Can I send a copy of the paper? Can I send a press release about the research?
* Leave out links and attachments. Those can trigger spam filters. Just send a text note with nothing else and you’re more likely to be seen. If the reporter is interested, they will reply and ask for more.
* Create a tiered pitch list. Go after your big fish first. I segment my lists in groups of ten. Biggest publications at the top, smaller publications at the bottom. You may have to send out dozens of pitches before you get one reporter that swings at it.

Examples of successful recent pitches

**Pitch: Discrimination Linked with Cognitive Decline in Hispanic Adults**

Hey Domenico,

One of our researchers here at The University of Texas at Austin recently published a first-of-its-kind study that found a link between experiencing discrimination and later cognitive decline in Hispanic and Latino adults. The study looked at Hispanic and Latino people born in Mexico and the U.S., who were living in the U.S. It found that those who experienced discrimination were more likely to suffer from cognitive decline later in life.

In light of the impacts of cognitive decline on older Americans, researchers said it’s important to understand as many contributing factors as possible. I thought you and your audience might be interested in this story. Would you like me to send you a copy of the release and the study?  The author, Elizabeth Muñoz, is available for interviews.

**This landed our researcher on NPR’s Morning Edition**

**Breaking News Pitch - How Coronavirus Spread Before Quarantine**

Hey Tiffany,

Saw some of your excellent coronavirus reporting in the NYT. UT Austin has breaking research news this morning by one of our disease vector-specialists and a team from China (including Hong Kong) and France on the likelihood that coronavirus spread to more than 100 cities well before the quarantine in Wuhan. Based on travel data and modeling, her team believes there were 10 times as many cases of coronavirus in Wuhan as reported the day before the quarantine, and 128 cities have a 50% or greater chance of infection spreading there.

The lead researcher, Lauren Ancel Meyers, is working with the CDC and they have her paper in press for Emerging Infectious Diseases.

Want to talk to her this afternoon?

**This pitch landed our epidemiologist in the NY Times and launched her as a high-profile expert on the spread of SARS-COV-2**.