

# FROM GEEK SPEAK TO GOOD SPEAK - Crafting a message that resonates

Professional Development - Friday - April 1st, 2022

**TIME:** 3 pm to 5 pm

TIME	ACTIVITY	DETAILS
3:00 to 3:05 pm	<b>Introduction</b>	1. Who am I? 2. Who are you? 3. How did we get here?
3:05 to 3:25 pm	<b>Lecture 1</b>	<b>How and Why to Effectively Communicate Science to Broad Audiences</b> (...so basically anyone)
3:25 to 3:50 pm	<b>Workshop 1</b>	<b>Recognizing and Avoiding Jargon</b> Crafting your message without difficult words
3:50 to 4:00 pm	BREAK	BREAK
—	—	—
4:00 to 4:20 pm	<b>Lecture 2</b>	<b>Social Media and Science</b>
4:20 to 4:50 pm	<b>Workshop 2</b>	<b>Crafting a message for online media</b> Micro-blogging from 140 characters to 500 words
4:50 to 5:00 pm	<b>Wrapping Up</b>	1. My closing remarks 2. Any questions?

## Lecture 1 - How and Why to Effectively Communicate Science to Broad Audiences

Presentation

## Workshop 1 - Recognizing and Avoiding Jargon

**GOAL:** After a brief introduction to what jargon *is* and how to recognize it, we will use the and then reconvene and report back to the group about the types of jargon you use in your field and how to explain those concepts in other ways.

### **Avoiding Jargon in Public Communication:**

I've introduced the concept of our discipline specific jargon in the presentation materials. As I mention in the presentation, the use of jargon is the number one way you can turn an audience (weather its your Mom and Dad or a stranger in an elevator or a lecture hall) away from you. It is also to remember the key is to communicate by finding the "sweet spot" of communication - not talking below

Here's a series of questions for us to consider:

- What language are you using when you are speaking about your science?
- Is it possible to use more simple language to clearly communicate?
- How do you decide which words everyone can understand (unless you can't use any other word - then how do you clearly explain and define)?
- Can you come up with examples in your own research of how you avoided jargon when speaking to someone?

Let's prepare a 500 word or less blog post on your Dissertation research topic. We'll use the [Up-Goer Five Text Editor](#). You have 15-20 minutes to do this. We'll reconvene to discuss how it went for you.

## **Lecture 2 - Social Media? Why does it matter?**

Presentation

## **Workshop 2 - Crafting a message for online media - Micro-blogging from 140 characters to 500 words**

**GOAL:** Crafting a narrative by storytelling that is compelling and interesting for a general audience using short bits

Points to remember:

- Science writing focuses on jargon-filled accuracy over engagement. Science for scientists, is usually "and... and... and..."
- So, how do we engage? Let's talk about the *ABT* method (And... But... Therefore) and focus on developing a "three-act" story. Here let's focus on the tension of the "but"
- Our brains naturally look for the conflict and are focused on the tension

Let's think about crafting our stories using this template, which works for both short and long stories

This template can be written as:

\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, but \_\_\_\_\_, therefore \_\_\_\_\_.

We'll listen to this NPR story from a couple of years ago about how scientists have taken a picture of the elusive black hole: <https://www.npr.org/2019/04/10/711951875/scientists-have-taken-the-first-photo-of-something-thats-invisible-a-black-hole>

After we have listened to the story, let's now discuss the *ABT* method of storytelling here. Using the transcript of the story (here's the [link](#) again) as a guide:

- What are the factual details to set up the story (the “ands”)?
- What is the conflict (the “but”)?
- What is the resolution (the “therefore”)?

**GOAL:** Let's craft a series of tweets (at 140 characters or less) about the NPR story above using the storytelling guidelines we just discussed.

Here are a few tips for crafting content:

1. **You don't have to fill the space**

We have short attention spans so if you can get your point accross in less than 140 character or 500 words then that is the best. Also remember, content such as any images, videos, polls, or tweets that you quote don't count against your character or word limit.

2. **Avoid jargon, too many hashtags, and inside humor**

People are turned off by too many hashtags and copious jargon - make everyone feel connected and not overwhelmed when you are communicating your message. Hashtags can be very powerful, so think about the purpose of your post before you add any hashtags. If you're looking for this post to reach new audiences or trying to boost engagement, a hashtag or two can make sense. But if you're looking for clicks from your existing audience, it could be best to not use hashtags at all.

3. **Think about short and catchy titles and headlines**

When you share a tweet or a blog post, titles that are too long can turn a viewer away. It's important to keep in mind that when links are shared to Twitter, the headline is displayed so it can be good to avoid repeating it in your tweet, too.

4. **Stay timely**

Social media is all about real-time and in-the-moment content – while it's okay to deviate a bit (I do it), it's best to stay timely and focus on science topics that are happening now or research that is new to the world.

## Closing Remarks