

CRAFTING A WINNING RESEARCH ELEVATOR PITCH

Arthritis Society Training Workshop 2018

WHAT'S AN ELEVATOR PITCH?

- ▼ A short description of who you are and your research project, for when you're speaking to people unfamiliar with it.
- ▼ Think of "4 Cs" – clear, concise, compelling, and conversational.

WHY CREATE ONE?

- ▼ Share your research with those who may benefit from it.
- ▼ Raise awareness of key problems and what can be done to fix them.
- ▼ Make connections with others in the research ecosystem.
- ▼ Start a conversation to encourage mutual learning.
- ▼ Inspire others with research progress.

WHAT SHOULD IT COVER?

- ▼ Your research project topic "one-liner"
- ▼ The Big Gap
- ▼ How you're helping fill it
- ▼ What you've found (if available)
- ▼ The impact this could have – *what's in it for your audience?*
- ▼ So what?

WHAT MAKES A GOOD ONE?

- ▼ Clear
 - Avoids jargon; uses clear plain language
 - Tells a story with a logical flow
- ▼ Concise
 - An elevator ride is pretty quick!
 - Keeps it simple
- ▼ Compelling
 - Clear rationale, gap, and solution
 - Clear "so what" factor
- ▼ Conversational
 - Relatable (e.g. use of analogies or simple concepts)
 - Invites further interest

WHAT IS PLAIN LANGUAGE?

- ▼ Grammatically correct, accurate, professional communication
- ▼ Clear and to the point
- ▼ Tells audience what they need to know, without unnecessary words, jargon, or expressions
- ▼ Takes less time to read/process and understand
- ▼ Describes research terms and concepts in a meaningful way for the audience
- ▼ Breaks down barriers and silos

COMMON CHALLENGES

- ▼ Not so clear
 - Boggled down in caveats/exceptions
 - Too much jargon or unnecessarily technical language
- ▼ Not so concise
 - Rambling
 - TMI
- ▼ Not so compelling
 - Forgetting the “big picture” impact goal and “so what” factor
- ▼ Not so conversational
 - Tone or language doesn't match the audience or setting

FURTHER READING AND RESOURCES

- ▼ Plain language resources and guidance from the National Institutes of Health (NIH):
<https://www.nih.gov/institutes-nih/nih-office-director/office-communications-public-liaison/clear-communication/plain-language>
- ▼ Plain language summary guidance from INVOLVE:
<http://www.invo.org.uk/resource-centre/plain-english-summaries/>
- ▼ CIHR Jargon Buster:
<http://www.cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/48952.html>
- ▼ CIHR-IMHA Research Ambassadors – criteria for excellent lay abstracts and winning examples:
<http://www.cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/43205.html>
- ▼ Naturejobs.com article on elevator pitches:
<https://www.nature.com/naturejobs/science/articles/10.1038/nj7435-137a>