The Art of Storytelling

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Describe your latest research project...

Colleague

Airplane Acquaintance
Lost in Translation...

Consequences of erudite vernacular utilized irrespective of necessity

Problems with using long words needlessly
Graduate Training

coursework
research
writing
presentations
teaching
consulting
Why translate science for the public?
How can we do this?

• CONNECT
• CAPTIVATE
• CONVEY

Tell a better story!
“The Story...Matters, Not Just the Ending”

--Paul Lockhart
Storytelling

• Break away from the norm
  – Suspense! Surprise!

• Clear structure and purpose: So what?

• Clarity and focus: What is the take-away message?
Translation

• What does the audience need to know?
• Why should they care?

“You should behave as if the listeners know nothing but are capable of understanding everything.”
Lion Podcasts

Africa’s human population is expected to increase threefold by the end of this century and growth is expected to be highest near protected areas....

 Accelerating declines of carnivores as a result of human-carnivore conflict and habitat loss are likely.

The movie the lion king has been captivating audiences since 1994. ... Many people dream of visiting Africa and seeing lions in their natural habitat.

However, people may be the bigger threat that lions face.
Storytelling

• Break away from the norm
  – Suspense! Surprise!
• Clear structure and purpose: So what?
• Clarity and focus: What is the take-away message?
• Analogy and metaphor
[G]rowth is expected to be highest near protected areas. The fastest growing areas in Africa are along the borders of protected areas. *This would be like the US having major human development occurring around Yellowstone and Yosemite national parks as opposed to around metropolitan areas.*
“It’s All in the Delivery”

• Animate with voice
• Nonverbal communication
• Visuals
Microbial Communities

(MICROBIAL)

Engineering the Neighborhood
Hormay rest-rotation

Year 1

- Grazed during growing season
- Grazed post-growing season
- Rested
Hormay rest-rotation

Year 1

- Grazed during growing season
- Grazed post-growing season
- Rested
Hormay rest-rotation

Year 1
- Grazed during growing season
- Rested

Year 2
- Grazed during growing season
- Grazed post-growing season

Year 3
- Grazed post-growing season
- Rested
Take-Aways

• Know your audience

• Tell a better story: Connect, Captivate, Convey

• Translate

  “You should behave as if the listeners know nothing but are capable of understanding everything.”

• Practice!
www.montana.edu/stemstorytellers
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