




Three Minute Thesis Workshop

December 5th, 2023
School of Graduate Studies

Parts of the Workshop

-
- Rules
 - Judging Criteria
 - Presentation & Slide Tips
 - Delivery Tips
 - Small Group Drafting Time
- 

Rules (Part 1)

- **A single static PowerPoint slide is permitted (no slide transitions, animations or 'movement' of any description; the slide is to be presented from the beginning of the oration).**
 - *This can be a very useful tool to convey meaning or tone quickly and easily.*
- **No additional electronic media (e.g. sound and video files) are permitted.**
- **No additional props (e.g. costumes, musical instruments, laboratory equipment) are permitted.**
- **Presentations are limited to 3 minutes maximum and competitors exceeding 3 minutes are disqualified.**
 - *You will be able to see a countdown timer of your time as you speak.*
- **Presentations are to be spoken word (e.g. no poems, raps or songs).**

Rules (Part 2)

- **Presentations are to commence from the stage.**
 - *There won't be a stage, but you will have to stand in front of the room and not move around.*
- **Presentations are considered to have commenced when a presenter starts their presentation through movement or speech.**
 - *The second you start talking or gesturing, the timer will begin.*
- **The decision of the adjudicating panel is final.**
 - *No arguing with the judges! Not that you would.*

Criteria: Comprehension and Content

(These aren't meant to be hit in order; they can be sprinkled throughout the presentation wherever it makes sense to include them.)

- **Presentation provided clear background and significance to the research question**
 - *You've shown the audience enough context for your research for them to understand a) what you are doing and b) why what you're doing is important.*
- **Presentation clearly described the research strategy/design and the results/findings of the research**
 - *You've shown the audience how you got your results and what those results were.*
- **Presentation clearly described the conclusions, outcomes and impact of the research**
 - *You've shown the audience what conclusions you drew from your results and what those results and conclusions mean for the world.*

Criteria: Engagement and Communication

(These should be present throughout the entire presentation.)

- **The oration was delivered clearly, and the language was appropriate for a non-specialist audience**
 - *You've spoken clearly and slowly, and explained your work in a way that anyone could understand it, not just your peers.*
- **The PowerPoint slide was well-defined and enhanced the presentation**
 - *Your slide tied in to your presentation clearly, supported the points that you were making, and was clean looking.*
- **The presenter conveyed enthusiasm for their research and captured and maintained the audience's attention**
 - *Your tone was engaging (excited, serious, etc.) and you were able to inspire that feeling in the audience and keep them interested the whole time.*

Submission Details

The deadline for entry via [this form](#) is 11:59pm on 1/31/2024.

Be sure to have a draft (written or video) of your 3 minute presentation, a draft of your single PowerPoint slide, and written permission from your committee chair/thesis advisor to be a part of the competition. (Written permission can be any correspondence giving consent to compete, from a formal letter of approval to an informal email exchange.)

All entries will be judged by an unbiased preliminary panel in order to choose the top 5 Master's and top 5 Doctoral presentations. Those ten entrants will then move on to the live 3MT event on April 12th.

Example Video



Writing and Style Tips



Motivation

Why is this important?



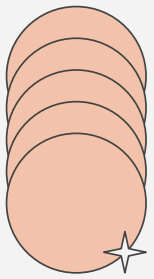
Take a Bird's Eye View



Tell a (Captivating) Story

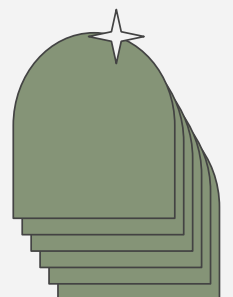


Simplify Your Slide



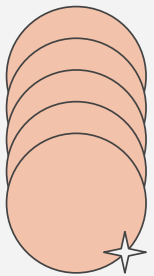
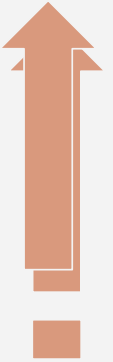
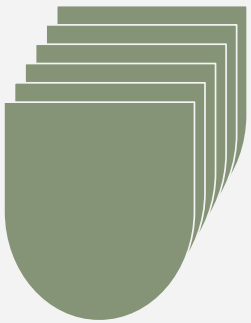
Motivation: Why is this important?

Your audience should be aware from the very beginning why they should care about the work that you are doing. There are many ways to do this -- you can connect it to their lives in some way, tell them something about it that you are very excited about, show how it will help to improve the world or our understanding of it, etc. There is a reason that you are doing the work that you are doing; make that reason clear.



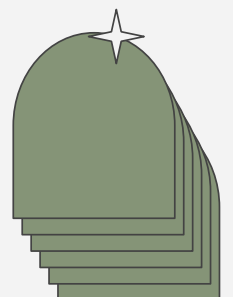
Take a Bird's Eye View

Don't get bogged down in very specific details or jargon about your research. Remember that your audience members don't know your research like you do! You don't want to lose them by confusing them with unfamiliar terms or concepts. Approach your research like you are explaining it to a parent or a friend who is not in your field. Find a balance between talking about your work in simple terms and oversimplifying your work.

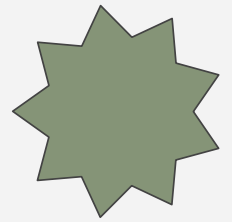


Tell a (Captivating) Story

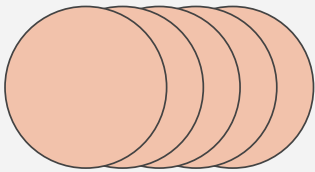
The best 3MT speeches tend to be structured like stories. Some of them have a beginning, middle, and end. Some of them use a more familiar extended metaphor to make a complicated concept clear to a layman audience. Some of them ask the audience to imagine themselves in a future where the results of your research have made positive changes to the world. You are, in the end, a storyteller during this speech, and it will be up to you to lead the audience along through the work you've done in a way that keeps them engaged.



Simplify Your Slide



The slide is meant to complement your speech, not stand in for it. The best slides for 3MT speeches are simple images that evoke something important for the audience, or simple data visualizations that make much clearer something that might be difficult to describe with words alone. Don't lean on the slide as a crutch; very often, winning slides only act as a backdrop for the winner's presentation, not as an integral piece of it.



Delivery Tips

01

Take
Breaths
and Speak
Slowly

02

Use
Dynamics

03

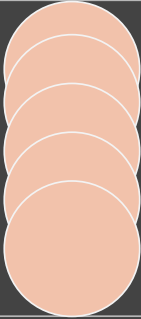
Practice,
Practice,
Practice

04

Watch
Previous
Winners

Take Breaths and Speak Slowly

Make sure that you are not breathless when you speak. Take a breath before you start, and do not let yourself get out of breath as you continue. You also want to speak more slowly than you think. Your nerves will make you speed up automatically, most likely without noticing it; making yourself go about 30% slower than you would normally will help to combat that unconscious speed change.



Use Dynamics

You only have your voice and one slide to get a lot of information out to the audience, so you will need to use all of the tools that you have. In music, “dynamics” are the variations in volume and intensity that exist throughout a piece in order to evoke a particular effect. Changing your volume, intonation, cadence, etc. can have an impact on the meaning of your words, their impact on the audience, and the audience’s interest in what you are saying.



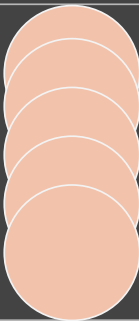
Practice, Practice, Practice

Practice early and often. Give your presentation alone to yourself, in front of the mirror, and in front of friends and family. Start with cue cards, and then slowly work up to not needing to use them anymore. Record yourself to see where you speed up, where you stumble over your words, and where you might need to make changes in order to make your delivery easier to remember or say. Get feedback wherever you can.



Watch Previous Winners

There are hundreds of videos of winners of 3MT from all over the world. They all won for a reason, and you can learn from watching them and listening to how they present their work. Watch their body language, their facial expressions, and break down how they talk about the research that they are doing in an effective way. Why are they successful? How can you emulate those parts of their presentations, while adding your own unique twist?





QUESTIONS?



Drafting
Group
Breakout
Session



Please ask questions of the staff in order to help you with your draft!

3MT Resources

 [3MT Winners and What Sets Them Apart](#)

[Translating Your Scientific Writing for a Public Audience](#)

[Translating Your Scientific Figures for a Public Audience](#)

