

## Bring Clarity, Relevance and Impact to Your Message!

You can use this form to prepare for: an elevator pitch, the beginning of a longer talk, a conversation with funders, a media interview...or even your family at the holidays!

Before you generate your BIG IDEA with this form, it is important to consider your audience.

**Communication only exists if the speaker's message resonates in some way with their audience.** You wouldn't speak the same way to a kindergartner as you would a rocket scientist – so start with them. Recognizing their needs first will help you shape what to include and exclude, and help you consider audience-appropriate language and examples.

<p><b>WHO is your audience?</b> <i>A job or research interviewer? The media? A funding source?</i></p>	<p><b>WHY is this topic important to them?</b></p>
<p><b>WHO are you?</b> <i>Relationship to audience and/or your credentials.</i></p>	<p><b>WHY do you care about this topic?</b></p>
<p><b>WHAT is your Goal?</b> <i>What do you want your audience to think, feel or do?</i></p>	



**Your audience might have a different perspective on your topic than you do.** You might encounter misunderstanding or even confrontation from a listener. When this happens, you need to have a strategy that 1) shows understanding and even empathy for their position, and 2) bridges the conversation back to your BIG IDEA.

**One way is to think about the common ground that you both share.** For example, a pediatrician talking to a vaccine-hesitant parent—their common ground is that both doctor and parent are concerned with the health of the child. Let's construct your message in a conversational way. **Consider beginning with language like: "One thing we BOTH care about is \_\_\_\_\_."**

You have considered the people involved in this communication scenario and the common ground that exists between you. **Drawing on that information, and in the simplest form, what is this topic about? This is The BIG IDEA.** The BIG IDEA needs to be drawn from your passion about this topic and described in a way that is relevant to the cares and concerns of your audience. For example, as a pediatrician, Evonne's BIG IDEA is that the benefits of vaccination far outweigh the slight chance of side effects you might be concerned with.

**Consider beginning with language like: "The thing I care about most in this area is \_\_\_\_\_."**

Use the space below (if desired) to expand the BIG IDEA and, if applicable, add your research question. **Consider beginning with language like: "I / our team are trying to / we wondered if \_\_\_\_\_."**

**What is the most novel aspect of what you are doing? How do you stand apart?**

*Remember, people are a part of this story.*

**An example, analogy or metaphor helps support understanding (don't skip these steps)**

*(EXAMPLE: "An example of this is \_\_\_\_\_.")*

*(ANALOGY or METAPHOR: "It's kind of like \_\_\_\_\_.")*

**How will the world change?** *Remember to include what is at stake. What will happen if this work succeeds or fails?*

**The final statement is the only thing many audiences remember. Make it count! "The most important thing to remember is \_\_\_\_\_."** *(Revisit what makes you novel and why it should matter to them).*

**In speaking or writing, you may choose to expand on some of these ideas, and/or leave some out.** You may choose to reorder this writing to engage your audience more directly. It is likely that this template has provided a framework that you might need to tie together with transitions. The intent is to give you a starting point that will make your message not only reflective of your work – but resonant to the audience in front of you. Remember, what you say is only as valuable as how you say it. **How people hear your message determines whether you make a connection – so go back to your WHY and tap into that passion to motivate your reason to speak. Good luck!**