

How to Create a Research Presentation for an Elected Official

Creating a presentation for an elected official about your scientific research can be hard! It's difficult for scientists to get out of the mindset of "I need to justify my results by showing all my data" and really get to the core aspects of your research, especially for basic scientists. It's important to do your research ahead of time and tailor your talks to whomever you will be presenting to and to make sure that you don't exceed the time allotted to you.

Here is a basic outline as to what your presentation should include:

- A slide on big picture about your research/why it's important to study
 - Connect how your research and research like it benefits the official's constituents or furthers their priorities/how it links up with their own interests
- A slide on the background of your research
 - Keep it brief and general, only important take-aways
- A slide on the specific question you're asking and how it will advance your field
 - Keep technical details at a minimum
- A slide on what your research has found/is telling you
 - You don't need to show specific results, or even talk in depth about the results you are showing
- A slide on the broader implications of your research/how your field will be impacted
 - Emphasize how your research is contributing to the advancement in your field
- A summary/acknowledgements slide
 - Be sure to make federal sources of funding prominent
 - Acknowledgements should be brief, really emphasize the summary

Some tips:

- If you're showing graphs or data, re-label the axis to something that anybody can understand
- Reiterate the big picture and how your research is advancing the field, repetition is key in driving your point home
- Relate your research as much as possible to what the official's goals/priorities are and make sure to reiterate this throughout your presentation