

2022 3MT Past Winner's Advice to All Participants

Shoutout to all those who have registered for this year's 3MT competition. Congratulations on taking up the challenge of disseminating your research to a general audience. Our times suggest increasing awareness and the significance of science communication. To those who have yet to register, I encourage you to try it. In my opinion, the experience one gets from participating in this helps boost one's confidence and succinctly clarifies one's position on one's research focus. These benefits come from communicating and modifying one's thought processes when one touches on the essentials of their research to a general audience. Here are my top three tips for those willing to give the 3MT opportunity a try:

For you to remember, I will call it the **SIM card** approach for this discussion. We all have SIM cards on our phones, so this approach should be easy to remember. Let's start with:

1. **S – Story.** Share a story! You have 3 minutes and not enough time to explain everything in your research to us. Most of us have Netflix, Amazon Prime, Disney+, etc., because we are all innately wired to love stories. Remember your bedtime stories while you were young? Those of us who remember and enjoyed such moments loved it! There is adequate research to back up why the human brain is wired for stories, and you can look it up if interested. For the 3MT, share a well-crafted short story communicating your research to a general audience. Don't pick the wrong story. Your story should be the polished piece of work you have already done or work in progress.
2. **I – Imagery.** Choose your words carefully, and let your words be visually descriptive or figurative. This allows your audience to follow what you say in a short time and attention span. You can combine imagery with whatever you create on your 3MT slide. If you want to use a random image from online, try to get a free Creative Commons licensed image. Keep your slide simple. As has always been said, less is more! Unless there is no other way to communicate your story apart from using a complex slide, make your slide simple. Remember to be intentional with the words you choose or say to support your slide image and research.
3. **M – Metaphors.** Using metaphors is like utilizing suspense in a movie. Use this generously to keep your audience focused and engaged in the story you are sharing. It is good to use this midway to explain your research or at the end to keep your audience reflective of your story. You can get creative and have your 3MT title reflect the metaphor from the beginning.

Now, there you have it. The **SIM card** approach (Story, imagery, and metaphors) in communication.

Some **other tips** I have heard from different sources are: “Stay on time and be engaging” and remember that “nobody knows deeply what your research is about, and even if they do, they don't care” – Wendy Strangman. For those who want **one more** tip, you can read about “Stasis theory.” Wishing you all the best!!