LUCID Seminar
3 Minute Thesis
3 Min Thesis

YOUR THESIS IN 3 MINUTES:

1. WHY YOU’RE DOING IT
   ("MY SUPERVISOR TOLD ME TO DO IT" DOESN’T COUNT)

2. HOW YOU’RE DOING IT
   (ASSUMING YOU KNOW)

3. HOW IT RELATES TO THE REAL WORLD
   (UMM... PAUSE!)
3 Min Thesis

Goal:

To present
What you are doing
How you are doing it and
Why

In a way that engages the audience, without reducing your research to purely entertainment value
3 Min Thesis

The What and How of your research should be in your thesis abstract

Think of this as a ‘user friendly version’
3 Min Thesis

Your Audience:

Academics – not in your field
3 Min Thesis

Your Audience:

Academics – not in your field

They will be wondering:

Can you think and communicate clearly?
Do you pay due respect to the body of knowledge?
Do you have interesting ideas?
Can you ask the right questions?
Do you know the implications of your work?
Exercise:

What are the characteristics of a bad academic presentation?
Exercise:

What are the characteristics of a bad academic presentation?

Others have said:

Too technical – lose interest
Too much on each slide – get lost – try to read while trying to listen
No structure – doesn’t have a narrative arc or flow
Reading from notes
Unclear speech
Too simple – feel ‘talked down to’
Body language – too much or not enough
Small font or wacky fonts
Lots of different fonts or colors
3 Min Thesis

6 Step Plan
First Step: Identify the core of your idea

Complete the following sentence:

‘The purpose of my research is … ’
3 Min Thesis

6 Step Plan
First Step: Identify the core of your idea

Complete the following sentence:

‘The purpose of my research is … ’

Try ‘if we don’t understand *blah* then we can’t *blah*’

If time – share with neighbor and provide constructive feedback
6 Step Plan
Second Step: Can you Break a Pattern?

One sentence response to:

Do you have an unexpected aspect of your research? What might be counter-intuitive? Where does it disrupt common sense?
6 Step Plan
Second Step: Can you Break a Pattern?

One sentence response to:

Do you have an unexpected aspect of your research? What might be counter-intuitive? Where does it disrupt common sense?

Try – ‘previous research has only looked at X I’m exploring Ψ’

We can’t demand attention – we must attract it. The most basic way is to provoke surprise and interest by breaking a pattern.
3 Min Thesis

6 Step Plan
Third Step: Find a Metaphor

Close your Eyes as you think about these statements:

Imagine the Wisconsin Capital Building
Imagine the chorus of a favorite song
Imagine the Mona Lisa
Imagine the house where you spent most of your childhood
Imagine the definition of watermelon
6 Step Plan
Third Step: Find a Metaphor

When I said think of
The ‘definition’
You probably thought
Of this...

Not the word ‘fruit’

Which memories were the most vivid?
6 Step Plan
Third Step: Find a Metaphor

If you examine something with your senses it becomes more concrete.

Can you use a metaphor to explain your research method, topic or a key problem you are working on?

Metaphors are useful because they borrow features from everyday world of experience.
6 Step Plan
Forth Step: Why You?

Being a student makes you pretty credible...

But if there is a reason that you are doing this work vs. a completely different field ... or if you have an experience that makes you the most suited for this work it could add to your credibility...

Perhaps insert your Why You Do What You Do
6 Step Plan
Forth Step: Why You?

Being a student makes you pretty credible...

But if there is a reason that you are doing this work vs. a completely different field … or if you have an experience that makes you the most suited for this work it could add to your credibility...

Perhaps insert your Why You Do What You Do
3 Min Thesis

6 Step Plan
Fifth Step: Emotional Engagement

When ideas are presented abstractly, limited to stats; People are more likely to be more analytical than emotional …

Remember the goal is to excite & inspire (these are emotions)
I could tell you that doing a thesis is hard and about 1/3 of people who start never finish.

OR
3 Min Thesis

I could tell you that doing a thesis is hard and about 1/3 of people who start never finish.

OR

I could tell you it feels like this.
You can make people to care more about your research if you can get them feel some degree of emotional engagement.

An easy way to do that is ‘piggy back’ your research on a care or interest that already exists.

- Social Concerns
- Audience’s self interest (WIFM)
6 Step Plan
Sixth Step: Stories

Is there a story that you can use to talk about your research? Can this story make us feel emotionally involved? Or make us curious?

Stories draw the audience into the story teller’s world and help us to identify with the scenario being told.
3 Min Thesis

6 Step Plan

1. Simplify – what is the purpose?
2. Surprise – is there something unexpected?
3. Concrete Example or metaphor?
4. Credibility – why you?
5. Emotional Engagement – why should we care?
6. Stories – bring it to life
3 Min Thesis

Examples:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IraTf8UPcUY
Language and the Brain

https://vimeo.com/61599047
Lifetime costs of male reproductive effort

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QfrUCg1S7vk
Giving words new life in dementia

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zKBXhpc2cBU
Network Security by YOU

https://vimeo.com/151162651
Neuro-Sign: Not Just another Vital Sign

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ufh5iw8__1k
Speech Synthesis from Found Speech