



REconnect Symposium Tip Sheet

KISS: Keep It Simple Scientists!

This does not mean "dumbing down" anything; it does mean that there is a range of scientific understanding and awareness in the room. While it is impossible to predict "who knows what" , a few suggestions below might help you craft and deliver your research in engaging ways:

Rule of 3s

- Write out a short (one paragraph) elevator speech that captures your research from a 30,000 foot view. To do this, imagine you have 30 seconds with someone who knows nothing about science but has 3 billion dollars to give to one coastal research project. What would you sift out as the most important to share? Next, using your script, identify no more than *three* main points you see as the most important to share. If you have trouble, practice speaking your elevator speech. Oftentimes, core messages organically bubble up to the surface.

Demonstration

- Now, with your main points in hand, which ones can you substitute or emphasize with a demonstration, video, hands-on activity, specimen, etc.?
- Connecting to real life examples or metaphors is a great way to emphasize points. For example, use a tape measure to show how long a humpback whale is, touch sandpaper to represent shark skin, use a gallon of water to represent the weight of a bear cub.
- Remember how you like to learn...and how you don't. If you gravitate to visuals such as videos and photos, use those. If you learn best by doing, share hands-on demonstrations and specimens.

Engage, Engage, Engage

Diversify

- A good strategy is to prepare multiple ways of engagement since people learn in different ways and you might have several people at your table at one time. Prepare at least one self-directed activity, demo, visual at your table so that it can free you up to talk to others or lead a separate activity yourself.
- Example: If you are talking to an educator about your research on fiddler crabs, you might want to have photos (or molts) of the different species found in S.C., a looping video of male fiddler crabs doing their mating dance, live specimens in a tank, etc. for others who walk up as you are talking to another teacher. That way, as you wrap up talking with one person, you can be engaging others in the meantime.
- If you have classroom lessons you've already used or what to try out...do! Even if a lesson isn't polished, you can always ask educators to try it out with their students and give you feedback. Teachers are willing participants in helping you!

Ask Questions

- Verbally
 - Ask what subject and grade level they teach.
 - Ask why they are interested in your research topic and/or what they know about the general topic of your research
 - Ask what their needs are for their classroom (as it pertains to science education)
- Written
 - Have questions that go along with your demonstration, activity, etc. This could be matching, T/F, multiple choice, etc.

Handouts

- Have handouts and resources available to pass out
- Create your "calling card": what can you provide after the event is over? Examples include: speaking to a class, working together on a lesson plan, etc.

What do educators need? What do you need?

- Real time data is a *huge* draw for lots of science teachers. Knowing how to access the data and possible applications are bonuses.
- Provide any potential research that teachers and/or their students could become involved.
- What online resources you would suggest to teachers.
- Offer your time to speak to their students.
- Identify ways in which teachers and their students might help you – do you have lesson you want to try out? Do you have a new community-science tool you'd like to use?

DO:

- Select three main concepts you want the teachers to fully understand. If they want more, have resources available for them to take and they can follow up with you later.
- Omit terms and/or acronyms that might not be commonly used or understood.
- Use metaphors or every day examples to highlight your points. Connecting on commonly understood items helps drive home your key points. For example, if you're talking about the salt marsh as a natural way to mitigate flooding, you might say, the salt marsh acts like a sponge.
- Ask questions to the teachers - this will help you with sharing your information.
- Do create your "calling card": what can you provide after the event is over? Examples include: speaking to a class, working together on a lesson plan, etc.

DON'T:

- ...try to capture multiple years of research within the few minutes you'll have with the teachers.
- ...use unnecessary acronyms or complicated scientific terms.
- ...worry! You'll do great!