

Advice for Presenting in a Three Minute Thesis Competition

Before you start work on your PowerPoint presentation file please read through the advice below.

Speak Substance to Your Audience

- Make sure you have more to share than general conceptualization and theory & methodology
- This competition focuses on *communicating to non-academic audiences*. You must translate, simplify, employ rhetoric, and speak plain English that captivates persons outside your academic discipline.

Watch videos of winning participants from previous 3MT competitions:

- <https://threeminutethesis.uq.edu.au/watch-3mt>

Write for your audience

- Avoid jargon and academic language.
- Explain concepts and people important to your research - you may know all about a scholar's theories but your audience may not.
- Highlight the outcomes of your research, both the desired outcomes and the unforeseen outcomes.
- Imagine that you are explaining your research to a family member who is not an academic or an intellectual
- Convey your excitement and enthusiasm for your subject.

Tell a story

- You may like to present your 3MT as a narrative, with a beginning, middle and end.
- It's not easy to condense your research into three minutes, so you may find it easier to break your presentation down into smaller sections.
- Try writing an opener to catch the attention of the audience, then highlight your different points, and finally have a summary to restate the importance of your work.

Have a clear outcome in mind

- Know what you want your audience to take away from your presentation.
- Try to leave the audience with an understanding of what you're doing, why it is important, and what you hope to achieve.

Revise

- Proof your 3MT presentation by reading it aloud, to yourself and to an audience of friends and family.
- Ask for feedback from colleagues.
- Ask your practice audience if your presentation clearly highlights what your research is about and why it is important.

Best Practices

- **Less is more:** text and complicated graphics can distract your audience – you don't want them to read your slide instead of listening to your 3MT.
- **Personal touches:** personal touches can allow your audience to understand the impact of your research.
- **Creativity drives interest:** do not rely on your slide to convey your message – it should simply complement your oration.

- **Work your message:** think about how your slide might be able to assist with the format and delivery of your presentation – is there a metaphor that helps explain your research?
- An engaging visual presentation can make or break any oration, so make sure your slide is **legible, clear and concise**.

Study and Learn From Examples

- Watch your role models such as academics, politicians and journalists, and break down their strengths and weaknesses.
- Analyze how they engage with their audience.
- View presentations by [previous 3MT finalists](#).

Vocal range

- Speak clearly and use variety in your voice (fast/slow, loud/ soft).
- Do not rush – find your rhythm.
- Remember to pause at key points as it gives the audience time to think about what you are saying.

Body language

- Stand straight and confidently.
- Hold your head up and make eye contact.
- Never turn your back to the audience.
- Practice how you will use your hands and move around the stage. It is okay to move around energetically if that is your personality, however it is also appropriate for a presentation to be delivered from a single spot on stage.
- Do not make the common mistakes of rolling back and forth on your heels, pacing for no reason or playing with your hair as these habits are distracting for the audience.

Dress

- There is no dress code, but if you are unsure of how to dress you may want to dress for a job interview or an important meeting. It is important that you feel comfortable so you can focus on your presentation.
- Some footwear create loud noises while you walk, which detract from your presentation, so choose your footwear wisely.
- Do not wear a costume or use props of any kind as this is against the rules.

Practice, Practice, Practice

- Feeling nervous before you present is natural, and a little nervousness can even be beneficial to your overall speech. Nonetheless, it is important to practice so you can present with confidence and clarity. Practicing will also help you gauge the timing of your presentation so that you keep within the three minute time limit.

Record Yourself

- Record and listen to your presentation to hear where you pause, speak too quickly or get it just right.
- Then work on your weaknesses and exploit your strengths.